

Sport and Active Lifestyles.

State of the Nation.

A statistical release from the National
Survey for Wales 2016-17.

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National Survey for Wales 16/17: Sport and Active Lifestyles

State of the Nation Report

Summary

- The National Survey for Wales has replaced the Active Adults Survey as the source of data on adult sport participation, club membership and volunteering in Wales. Results from the two surveys are not comparable due to the change in survey methodology.
- In 2016-2017, 59% of adults reported that they had taken part in some sporting activity in the last four weeks. Age, gender, disability and Welsh speaking characteristics are associated with varying participation rates.
- 29% of adults participated in a sporting activity three times a week or more. 8% participated approximately twice a week, 10% participated approximately once a week and 53% participated less than once a week. Again, protected characteristics are associated with varying rates of participation.
- Adults in Wales are most likely to be taking part in walking (2 miles or more), swimming, running and jogging, football and cycling.
- 23% of adults in Wales reported being a member of a sports club. There is a gender gap in sports club membership – 29% of males are sports club members compared with 17% of females.
- 10% of adults in Wales reported volunteering in sport. Of these volunteers, most were likely to provide coaching (5%) followed by administration (3%), officiating/refereeing (2%), stewarding (2%), catering (1%) transport (1%) and other activities (1%).
- 58% of all adults would like to do more sport or physical activity. The types of activity in most demand include swimming (18%), cycling (12%) and gym and/or fitness classes (11%).
- The survey asked respondents about the factors that would encourage them to participate more in sport. The most popular factor selected by adults in Wales was 'if I was less busy at work' (32%), followed by 'if I was younger' (29%), 'if I was fitter' (27%) and 'if I had fewer family commitments' (23%).
- For more background information on the survey, the survey method and questionnaire coverage, latest news, results and reports from the development work, and further

information on data linkage, please see the Welsh Government's web pages (<http://www.gov.wales/nationalsurvey>).

Introduction

Sport Wales has commissioned large-scale population based surveys on adult sport participation in Wales since 1987. Until recently, this took the form of the Active Adults Survey, a biennial household survey measuring levels of sports participation, club membership and volunteering in addition to lifestyle, health and other sport related behaviours amongst adults in Wales. The last Active Adults Survey was conducted in 2014.

Since then, a Welsh Government cabinet decision was made to integrate several existing large-scale surveys of people in Wales into one survey managed by the Welsh Government. The aim behind this was to enable richer analysis across topics, reduce costs and reduce survey burden for the people of Wales. The new National Survey for Wales is therefore made up of the Welsh Health Survey (previously run by Welsh Government), the Active Adults Survey (previously run by Sport Wales), the Arts in Wales Survey (previously run by Arts Council of Wales), and the Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey (previously run by Natural Resources Wales). The integrated survey covers a wide range of topics, with core questions on sport participation, latent demand, sports club membership, motives for participation, volunteering and coaching being retained from the Active Adults Survey. The National Survey for Wales has therefore replaced the Active Adults Survey as the primary source of data on adult sport participation, club membership and volunteering in Wales.

The sport data from the National Survey for Wales provides one of the main sources of data used by Sport Wales to strategically monitor and track trends in sport in Wales, as well as forming a base from which to shape policy and practice.

Method

The Welsh Government awarded the contract for conducting the National Survey for Wales to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Field work began in 2016 and is planned to run continuously for a period of five years, with survey results being published annually.

The first wave of the new survey ran between the end of March 2016 and March 2017. This avoided any seasonal effects on the results. It involved conducting more than 10,000 interviews of people aged 16 and over, based on a randomly selected sample of residential addresses across Wales.

The survey questionnaire and all supporting materials were available as standard in both Welsh and English, with interviews also offered in other languages with the help of an interpreter, if required.

Given the difference in the way the data has been collected, it is not possible to make comparisons between the data collected during the former Active Adult Survey cycles and the new sport data captured as part of the National Survey for Wales. This means that the National Survey 2016-17 results are to be treated as a new baseline from which to measure progress and as an opportunity to explore the links between sport and other policy areas.

For more background information on the survey, the survey method and questionnaire coverage, latest news, results and reports from the development work, and further information on data linkage, please see the Welsh Government's web pages (<http://www.gov.wales/nationalsurvey>).

