

Swimming

- Swimming is the most popular activity for female participation
- A fifth of female swimmers are over the age of 55
- There is more latent demand for swimming by women than any other sport

All data are based on those adults (16 and over) who took part in the sport at least once in the last four weeks (Active People Survey 2007-08) unless stated otherwise. See Note 1.

Women who swim – overview

Trends in women's swimming participation

Swam at least once a week (moderate intensity)



Swam at least once in the last four weeks



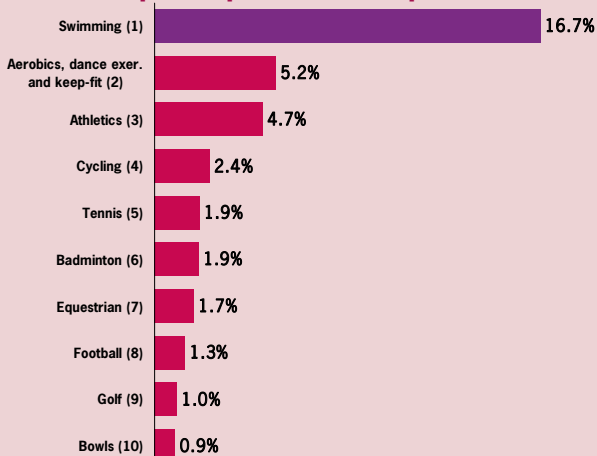
Base: All female respondents. (APS1 = 212,568, APS2 = 113,056)

Participation overview

•Swimming is the most popular sport for female participation by a considerable margin, although there has been no significant change between 2005/06 and 2007/08

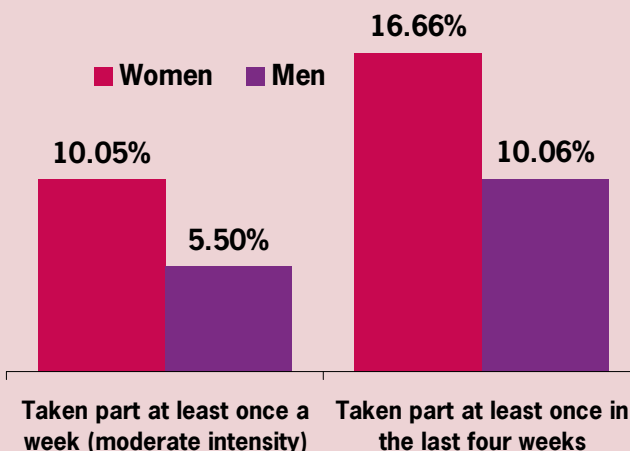
•Women who swim also like to take part in athletics, aerobics, cycling, tennis and badminton

How does swimming fare? Women's participation in all sports



Base: All female respondents. Figure for cycling is respondents who took part in at least four recreational cycles in the last four weeks at moderate intensity.

