



Sport and physical activity in New South Wales





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Introduction

Participation in sport and physical activity delivers benefits beyond improvements in physical and mental health, with evidence that communities as a whole are strengthened. Healthy, harmonious communities have strong social connections and links, and exhibit a high level of inclusion, cooperation and participation across all community groups.

This publication provides an overview of key facts and research into sport and physical activity in NSW, outlining the current levels of participation, as well as motivators and constraints for participants. This overview also demonstrates the importance of volunteers in the delivery of sport and physical activity, and highlights the contribution that the sport and physical activity industry makes to the NSW economy.

Overall adult participation in sport and physical activity

Overall adult participation is defined as both organised and non-organised sport and physical activity by persons aged 15 years and over. In 2007, there were 4,176,600 adults in NSW who participated in a sport or physical activity – a participation rate of 77.9 per cent of the adult population.

This comprised 2,091,100 males and 2,085,500 females – participation rates were slightly higher for males (79.5 per cent) than females (76.3 per cent). The participation rate for adults declines with age. The NSW rate of 77.9 per cent was slightly lower than the national average of 79.4 per cent.

Overall participation in NSW by age – 2007

Age group	Males	Females	Total
15 to 24 years	89.2%	74.3%	81.8%
25 to 34 years	84.2%	81.9%	83%
35 to 44 years	85.1%	79.6%	82.3%
45 to 54 years	72.6%	77.6%	75.2%
55 to 64 years	73.6%	78%	75.8%
65 years and over	69.5%	66.2%	67.7%
Total	79.5%	76.3%	77.9%

Since 2001, overall participation has remained stable. There was a slight increase in the female participation rate and a slight decrease in the male participation rate for the same period.

Ten most popular sports and physical activities for adults in NSW – 2007

	Overall		Males		Females	
	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%
Walking (other than bushwalking)	1	32%	1	24%	1	39%
Aerobics/fitness	2	20%	2	16%	2	24%
Swimming	3	14%	3	14%	3	14%
Cycling	4	8%	4	12%	6	5%
Running	5	7%	5	10%	7	5%
Tennis	6	7%	8	8%	5	6%
Bushwalking	7	6%	9	5%	4	7%
Soccer (outdoor)	8	6%	6	9%	–	3%
Golf	9	6%	7	9%	10	3%
Touch football	10	4%	10	5%	–	2%
Yoga	–	3%	–	1%*	8	5%
Netball	–	2%	–	0%*	9	5%

* relative standard error > 25%

Frequency of overall adult participation

Although 77.9 per cent of adults in NSW participated in a sport or physical activity at least once in 2007, the weekly participation rates show a different picture.

Less than half of adults in NSW (42.5 per cent) participated in a sport or physical activity three or more times per week – the recommended amount to achieve health-enhancing benefits. Of these, 18.9 per cent of adults participated three or four times a week and 23.6 per cent participated five or more times a week.

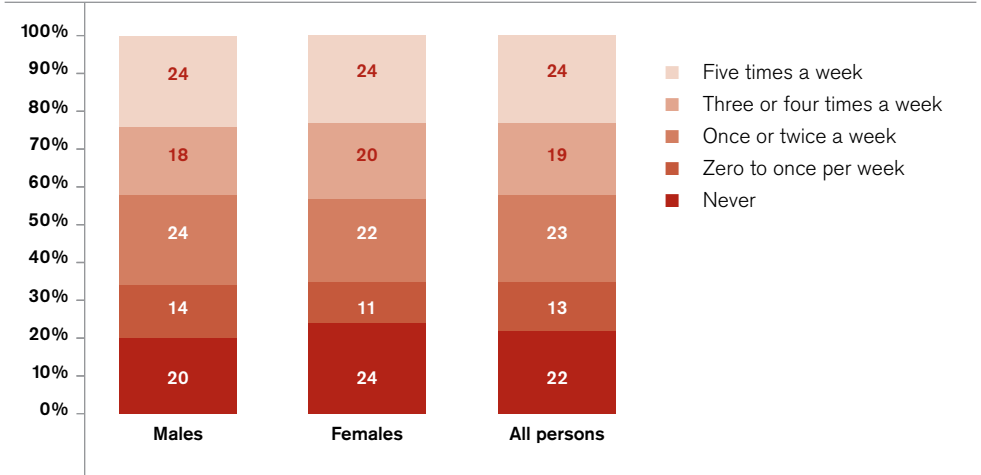
More females (43.5 per cent) than males (41.5 per cent) participated in sport or physical activity three or more times a week.