Results

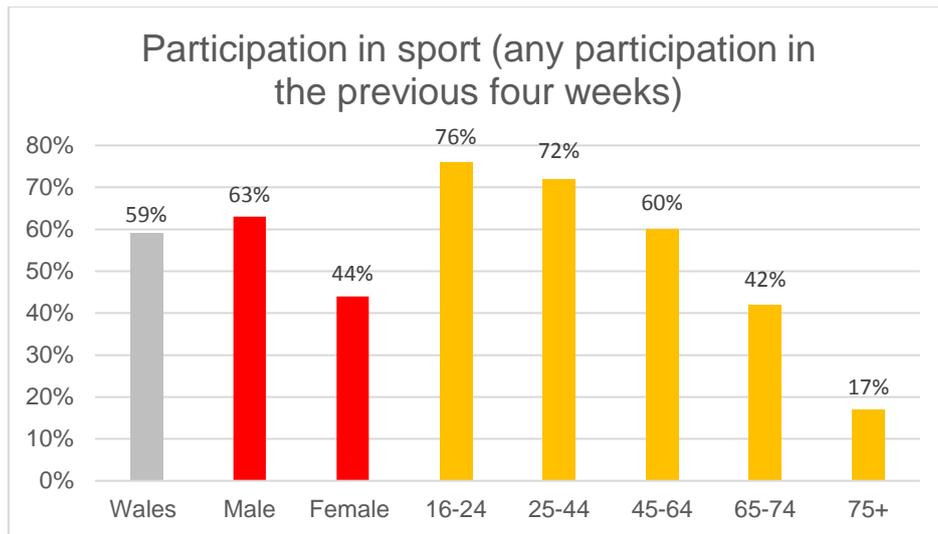
This report provides an overview of the data on:

1. Participation in sport (any participation in the previous four weeks)
2. Participation in sport – excluding walking (any participation in the previous four weeks)
3. Frequency of participation in sport (average per week)
4. Most common sporting activities
5. Sports club membership
6. Volunteering in sport
7. Latent demand for sport
8. What would encourage more participation in sport?

For more information please see the data tables at <http://sport.wales/research--policy/surveys-and-statistics/statistics.aspx>.

1. Participation in sport (any participation in the previous four weeks)

In 2016-2017, 59% of adults reported that they had taken part in some sporting activity in the last four weeks. Males (63%) were more likely to have participated than females (54%), and younger people were more likely to have participated than older people as shown in the figure below.



Disability, employment status and other characteristics were also linked to differences in participation. For example:

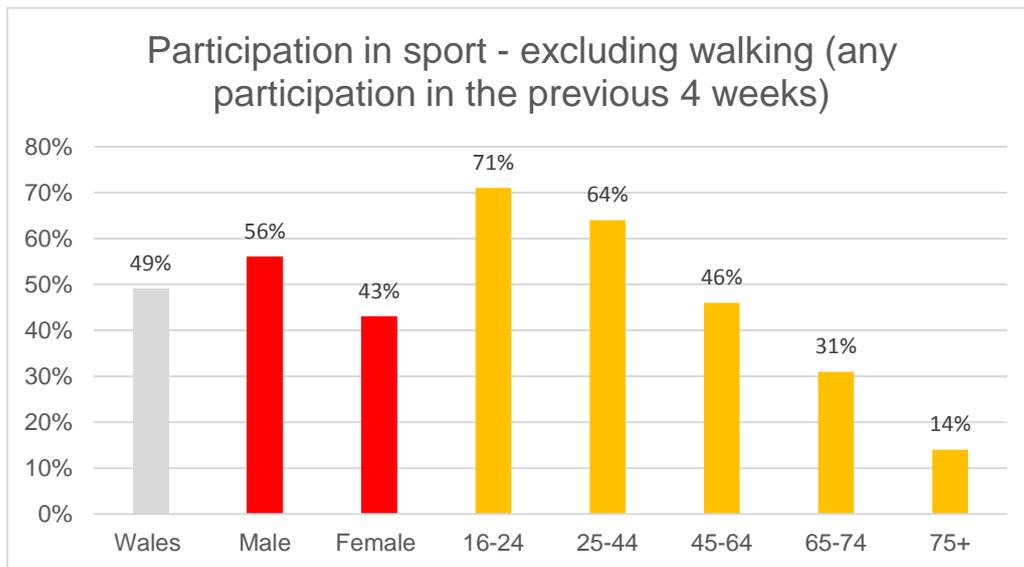
- Adults with a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity were less likely to have participated in a sporting activity in the last four weeks (47%) than those without (69%).
- Those in employment were more likely to have participated in a sporting activity in the last four weeks (72%), than those who were unemployed (52%) or economically inactive (43%).
- Welsh speakers were more likely to have participated in a sporting activity in the last four weeks (63%) than non-welsh speakers (58%). Indeed, people using the Welsh language in their everyday life were more likely to have participated in a sporting activity in the last four weeks (65%) than others (58%).
- Those living in a household in material deprivation were less likely to have participated in a sporting activity in the last four weeks (49%) than those who weren't (61%).

