

Participation

- Swimming, gym and cycling are the greatest participant activities for women
- 2.8 million women (13%) take part in sport regularly every week
- There is considerable demand to do more activity from young women, BME women and women with children at home

Charts are based on those adults (16 and over) who said they had taken part in sport at moderate intensity at least three times a week (Active People Survey 2, 2007-08 (APS2)), unless stated otherwise. See Note 1.

**Sport participation' does not include recreational walking or infrequent recreational cycling but does include cycling if done at least once a week at moderate intensity and for at least 30 minutes. It also includes more intense/strenuous walking activities such as power walking, hill trekking, cliff walking and gorge walking. 'Sport and active recreation' includes all the above as well as recreational walking and cycling.

Women who take part in sport and active recreation – overview

Trends in women's 'sport and active recreation'*

Takes part at least once in four weeks

APS1 (2005-06) 9.4 million women 44.81%

APS2 (2007-08) 9.9 million women 46.45%

Takes part at least once a week

APS1 (2005-06) 7.7 million women 36.72%

APS2 (2007-08) 8.1 million women 38.29%

Takes part at least three times a week

APS1 (2005-06) 18.48% 3.9 million women

APS2 (2007-08) 18.62% 4.0 million women

Base: All female respondents (APS1 = 212,568, APS2 = 113,056)

Trends in women's 'sport participation'*

Takes part at least once in four weeks

APS1 (2005-06) 7.6 million women 36.46%

APS2 (2007-08) 8.0 million women 37.81%

Takes part at least once a week

APS1 (2005-06) 6.2 million women 29.81%

APS2 (2007-08) 6.6 million women 31.05%

Takes part at least three times a week

APS1 (2005-06) 12.25% 2.6 million women

APS2 (2007-08) 13.11% 2.8 million women

Base: All female respondents (APS1 = 212,568, APS2 = 113,056)

Top 10 activities for female participation



Base: All female respondents. Participation at least once in the last four weeks. Cycling is moderate intensity recreational cycling for 30 minutes. 'Dance exercise' includes aerobics and keep fit; athletics includes road running and jogging

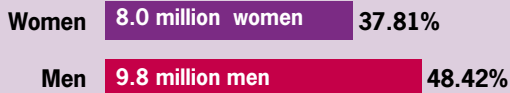
Participation – overview

- 4 million women take part in sport and active recreation at least three times a week
- However, if we look at just the 'sport' element (therefore not recreational cycling and walking) regular female participation is 2.8 million
- Swimming, gym and cycling are the three most participated in physical activities

Demographic profile of women and men who take part in sport

Proportion of women and men who take part in sport

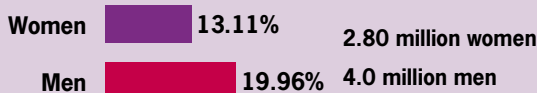
Takes part at least once in four weeks



Takes part at least once a week

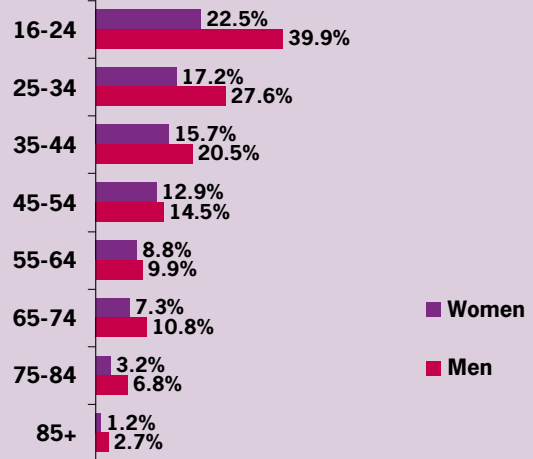


Takes part at least three times a week



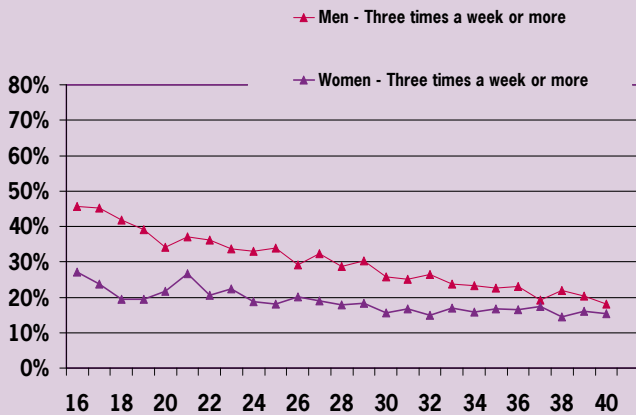
Base: All respondents (women = 113,056, men = 78,269)

