

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS IN WALES



PRE COVID-19

NATIONAL SURVEY FOR WALES 2019-20: SPORT AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

This report covers the twelve-month period prior to April 2020. As such it represents the state of the nation immediately prior to the Coronavirus outbreak (and the subsequent social distancing and lockdown measures).



59%

of adults had participated in some form of sporting activity in the last 4 weeks.

This rate remains unchanged when compared with the results from the previous years between 2016-19.

Adults in Wales are most likely to take part in activities such as



49%

of all adults would like to do more sport or physical activity.

This demand to do more sport has steadily declined from 58% in 2016-17. The equivalent measure was 50% in 2018-19, 55% in 2017-18, and 58% in 2016-17. This indicates that there has been a short-term decline in demand to do more sport.

Adults who already participate in sport are most likely to want to do more sporting activities.



SCHOOL SPORT SURVEY 2018: STATE OF THE NATION

48%



of pupils in Years 3-11 participate in extracurricular or community sport three or more times per week.

The percentage of pupils per school who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) is used as a proxy measure of the socio-economic status of school children in Wales. Schools in the survey are placed into a FSM quartile; free FSM quartile 1 has a low percentage of pupils who are eligible for a FSM and are considered to be the least deprived, and FSM quartile 4 has a high percentage of pupils who are eligible, and so are considered the most deprived.

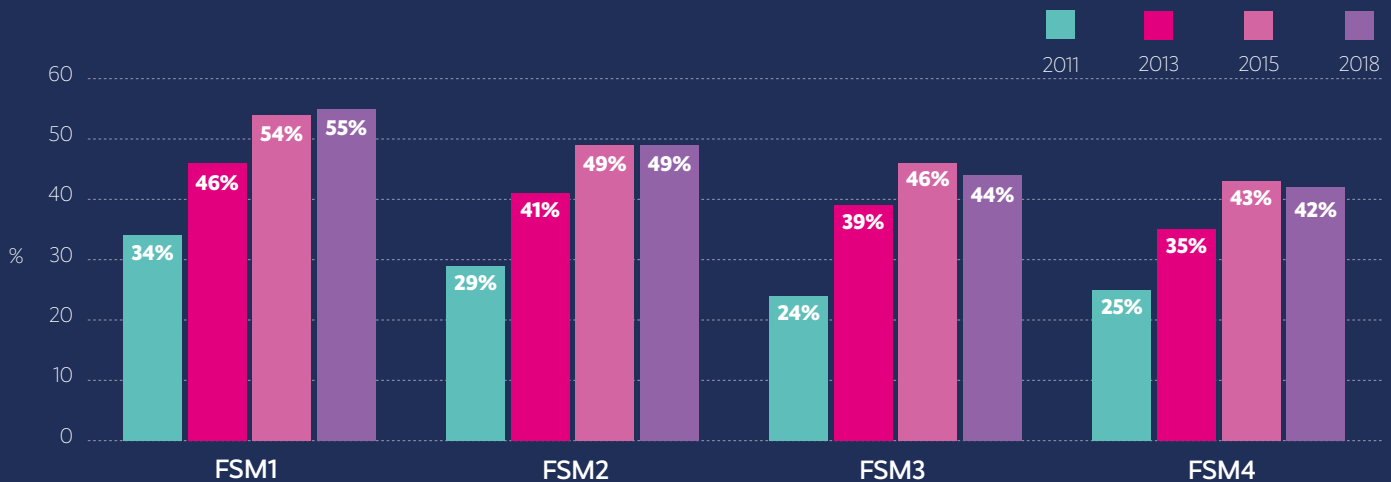


Figure 6. Percentage of pupils who participate in extracurricular or community sport at least three times a week according to FSM quartile

The disparity in participation between FSM1 and FSM4 in 2015 was 11%. The disparity in participation between these same two quartiles in 2018 is 13%.



COMRES – WELSH SPORT ACTIVITY LEVELS DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

The surveys, run at different points of the pandemic, provide a snapshot of how different restrictions impacted on physical activity and sport, as well as the attitude of people in Wales towards exercise during and after lockdown.

Overall, children and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds tended to take part in less sport and physical activity during lockdown than they had done previously.

In May 2020, 14% of adults from lower socio-economic backgrounds reported that their **children are doing no physical activity or exercise** on a typical day at the moment, notably 5% higher than average at this time. Moreover, these children reported a decrease in physical activity levels since the COVID-19 restrictions were introduced, with 36% of **children doing less physical activity than before** whilst 23% reported doing more, a difference of 13%. In comparison, those children from higher economic backgrounds appeared to be experiencing lower reductions as 28% reported doing more physical activity than before and 35% reported doing less, a difference of 7%.

In October 2020, adults were also more likely to say their child/children are doing **less activity on a typical weekend day** than before restrictions were introduced. Similarly, 29% of young adults aged 16-34 from lower socio-economic backgrounds were more likely to report doing less sport than before the COVID-19 restrictions were introduced, compared to 25% from higher socio-economic backgrounds. This disparity is also reflected in the percentage of young people aged 16-34 participating in more sport during this time, as 25% of those from lower socio-economic backgrounds reported doing more compared to 42% of those from higher socioeconomic backgrounds.

The survey reported **physical activity levels had declined since October**, however, in March 2021, adults tended to report that their children were doing more activity outside of schools than they were before the pandemic. The exception is amongst those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds whose children **now tend to be doing less**.

The August 2021 release provided a more in-depth analysis of physical activity levels amongst adults from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Although the following data does not reflect children and young people, the above trends have been reflected in the adult data and therefore, does provide some context for this point in time – showing significant disparities by socio-economic group.

Disparities by socio-economic group were shown across the following aspects:

ABC1 C2DE