For more information on participation in sport (any participation in the previous four weeks) see Table 1 of the data tables at <http://sport.wales/research--policy/surveys-and-statistics/statistics.aspx>.

2. Participation in sport – excluding walking (any participation in the previous four weeks)

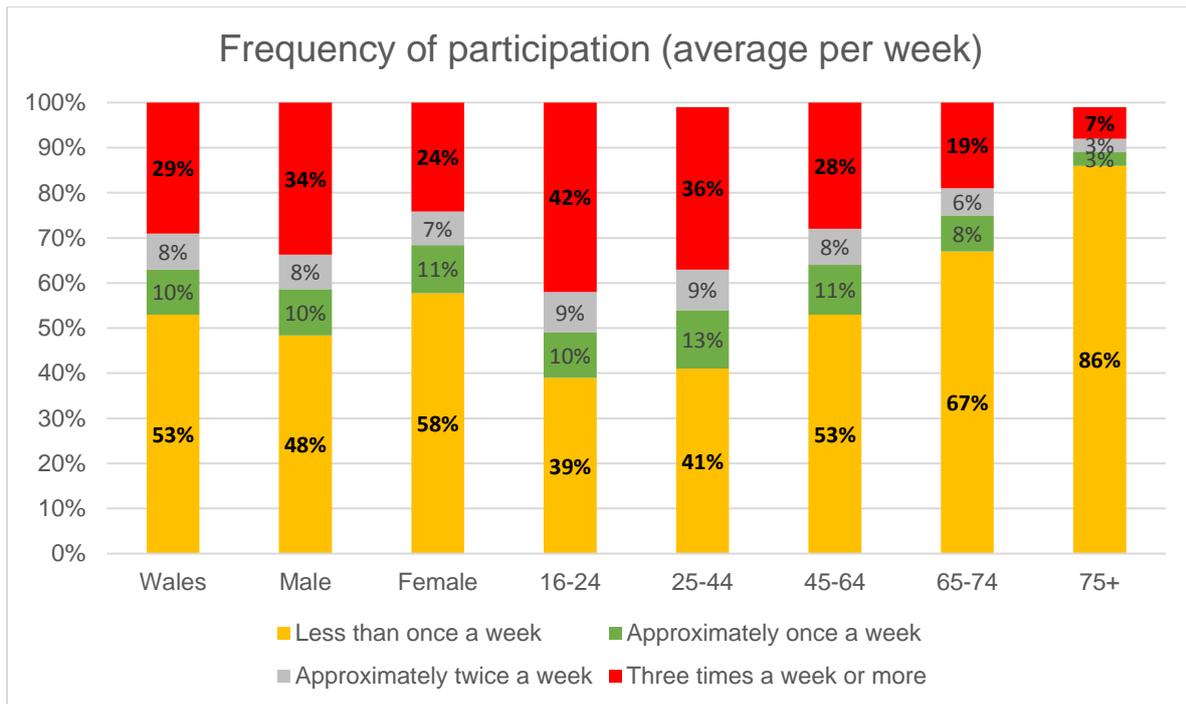
By far the most commonly reported activity was walking more than two miles (34% of adults reported walking more than two miles in the last four weeks). Apart from walking, 49% of respondents reported participating in at least some sporting activity over the previous 4 weeks.

Again, males (56%) were more likely to have participated than females (43%), and younger people were more likely to have participated than older people as shown in the figure below.



3. Frequency of participation in sport (average per week)

In 2016-2017, 29% of adults participated in a sporting activity three times a week or more. 8% participated approximately twice a week, 10% participated approximately once a week and 53% participated less than once a week. Males were more likely to participate in sport three times a week (34%) and less likely to participate less than once a week (48%) than females (of whom 24% participated in sport three times a week and 58% participated less than once a week respectively). Similarly, younger people were more likely to participate in sport three times a week and less likely to participate less than once a week than older people. The figure below shows frequency of participation by gender and age.



