

Sport Participation in Canada

2011 – 2012 SPORT MONITOR



Nature of sport participation

According to the 2011-2012 Sport Monitor, sport participation in Canada currently stands at 34% (see Bulletin 1 in this series), whereby sport participation is defined as physical activities that usually involve competition, rules, and the development of specific skills. This bulletin explores the nature of sport participation, including the use of a coach, training, competition, and the primary type of environment and location where Canadians participate.

Coaching

Overall, just over one-third (37%) of those that participate in sport indicate that they use a coach. Certain characteristics are associated with the reported use of a coach, namely:

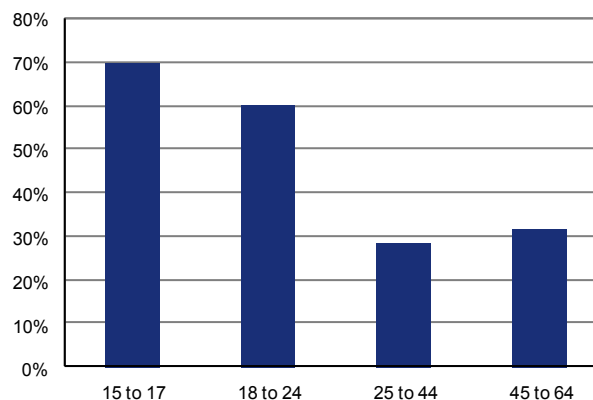
- being female,
- being younger (there is an age-related decline in the proportion who report using a coach),
- having less than a high school education (compared to those with a university education),
- being single or never married.

On the contrary, retirees are less likely than the average to use a coach.

Trends over time

There have been no changes over time in the overall proportion of adults indicating that they use a coach. Although relationships have generally persisted over time, a new relationship with education now exists.

FIGURE 1
Use of a coach by age



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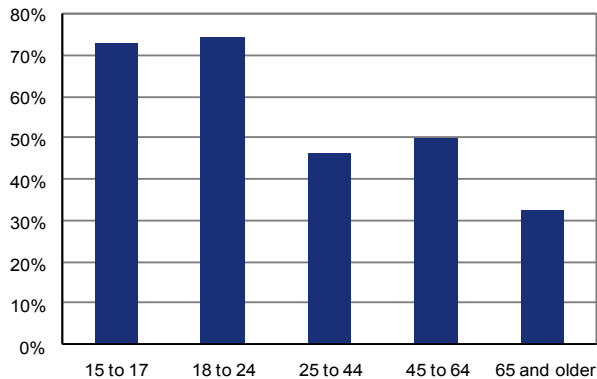
Training

Just over half (53%) of those who participate in sport say that they train for their sport. Among these individuals, certain characteristics are associated with training. More specifically, a greater proportion of sport participants indicate that they train for sport if they are: 15 to 24 years old (compared to older adults, aged 65 and older); single or never married (compared to those who are married/living with a partner); and active. On the contrary, relatively fewer retirees train for sport compared to the national average.

Trends over time

There have been no changes in the overall proportion of adults who train for their sport since 2006-2007.¹ Generally speaking, the relationships that appear in 2011-2012 have persisted over time, with the exception of a new association with marital status. In addition, regional differences that existed in 2006-2007 are no longer significant.¹

FIGURE 2
Training for sport by age



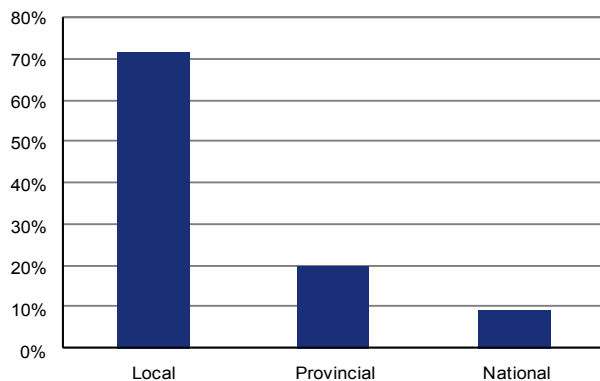
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Competition

Sport participants choose to participate in various levels of involvement, from informal play to higher levels of competition. Over half (58%) of those who participate in sport compete, and among them, the majority do so at a local level (72%), 20% at a provincial or territorial level, and the remaining 9% at a national level. Compared to the national average, those residing in Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories are more likely, whereas those in Quebec are less likely, to compete in their sport.

Young Canadians (15 to 17 year olds) are more likely to compete in sport compared to those who are 25 years and older. On the contrary, 18 to 24 year olds are less likely than their older counterparts to say that they compete at a local level. Compared to those who are married or living with a partner, a greater proportion of those who are single or never married indicate that they compete, yet are less likely to say that they compete at a local level.