Proportion of women and men who take part in sport by age



Base: All respondents (women = 113,056, men = 78,269)

Focus on drop off: proportion of women and men who take part in sport by single year of age

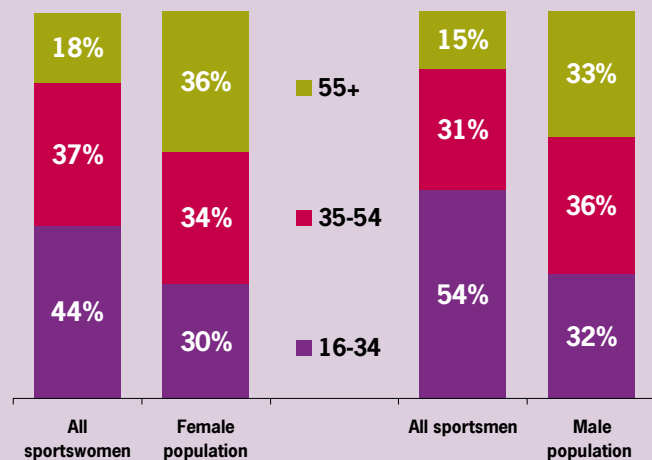


Base: All respondents

Participation – demographic profile

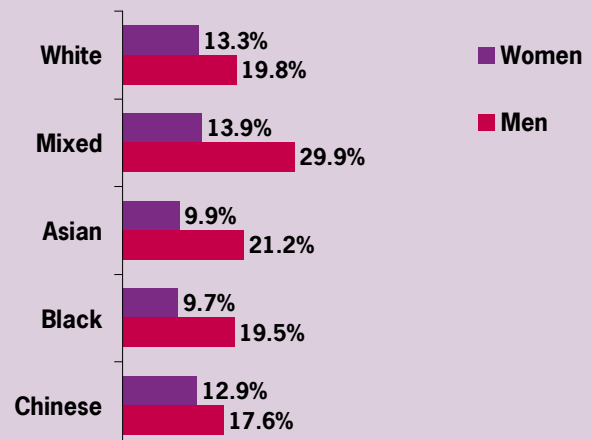
- The greatest difference between men and women is at age 18 where more than double the proportion of men than women do sport regularly
- Activity declines with age. As men and women reach their late 30s – as family commitments take over – they have similar experiences. Differences start to appear again around retirement age when men have a slight surge in participation
- Black and Asian women are the least active of all women – just 9.9% and 9.7% take part in regular sport respectively (all women = 13.1%)

Age profile of women and men who take part in sport



Base: All respondents; England only

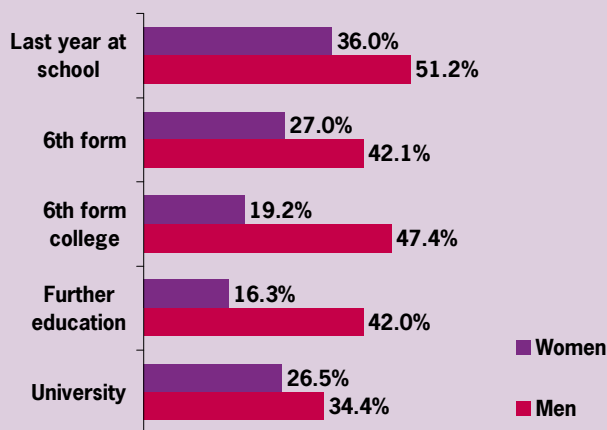
Proportion of women and men who take part in sport by gender and ethnicity



Base: All respondents

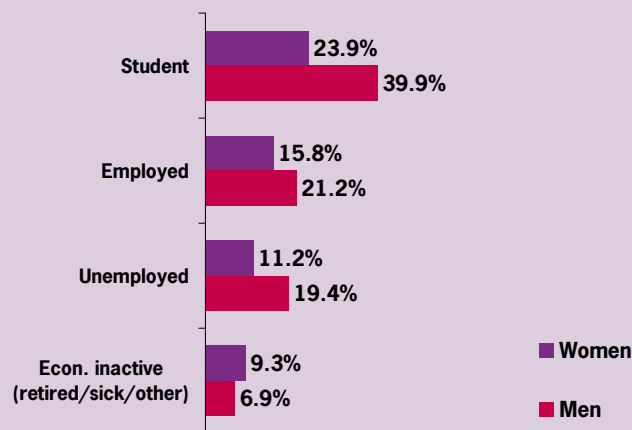
Demographic profile of women and men who take part in sport