Disability, employment status and other characteristics were also linked to differences in frequency of participation. For example:

- Adults with a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity were less likely to participate in sport three times a week (21%) and more likely to participate less than once a week (64%) than those without a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity (of whom 36% participated in sport three times a week and 43% participated less than once a week).
- Those in employment were more likely to have participated three times a week (35%) and less likely to have participated less than once a week (42%) than the unemployed or economically inactive (of the unemployed, 24% participated three times a week and 62% participated less than once a week, and of the economically inactive, 22% participated less than once a week, and of the economically inactive 66% participated less than once a week).
- Welsh speakers were more likely to participate in sport three times a week (34%) and less likely to participate less than once a week (49%) than non-Welsh speakers (of whom 28% participated in sport three times a week and 54% participated less than once a week). Indeed, people using the Welsh language daily were more likely to participate in sport three times a week (34%) and less likely to participate less than once a week (28%) than others (of whom 28% participated three times a week and 54% participated less than once a week).
- Those living in households in material deprivation were less likely to have participated three times a week (19%) and more likely to have participated less than once a week

(65%) than others (of whom 31% participated three times a week and 51% participated less than once a week).

For more information on frequency of participation see Table 1 of the data tables at <http://sport.wales/research--policy/surveys-and-statistics/statistics.aspx>.

4. Most common sporting activities

Table (i) shows the opportunities that adults in Wales were most likely to be accessing. The most popular activity for both males and females in Wales was walking (over two miles). Swimming, running and jogging, football and cycling were also popular activities among both genders.

Table (i): Most popular activities – percentage and by gender

Sporting activity	Wales (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Walking (over 2 miles)	34	32	36
Swimming (indoor or outdoor)	14	12	16
Gym or fitness classes	14	13	14
Athletics/Running (any)	14	15	12
Jogging	10	11	10
Football (indoor, outdoor or futsal)	9	15	3
Any cycling	9	13	5
Road running/cross country	6	8	4
Pool	6	9	3
Rambling/ hill & fell walking	5	6	5
Golf (inc. pitch and putt)	5	9	2
Dance (any)	4	1	7

For more information on participation by sport or activity see Table 13 of the data tables at <http://sport.wales/research--policy/surveys-and-statistics/statistics.aspx>.

5. Sports club membership

2016-2017, 23% of adults in Wales reported being a member of a sports club. There is a gender gap in sports club membership – 29% of males were sports club members compared with

17% of females. Sports club membership rates fell with age – 28% of 16-24 year olds were members decreasing to 15% for the 75+ age groups.

For more information on sports club membership see Tables 5 and 6 of the data tables at <http://sport.wales/research--policy/surveys-and-statistics/statistics.aspx>.

6. Volunteering and volunteering in sport

In Wales, 28% of adults volunteer. Table 7 of the data tables shows that adults are most likely to volunteer for charities (9%) and sports clubs (7%). Adults are more than twice as likely to volunteer in these activities than to volunteer at art groups (e.g. drama, music, art or crafts) or environmental groups.

The survey provides more detailed information on those adults who volunteered at least once in the last year in sport. We define sport volunteers as those that actively help on an unpaid basis to run any sporting activity after school or at a club. Sports volunteers help with activities such as administration, coaching, catering, and transport. In 2016/17 10% of adults reported volunteering in sport¹. There is a gender gap in volunteering with 14% of males volunteering compared to 6% of females.

Of these volunteers, most were likely to provide coaching (5%) followed by administration (3%), officiating/refereeing (2%), stewarding (2%), catering (1%) transport (1%) and other activities (1%). Volunteers may have taken part in more than one of these activities.

For more information on volunteering see Tables 7, 8 & 9 of the data tables at <http://sport.wales/research--policy/surveys-and-statistics/statistics.aspx>.

7. Latent demand for sport

58% of all adults would like to do more sport or physical activity. This data is referred to by the sport sector as 'latent demand'. The greatest demand can be seen for swimming (18%), cycling (12%) and gym or fitness classes (11%). Other types of activities in demand by gender are shown in the table (ii) below.

¹ This percentage is slightly larger than the 7% quoted above (volunteers for a sports club) because it represents an extended reference period (12 months vs. at the time of the survey) and additional settings (schools and sport club settings vs. sport club settings only).

Table (ii): Percentage of adults reporting a latent demand for sports and activities by gender

Latent demand for...	Wales (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Swimming (indoor or outdoor)	18	15	20
Any cycling (BMX/cycling/mountain biking)	12	14	9
Any exercise and fitness activity	11	8	14
Canoeing/kayaking	8	10	6
Athletics/running (any)	8	7	8
Walking (over 2 miles)	8	7	9
Climbing/mountaineering/ rock climbing	7	8	5
Skiing	6	7	6
Dance (any)	6	2	10
Archery	6	8	4
Football (indoor/outdoor/futsal)	6	11	2
Tennis	6	6	6

For more information on latent demand for sport see Table 15 of the data tables at <http://sport.wales/research--policy/surveys-and-statistics/statistics.aspx>,

8. What would encourage more participation in sport?

The survey asked respondents about the factors that would encourage them to participate more in sport. The most popular factor selected by adults in Wales (32%) was 'if I was less busy at work'. This was the most popular factor for males and females alike. The table below shows all the factors by gender.