The NSW rate of 42.5 per cent was slightly lower than the national average of 43.5 per cent.



National data showed that people aged 55 to 64 years had the highest rate (30 per cent) of participation in a sport or physical activity five or more times a week. Walking was the most popular sport or physical activity participated in five times a week or more by this age group.

Frequency of adult overall participation in NSW – 2007





Adult participation in organised sport and physical activity

Organised sport and physical activity is coordinated by a club, association or organisation. In 2007, there were 1,981,600 adults in NSW who participated in an organised sport or physical activity – a participation rate of 36.9 per cent. This included 1,047,000 males and 934,600 females, with males having a higher participation rate (39.8 per cent) than females (34.2 per cent).

The participation rate in organised sport and physical activity for adults declines with age. The highest rate of participation was amongst 15 to 24 year-olds (56.5 per cent), while the lowest was amongst people aged 65 years and over (25.9 per cent).

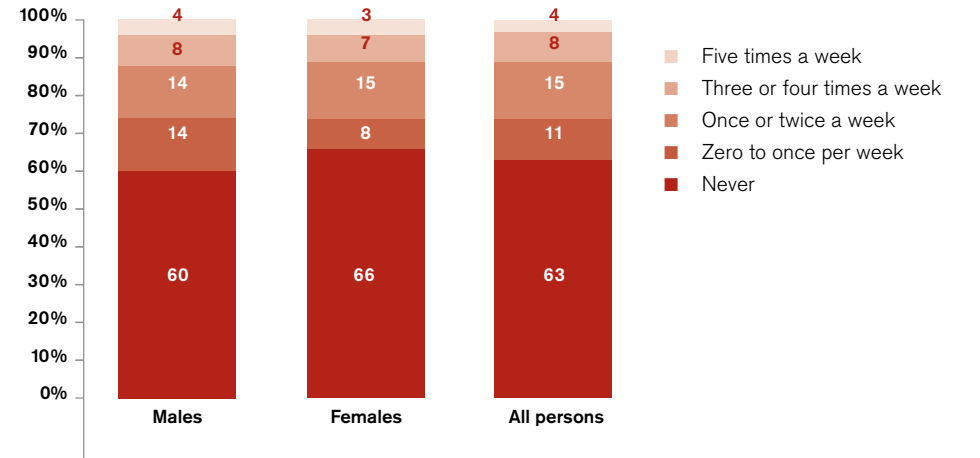
The NSW rate of 36.9 per cent was slightly lower than the national average of 38 per cent.

NSW participation rates in organised sport and physical activity by age – 2007

Age group	Males	Females	Total
15 to 24 years	65.9%	46.9%	56.5%
25 to 34 years	48.4%	38.2%	43.3%
35 to 44 years	40%	32.6%	36.2%
45 to 54 years	26%	30.7%	28.4%
55 to 64 years	27.6%	31.7%	29.7%
65 years and over	26.7%	25.2%	25.9%
Total	39.8%	34.2%	36.9%

Frequency of adult participation in organised sport and physical activity

NSW weekly participation in organised sport and physical activity – 2007



The frequency pattern is different for organised participation compared to overall (i.e. both organised and non-organised) participation.

While 36.9 per cent of adults in NSW participated in organised sport in 2007, only 11.1 per cent did so three or more times a week. Of these, 7.6 per cent of adults participated three or four times a week and a further 3.5 per cent participated five or more times a week.