FIGURE 3
Level of competition, overall

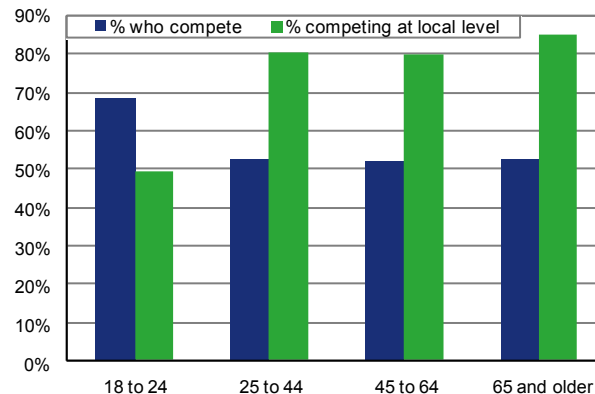


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Trends over time

The proportion of adults who compete for sport, and the levels at which they compete, have remained constant since 2006-2007.¹ Moreover, the relationships which appear in 2011-2012 have generally persisted over time.

FIGURE 4
Percentage competing and level of competition by age



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Structured or unstructured environment

Among those that participate in sport, almost half (48%) say that they primarily participate in a structured or organized environment (such as at a sport facility or club), 20% participate in a primarily unstructured or casual environment (such as pick-up games), and 32% participate in both types of environments. There are no regional differences regarding the types of environments where Canadians participate.

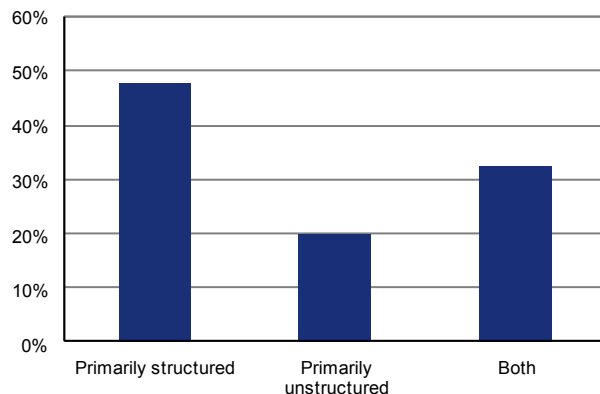
Although there are no significant gender differences, a greater proportion of 18 to 24 year olds say that they participate in *both* structured and unstructured environments compared to their older counterparts. Those with less than a high school education are more likely than those with a university education to participate primarily in a structured environment.

Trends over time

Over time, there have been no overall differences in the proportion of adults indicating the different types of environments in which they participate in sport. Previous relationships with region, gender, or activity level are no longer significant. New relationships with education now exist, whereas they were not significant in 2006-2007.¹

FIGURE 5

Type of sport environment, overall



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Key location for sport

Community – Among sport participants, the majority (82%) participate in the community. Compared to the national average, relatively more residents living in the Northwest Territories, Yukon, and Saskatchewan participate in sports in the community, whereas relatively fewer residents of Quebec do so. There are no other socio-economic or -demographic differences related to sport participation in the community.

School - Among those who participate in sport, roughly one in five (21%) do so at school. As one would expect, the majority of 15 to 17 years olds participate in sport at school (69%) and this proportion decreases substantially with age (i.e., 49% among 18 to 24 year olds and 11% among 25 to 44 year olds). A greater proportion of individuals with less than a high school education participate at school compared to those with a post-secondary education, and a greater proportion of those who are single or never married participate at school compared to those who are married or live with a partner. These findings may be due, in part, to age.

Home – Roughly two in five Canadians (43%) who participate in sport cite home as a venue for sport. A greater proportion of younger adults (18 to 24 years) cite home as a venue compared to their older counterparts. Compared to the average, relatively fewer retirees cite home as a key location for sport. A greater proportion of single or never married adults participate at home compared to those who are married or living with a partner. Those who are active are more likely to participate at home compared to those who are less active.

Work – Among those who participate in sport, 17% indicate that they participate at work. There are no significant differences, however, with respect to gender, age, region, education, income, community size, or activity level.

Trends over time

The proportions and relationships that are described above with respect to key locations for activity have persisted over time. As exceptions to this, three new relationships have emerged in 2011-2012: activity level is now associated with participation in sport at home; Saskatchewan residents are now more likely than the average to participate in sport in the community; and, the previous relationship between age and participation in sport in the community is no longer significant.¹

Reference

- 1 Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute. Bulletin 1: Sport Participation in Canada. 2006-07 Sport Monitor. Available at http://cflri.ca/media/node/351/files/2006_07_sport_b1.pdf.

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