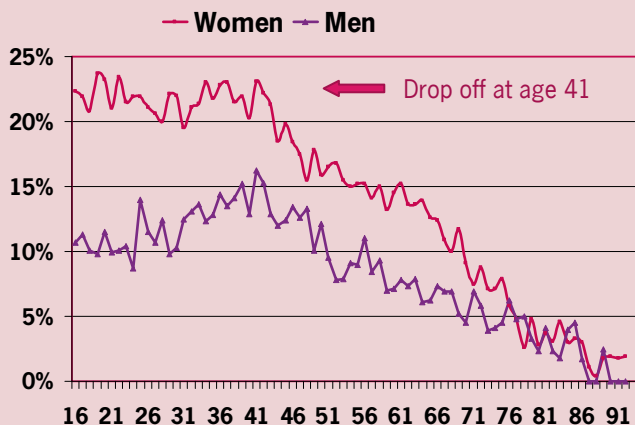
Proportion of people who swim by gender



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

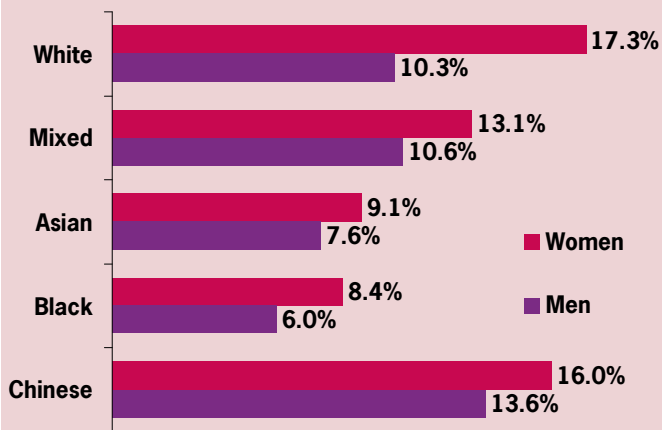
Demographic profile of swimmers

Focus on drop off: proportion of people who swim by gender and age



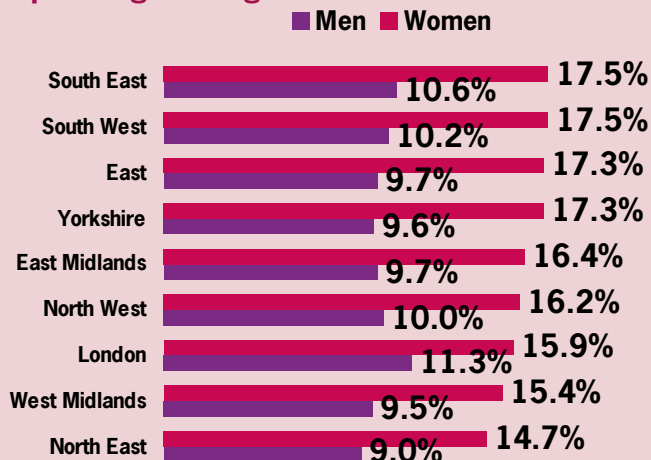
Base: All respondents

Proportion of people who swim by gender and ethnicity



Base: All respondents

Proportion of people who swim by gender and Sport England region

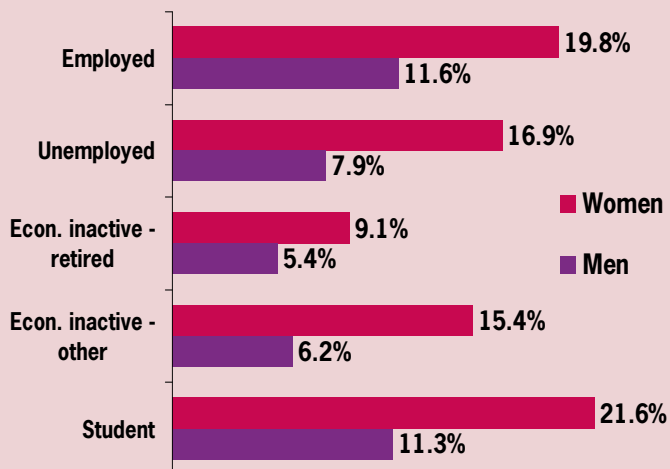


Base: All respondents

Participation – demographics

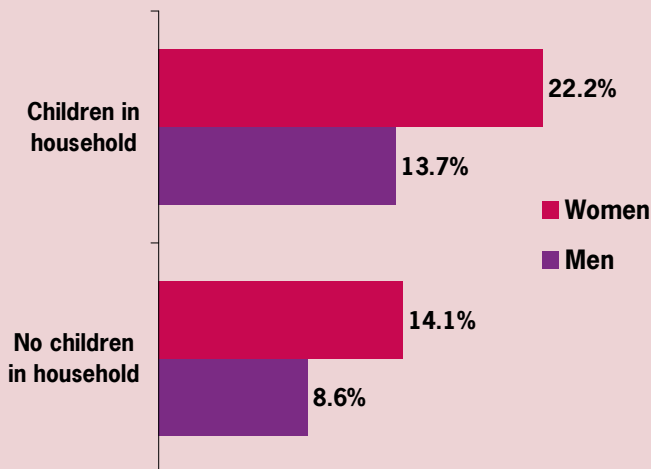
- Many women stay swimming until their early forties, when they start to drop off – most other sports see drop off occur much younger
- Despite this drop off, swimming is still one of the few sports that has a relatively older profile: a fifth of female swimmers are over the age of 55 – only seven other sports have a profile of more older women
- 95% of female swimmers are white (compared with 91% of the population)
- The South East has the most female swimmers while the North East as the least. The greatest disparity between the sexes is in Yorkshire