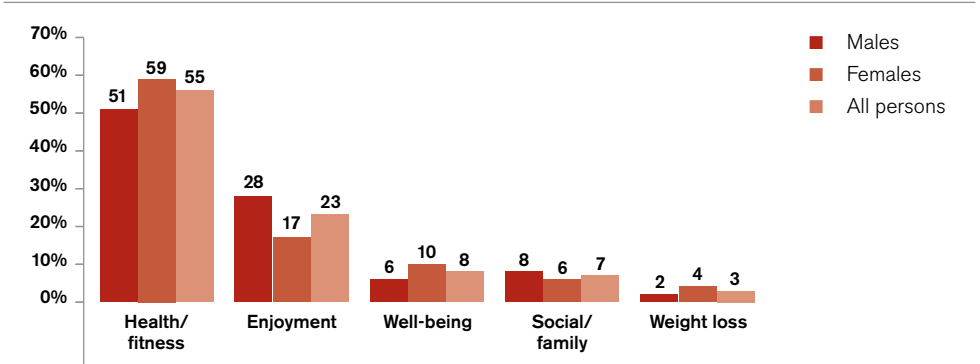
Compared to overall participation, where females were more likely to participate more frequently than males, more males (11.5 per cent) participated in organised sport three or more times a week than females (10.6 per cent).



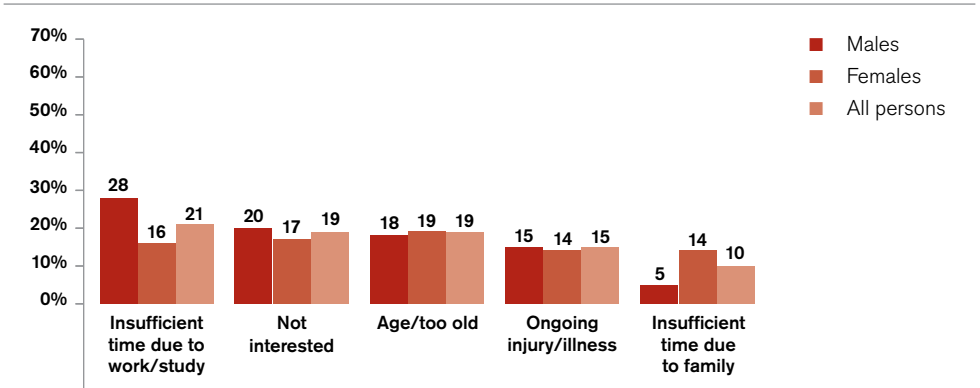
Motivators and constraints to adult participation

The main motivator for participation in sport and physical activity was health and fitness, with over half of both male and female respondents citing this factor. The next most commonly reported motivator was enjoyment. The main constraints to participation in sport and physical recreation were insufficient time due to work/study, not interested and age/too old.

Motivators for participation by adults in NSW – 2005-06



Constraints to participation by adults in NSW – 2005-06



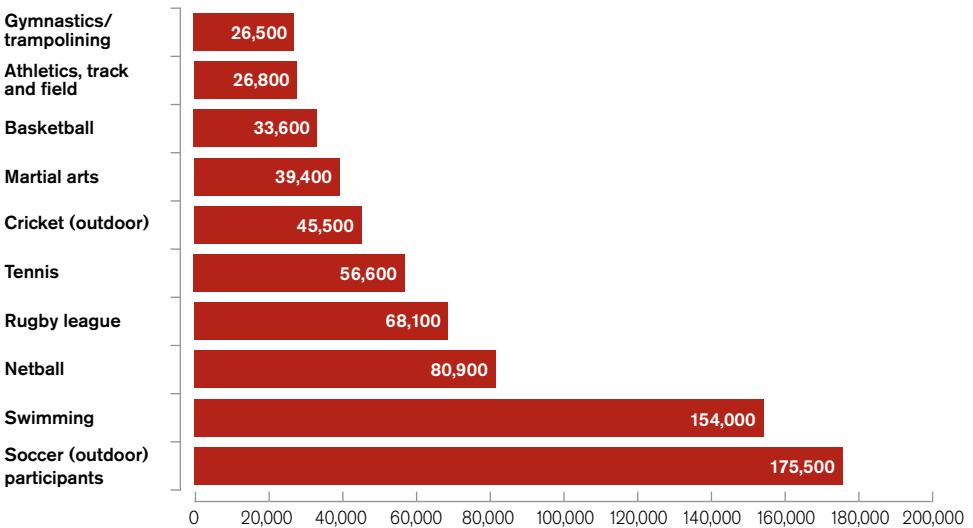
Children's participation in organised sport