Proportion of women and men who take part in sport by stage of full time education



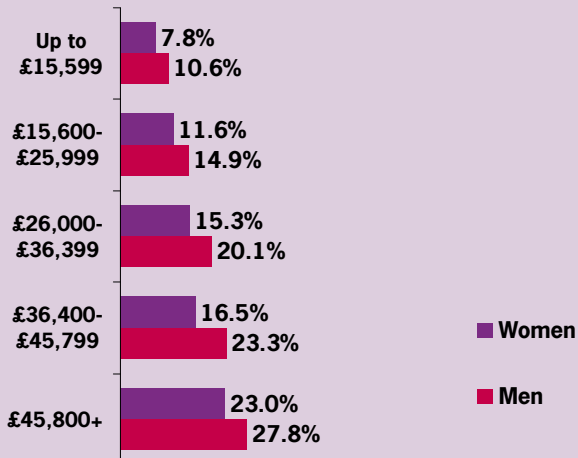
Base: All respondents still in education

Proportion of women and men who take part in sport by economic activity



Base: All respondents

Proportion of women and men who take part in sport by household income

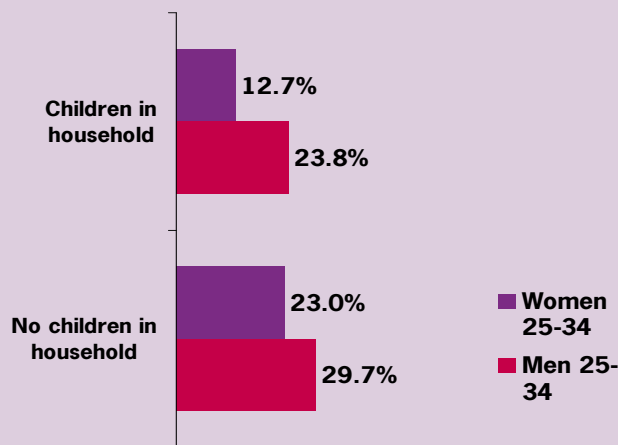


Base: All respondents

Participation – demographic profile

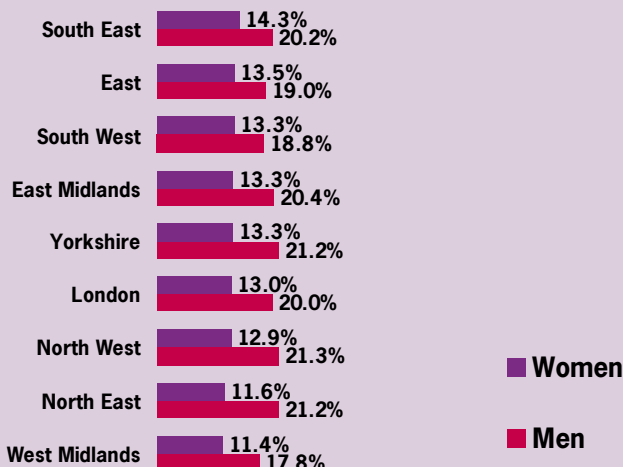
- Twice as many women in their last year at school as those in further education take part in sports at least three times a week
- Women with a limiting long term illness or disability are almost three times less likely than women without to take part in sport (5.5% v 14.7%)
- Women who have a household (hh) income of over £45,800 are more than three times as likely to be active as women with hh incomes less than £15,600
- Almost twice as many men as women volunteer in sport for an hour a week (6.4% v 3.5% respectively)
- Women aged 25-34 with children (at home) are almost half as likely as women of the same age without children to take part in regular sport

Proportion of women and men who take part in sport by whether children in household