Proportion of people who swim by gender and working status



Base: All respondents

Proportion of people who swim by gender and whether children in household



Base: All respondents

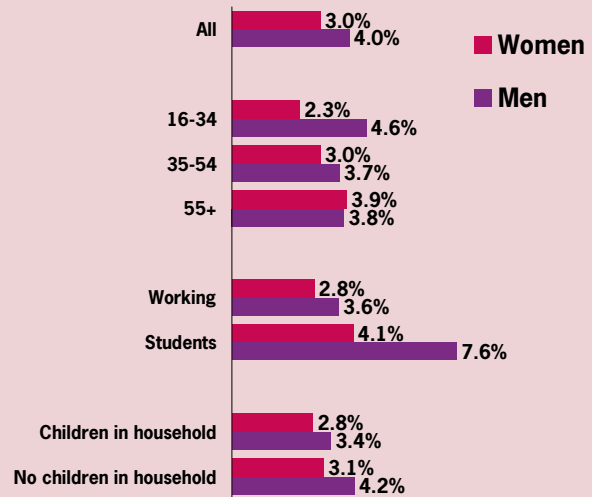
Organised participation



Club membership

- Female swimmers tend not to swim as a member of a club
- And despite swimming being one of the sports with higher female than male participation, male swimmers are more likely to participate formally as a club member
- There were almost 29,000 female adult members and 71,500 female youth members in Great Britain

Who swims as a member of a sports club?



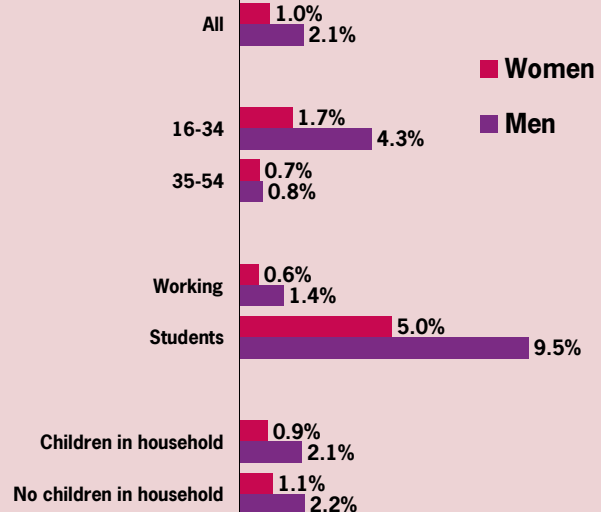
Base: All respondents who swam at least once in the last four weeks. See Note 2



Taken part in organised competition

- As competition generally occurs through clubs, (and women are less likely to be a club member) it is understandably why a small proportion of women take part in organised competition
- Two and a half times as many 16 to 34 year-old men than women take part in organised competition

Who takes part in organised competition?



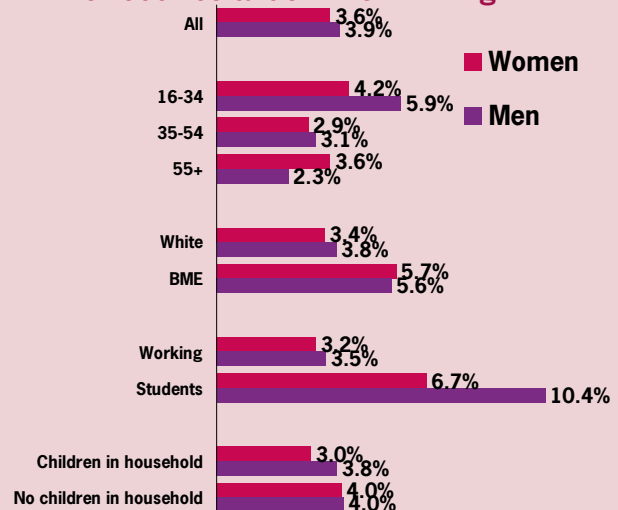
Base: All respondents who swam at least once in the last four weeks. See Note 3



Received tuition or coaching

- It makes sense that if male swimmers are more likely to take part in competitive swimming than women, that they are also more likely to receive coaching to improve their performance
- Younger women, students and BME women are most likely to receive tuition