In 2006, 572,900 children aged between 5 and 14 years participated in organised sport in NSW. There were 321,900 boys (70.8 per cent) and 251,000 girls (58.2 per cent). This represented 64.7 per cent of all children in NSW in this age group, and a 4 per cent increase from the last survey in 2003.

The NSW rate of 64.7 per cent was higher than the national average of 63.5 per cent.

The two most popular sports and physical activities for children in NSW were soccer (outdoor) and swimming. Netball, rugby league and tennis were ranked next followed by cricket (outdoor), martial arts and basketball.

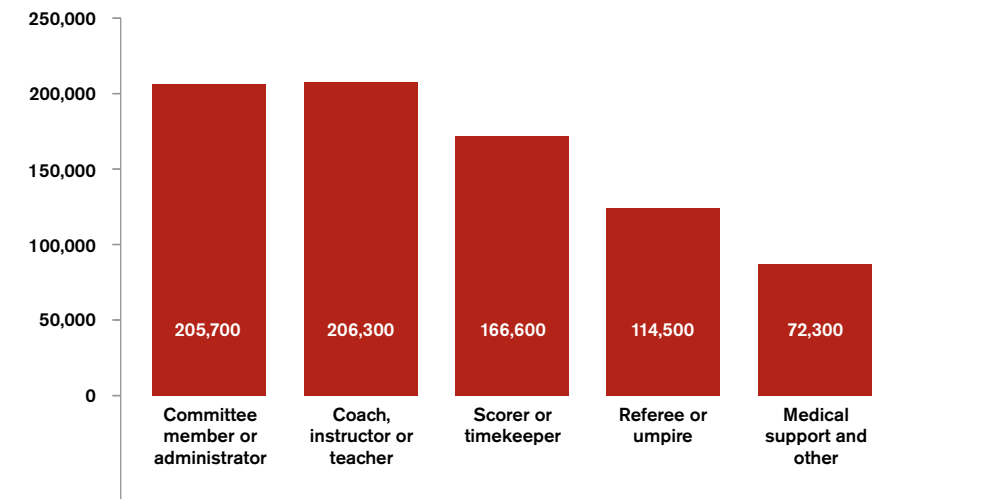
Children's participation by type of organised sport – 2006



Administering and organising sport and physical activity

One in 12 adults in NSW (465,100 people) was involved in a support role such as a coach, referee or committee member in organised sport in 2007.

Type of support role – 2007



There was a slight rise in the proportion of the population involved in such roles from 8 per cent in 2001 to 8.6 per cent in 2007. Many of those involved in a support role (40 per cent) reported involvement in more than one role.

Most of the people involved in organising and running sport and physical activity volunteered their time. Of the 765,400 support roles undertaken in 2007, 89 per cent of these roles did not attract any kind of payment (either in wages or goods and services in-kind).

A photograph of a male coach in a yellow t-shirt and blue cap kneeling on a grassy field, talking to three young cheerleaders. The cheerleaders are wearing white and blue uniforms with dark skirts. The background is a clear blue sky.