Base: All respondents

Proportion of women and men who take part in sport by Sport England region



Base: All respondents

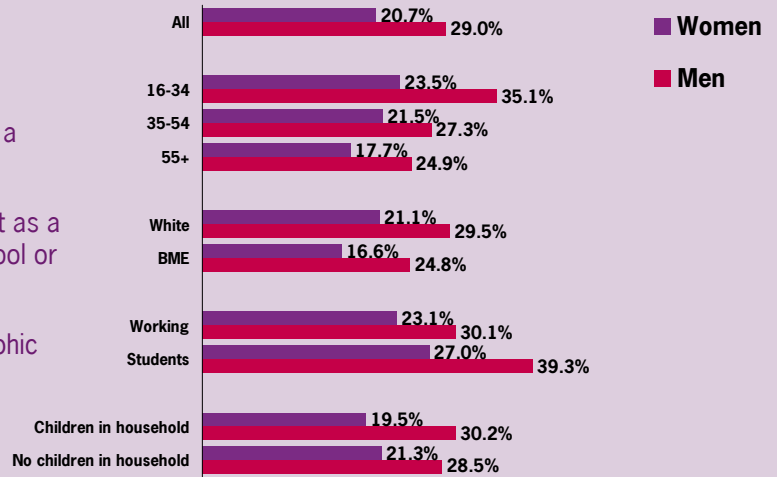
Organised participation



Club membership

- Women are less likely than men to play sport as a club member
- Female students are the most likely to play sport as a club member – possibly as many will play for a school or college club
- BME women are the least likely of any demographic group to take part in sport as a member of a club (16.6%)
- Female club membership is highest in rugby union, hockey and golf

Who plays sport as a member of a sports club?



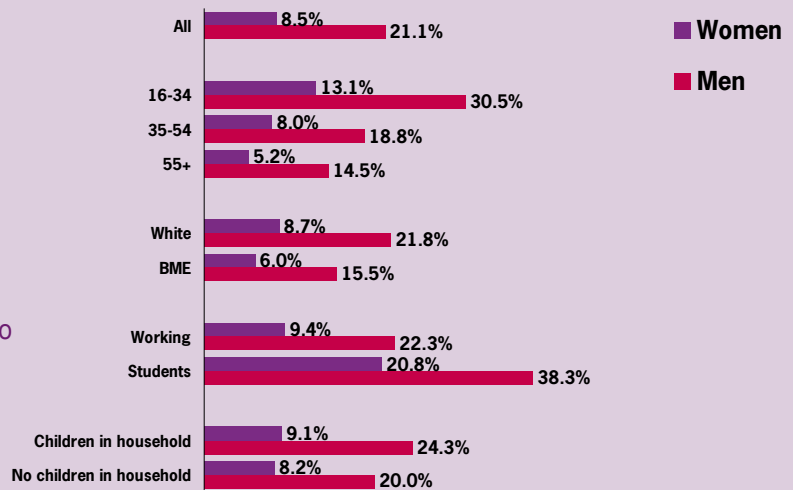
Base: All respondents who played sport at least once in the last four weeks. See Note 2



Taken part in organised competition

- Very few women take part in organised competition, at just 8.5% they are two and a half times less likely to take part than men
- Opportunities to take part in competition tend to occur in youth and in education, therefore it is understandable that female students and young women are the most likely to take part
- White women are more likely to take part in organised competition than women from BME groups

Who takes part in organised competition?



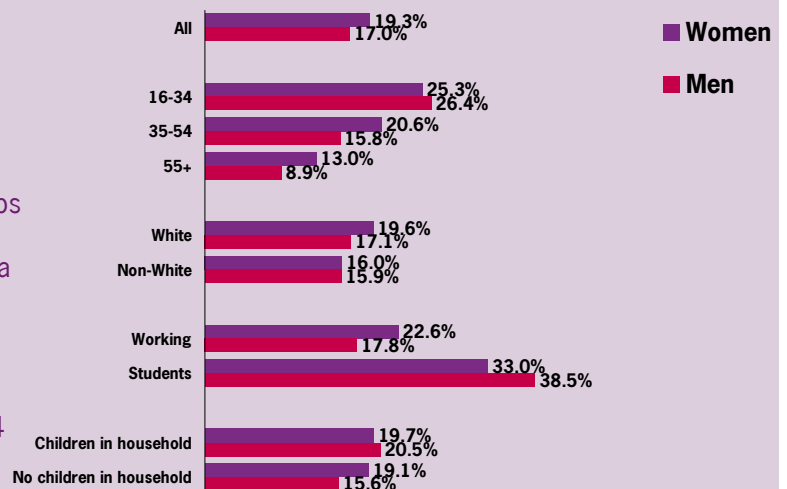
Base: All respondents who played a sport at least once in the last four weeks. See Note 3