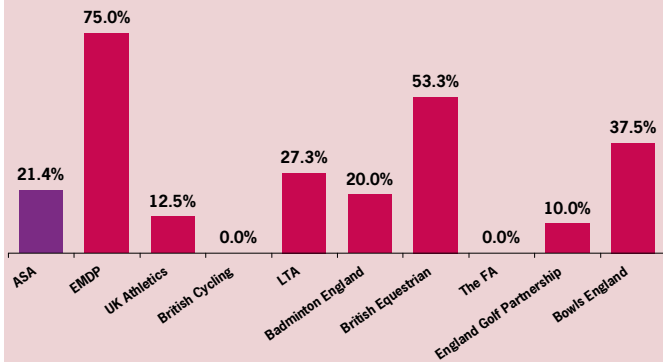
Who receives tuition in swimming?



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

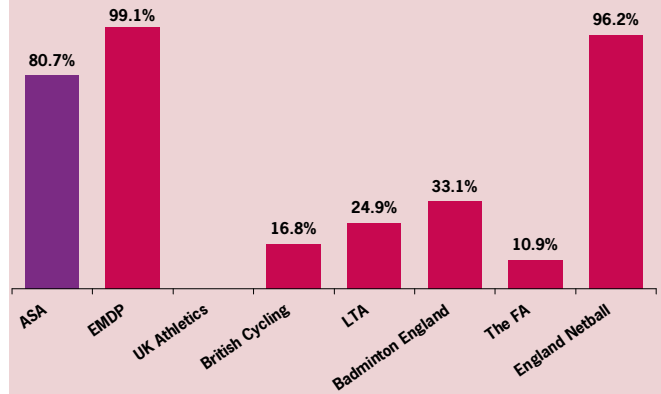
Women as leaders, coaches and volunteers

Women as leaders of sport % of NGB Board members who are women



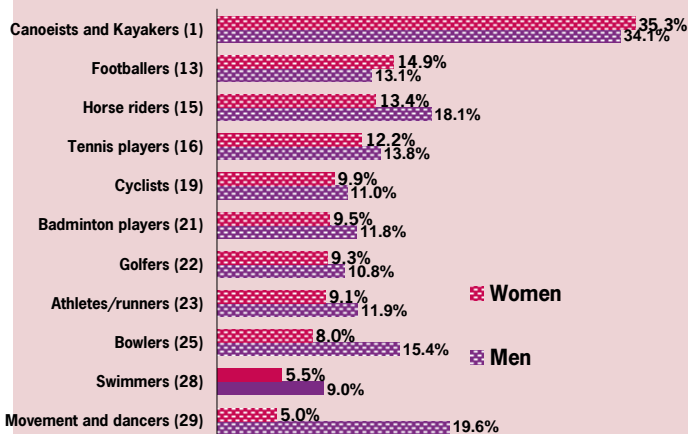
Source: WSFF 2009 NGB audit. See Note 5

Women as sports coaches % of NGB affiliated coaches who are women



Source: WSFF 2009 NGB Audit. See Note 5

Women and men as volunteers



Base: All respondents who take part in sport at least once a week. Top 10 sports for women. Figure in brackets is the sport's ranking out of 29 sports for volunteering. See Note 6

Women as leaders, coaches and volunteers

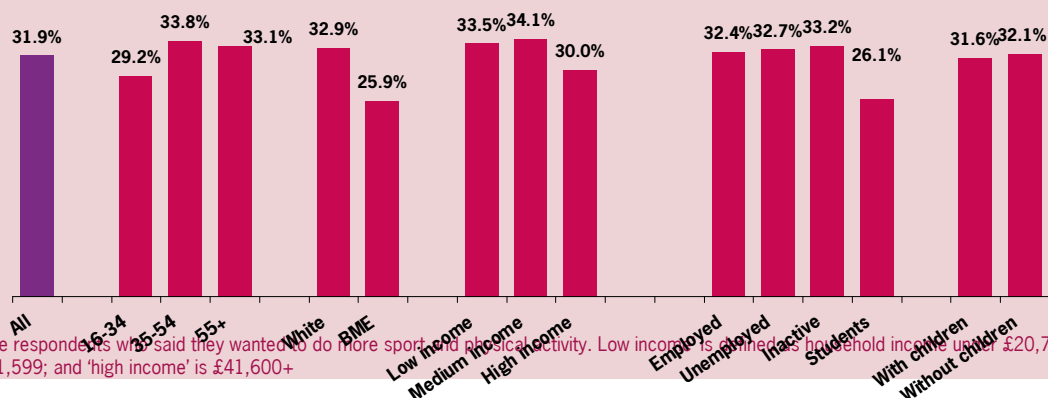
- Just over a fifth of the ASA Board are women. This is the same as the average for all NGBS (21%), and puts the ASA 20th out of the 46 Sport England funded NGBs