Coach

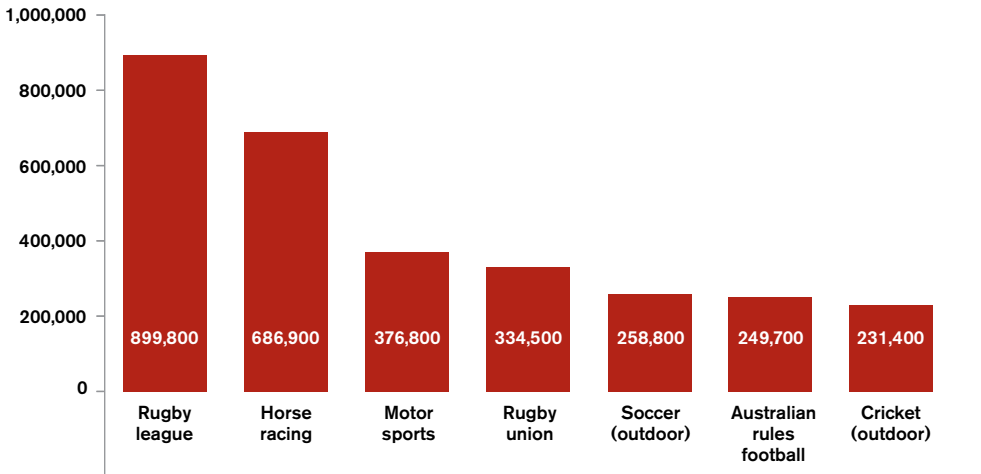
Attendance at sporting events

Over 2 million (2,259,400) adults attended a sporting event in 2005-06 in NSW. This represented 42.1 per cent of adults in NSW, a slight decrease from 2002 when 43.7 per cent of the population attended an event.

More males (1,310,000) than females (949,300) attended at least one sporting event – this was 50 per cent of all men aged 15 and over and 35 per cent of women.

The attendance rate for NSW of 42.1 per cent was just below the Australian average of 44.3 per cent.

Attendance at events by sport – 2005-06



Over the last 10 years, attendance rates for Australian rules, motor sports and rugby union have shown large increases whereas rates for rugby league, horse racing and soccer have remained stable.



The NSW sport industry

During 2004-05, 2,550 for-profit and not-for-profit businesses or organisations were engaged in sports and physical recreation services in NSW – representing nearly a third of these types of businesses in Australia. These businesses employed 34,041 people and generated income of \$2.4 billion in NSW.

The main income earners were:

- Sports and physical recreation clubs, teams and sports professionals (\$512 million or 21 per cent of total income)
- Sports and physical recreation administrative organisations (\$462 million or 19 per cent of total income) and
- Horse and dog racing businesses/organisations (\$429 million or 18 per cent of total income).

Household expenditure on sport and recreation

The average weekly household expenditure on sport and physical recreation products in NSW during 2003-04 was \$15.21, representing 1.6 per cent of the average household product expenditure.

With 2.5 million households in NSW, the total annual expenditure on selected sport and physical recreation products in NSW was nearly \$2 billion.

Almost half of all sport and physical recreation expenditure was for sport, physical recreation and camping equipment (\$7.42 per week). A further 44 per cent (\$6.68 per week) was spent on sport and physical recreation services, while the remaining 7 per cent (\$1.11 per week) was spent on sport and recreation vehicles.

The categories of sports and physical recreation products with the highest expenditure were swimming pools (\$3.42), sport facility hire charges (\$2.31) and other sport and physical recreation equipment (\$2.17).

Average weekly expenditure on sport footwear was \$1.20 per household, sport lessons were \$1.17, sporting club subscriptions were \$0.68 and health/fitness studio charges were \$0.96.

About the data

Information contained in this publication has been drawn from the following sources:

- Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey 2007, Australian Sports Commission
- Sports and Physical Recreation Services Survey, 2004-05 (ABS Cat. No. 8686.0)
- Sports Attendance, 2005-06 (ABS Cat. No. 4174.0)
- Involvement in Organised Sport and Physical Activities, 2007 (ABS Cat. No. 6285.0)
- Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, 2006 (ABS Cat. No. 4901.0)
- Participation in Sports and Physical Recreation, 2005-06 (ABS Cat. No. 4177.0)

For further information concerning sport and physical activity in NSW, contact NSW Sport and Recreation on 13 13 02 or visit www.dsr.nsw.gov.au