Table (iii): 'I would do more sport if...' by gender

I would do more sport if...	Wales (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
I was less busy at work	32	36	29
I was younger	29	32	26
I was fitter	27	26	28
I had fewer family commitments	23	19	26
It cost less	18	15	20
There were more facilities or clubs in my area	16	15	16
I had someone to go with	12	9	14
I could be bothered to make the effort	10	9	11
I didn't have a disability, illness or injury that prevents me from taking part	10	9	11
I got around to doing it	8	7	9
I was more confident	8	5	11
It was easier to travel to clubs/facilities	7	7	7
I was better at sport	6	5	7
I prioritised it over other leisure activities	4	4	4
I knew where to go and learn	4	4	4
I was asked to take part	3	3	2
Clubs/facilities catered for my level of ability	3	2	3
I felt less embarrassed playing sport	3	2	3
Facilities were improved	3	3	2
There was coaching available	2	2	2
I would take part at a different time of year	2	2	2
I had the necessary minimum skill base/competency	1	1	1
People who run clubs were more friendly	1	1	1
There was Welsh language activity provision in my area	0	-	-
No reason	11	12	10

For more information on what would encourage more participation in sport see Table 14 of the data tables at <http://sport.wales/research--policy/surveys-and-statistics/statistics.aspx>

9. Lifestyle and participation in sport and physical recreation

The National Survey for Wales 2016/17 contains information about specific lifestyle behaviours of adults in Wales. These are smoking and e-cigarette use, alcohol use, fruit and

vegetable consumption, physical activity (meeting the Chief Medical Officer guidelines), and body mass index (BMI).

In Wales, 1 in 5 adults reported that they smoke (19%) and a similar number (20%) said that they drank more than the weekly guideline amount (i.e. an average weekly consumption of more than 14 units). Around 3 in 4 adults reported that they had not eaten at least five portions of fruit or vegetables the previous day (76%). In terms of being physically active, almost half (46 per cent) of all adults reported that they had not been active for at least 150 minutes in the previous week. Over half (59 per cent) of adults were classified as overweight or obese including 23 per cent who were obese.

In addition, results are calculated for multiple healthy lifestyle behaviours. These include:

- *Not smoking*
- *Not drinking above weekly guidelines*
- *Eating five or more portions of fruit and vegetables the previous day*
- *Being physically active for at least 150 minutes in the previous week*
- *Maintaining a healthy weight / body mass index*

Table 16 of the data tables displays the frequency of participation in sport and physical recreation in relation to healthy lifestyle behaviours. It shows the composition of healthy lifestyle behaviours exhibited by adults within each participation group.

The table shows that 82% of adults that participated in sport and physical recreation (three times a week or more) met the recommended 150-minute guidelines for physical activity (compared to 37% of adults that participated less than once a week). In addition, only 17% of adults that participated in sport and physical recreation (three or more times a week) were classified as obese (in comparison to 27% of adults who undertook no frequent activity). Adults that participated more than three times a week were also most likely to eat five fruit or vegetables (35%) and to not smoke regularly (81% never smoked or had given up). Counter to these trends in healthy lifestyle behaviours, participation in sport and physical recreation was also associated with high risk alcohol consumption (26% of adults consumed over 14 units compared to 16% who did no frequent activity).

Survey respondents were also asked to self-report their general health. Table 16 highlights that adults that participated in sport and physical recreation three or more times a week were most likely to report good or very good health (86%) and less likely to report bad or very bad health (2%).

Overall there appears to be positive trends between sport and health and this is reflected in the number of adults with four or five healthy lifestyle behaviours (41% of adults that participated 3+ times a week had at least four of these behaviours).

10. Experiences of sport at school

A sub sample of adults in the survey were asked about their experiences of sport at school. Most adults enjoyed taking part in sport at school 'a lot' (59%). 21% enjoyed it 'a little', and 20% did not enjoy taking part at school at all.

In addition, adults were asked if they regularly took part in organised sport outside of school lessons, while at secondary school. 59% agreed that they did take part regularly whereas 35% disagreed with the statement.

Other resources

To view the data tables on adult sport participation, club membership and volunteering in Wales go to <http://sport.wales/research--policy/surveys-and-statistics/statistics.aspx>.

For more background information on the survey, the survey method and questionnaire coverage, latest news, results and reports from the development work, and further information on data linkage, please see the Welsh Government's web pages

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