Latent demand

- There is more demand for swimming by women than any other sport. And female demand is double that of men (16.1%)

Women's demand for swimming

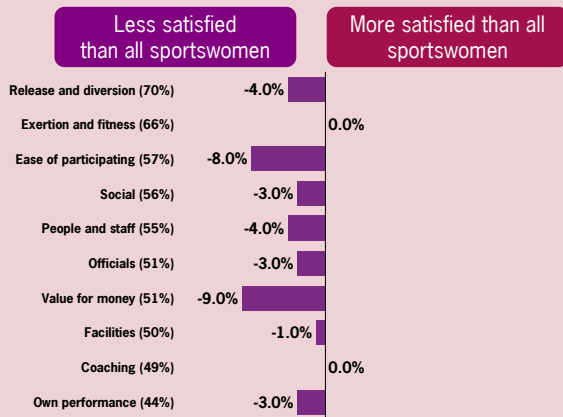
Profile of women who want to do more swimming than they currently do



Base: All female respondents who said they wanted to do more sport and physical activity. Low income is defined as household income less than £20,799; 'medium income' is £20,800-£41,599; and 'high income' is £41,600+

Satisfaction with experience of swimming

Female swimmers satisfaction compared with average for all women who do sport/activity



Source: Sport England's Satisfaction with the quality of the sporting experience survey (2009).
 Base: Female respondents (16+) who rated their satisfaction as 8-10 on a 1 to 10 scale.
 Figures in the brackets are satisfaction percentages for all sportswomen. See Note 7

Satisfaction

- Swimmers rank 31st out of 44 sports for overall satisfaction (79.1%)
- Female swimmers are less happy than average with all aspects of their sport except opportunities for exertion and fitness and coaching. They are particularly dissatisfied with value for money and ease of participation (compared with the average)

To sum up...

Swimming is a popular sport for women but there is still a high demand from women to be able to do more, which the ASA should be able to capitalise on. Unfortunately female swimmers have lower than average satisfaction levels, so there is still room for improving the swimming experience of those women who do swim.

Women also tend to participate in the sport informally, rejecting club membership, competition and opportunities to receive tuition. Formalising their involvement, especially for older women, may result in women sustaining their involvement. It may also address some of the issues which cause dissatisfaction.

While the ASA has more female than male members, it does need to consider the gender balance of its leadership.

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. For some sports, there are no data as sample sizes are too small.
- 2 Club membership is based on those who have been a member of a sports club to participate in swimming in the past four weeks. These figures may not correspond with NGB affiliation figures.
- 3 Organised competition is defined as 'having taken part in any organised competition in swimming in the last 12 months'.
- 4 Received tuition is defined as 'having received tuition from an instructor or coach to improve your performance in swimming in the last 12 months'.
- 5 In 2009 WSFF undertook an audit of all 46 Sport England funded National Governing Bodies (NGBs). NGBs were asked to provide demographic data about board members, affiliated coaches and members. Sports chosen for comparison are the top participation sports for women. Data not available for all NGBs.
- 6 Volunteering is defined as 'volunteering to support sport for at least one hour a week'. Sports chosen for comparison are the top participation sports for women.
- 7 Survey respondents were asked to rate their perceived satisfaction for 75 questions across ten themes. Figures in brackets are aggregate satisfaction percentages of the individual theme questions. Domains ranked in order of satisfaction for all women.

To convert overall percentages to numbers use the following figures:

Survey	Male 16+	Female 16+
APS 1	19,756,900	20,954,000
APS 2	20,170,100	21,266,200

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

WATCH THIS SPACE...

To be updated with sport specific data from Active People Survey 3...

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