Received tuition or coaching

- While women are not as likely as men to join clubs or take part in competition, overall they are more likely than men to receive tuition or coaching to do a sport
- Most of this coaching occurs when women are young or/and students, almost two in five students received tuition to play sport and a quarter of 16-34 year olds– possibly when they at school or at college

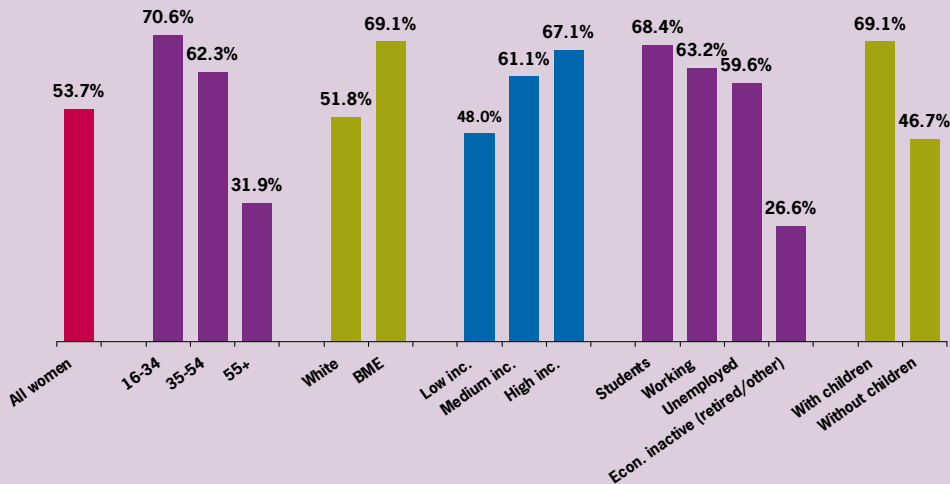
Who receives sport tuition?



Base: All respondents who played sport at least once in the last four weeks. See Note 4

Latent demand

Profile of women who want to do more sport than they currently do



Base: All female respondents; low income is defined as household income under £20,799; medium is £20,800-£41,599; and high is £41,600+

Latent demand

- Over half of women would like to play more sport than they currently do
- The greatest demand for more sport is among young women, BME women, and those with children at home
- The top five sports that women would like to do more of are swimming, cycling, tennis, athletics, and badminton

To sum up...

Less than 40% of all women (8 million) are taking part in sport at least once a month, and just 13% (2.8 million) take part in on a regular basis. Men dominate with 1.2 million more men than women taking part on a regular basis.

Individual sports are most popular with women – swimming, gym and cycling are the most participated in activities. Of team sports, football is the most popular sport for women (8th of all activities). Just one in five women play sport as a member of a sports club and just one in 12 women take part in competition.

To increase physical activity, sports deliverers will need to understand the different practical, physiological and cultural factors that currently impact upon behaviour. Ageing is one factor – participation declines as women get older and other commitments or influences prevent involvement. Income is another – women from low income households have the lowest levels of sport involvement. Deliverers have to carefully consider how to create programmes that will be appropriate to meet different groups of women’s needs. However, there are also many other physiological and cultural barriers such as body consciousness and experiences at school that have an influence on whether women want to be involved. Youth is a perfect time to become engaged in activity – yet young women are almost half as active as young men – deliverers need to first understand why this is, and then look to provide opportunities that work to counter this.

There are considerable opportunities for sport to increase participation numbers if deliverers focus on young women, BME women and women with children who have shown they would like to do more sport than they currently do.

Notes

- 1 Source for all data is the Active People Survey 2 (2007-08) unless otherwise stated. 16 year olds and over in England only. Data not shown if cell size is less than 30.
- 2 Club membership is based on those who have been a member of a sports club to participate in sport in the past four weeks.
- 3 Organised competition is defined as 'having taken part in any organised competition in sport in the last 12 months'.
- 4 Received tuition is defined as 'having received tuition from an instructor or coach to improve your performance in sport in the last 12 months'.

To convert overall percentages to population numbers use the following figures:

| Survey | Male 16+ | Female 16+ |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Active People Survey 1 (2005-06) | 19,756,900 | 20,954,000 |
| Active People Survey 2 (2007-08) | 20,170,100 | 21,266,200 |

Numbers may vary due to rounding

Source: Office for National Statistics Mid-year Population Estimates, England, 2005 and 2007

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