



**SPORT
NEW ZEALAND**
IHI AOTEAROA

Active NZ

**Updating the participation
landscape**

The New Zealand Participation Survey 2021

June 2022

Acknowledgements

Sport New Zealand's Active NZ survey measures nationwide participation in play, active recreation, and sport. This is the fifth year of data collection. Data was collected continuously over 12 months in each of the years 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021. In 2020, data collection was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This report explores the participation landscape in the play, active recreation and sport sector for New Zealanders aged 5-plus and updates the main participation statistics for 2021.

Special thanks go to all those who have provided feedback to guide the development of this report and the thousands of New Zealanders who took part in the Active NZ survey.

Authors

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Active NZ resources are available at sportnz.org.nz/ActiveNZ

Contact: activenz@sportnz.org.nz

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Glossary

Adult	Respondents aged 18-plus.
Being active	Refers to being physically active in play, active recreation and sport.
Deprivation	Low deprivation 1–3, medium deprivation 4–7, high deprivation 8–10, based on the NZDep index of socioeconomic deprivation. A value of 10 indicates the most deprived 10 percent of areas in New Zealand. Note: NZDep estimates the relative socioeconomic deprivation of an area and does not directly relate to individuals.
Disabled people	The Washington Group on Disability Statistics short set of questions has been used to identify disabled people. ¹ In the Active NZ survey, disabled people are people who self-report at least some difficulty across one or more of six domains of disability. Non-disabled people are people who self-report no difficulty in any of the six domains.
Ethnicity	Results by ethnicity throughout this report – European, Māori, Pacific (including Samoan) and Asian (including Indian and Chinese) – are based on respondents' self-identification.
Informal participation	Applies to children and young people only. Informal sports and activities include being physically active through play with others, playing alone, extra training activities or practising without a coach or instructor.
Non-participants	People who have not been physically active in play, exercise, active recreation or sport in the past seven days.
Organised participation	Applies to children and young people only. Participation in a competition or tournament is one component of organised participation. Other organised sports and activities include being physically active in physical education or class at school, sport and activities undertaken in a competition and training or practising with a coach or instructor.
Participants	People who have been physically active in play, active recreation (including exercise) or sport in the past seven days, where this participation excludes any physical activity undertaken for work or chores. Participation can include physical activity undertaken to get from one place to another if the respondent considers it to be for sport or active recreation.
Participation in competitive and non-competitive sports or activities	Participating through an organised structure, for example, in a league or club competition, tournament or competitive event. Non-competitive participation refers to sports or activities undertaken outside of a league or club competition, tournament or competitive event.
Play, active recreation and sport	Play, active recreation and sport are used throughout this report for simplicity. However, participation is multi-faceted. Play and active recreation are terms used by Sport New Zealand to capture participation in activities not considered to be sport, for example, playing with friends or alone, dance and tramping. Sport can be undertaken in an organised structure, for example, in a competition or tournament, or informally outside an organised structure. Sport is associated with being competitive, but individuals differ in their degree of competitiveness, irrespective of how they participate.

¹ The Washington Group on Disability Statistics is a United Nations city group with a mandate to promote and coordinate international cooperation in the area of health statistics focusing on disability data collection tools suitable for censuses and national surveys. See www.washingtongroup-disability.com for further information.

Respondents	People who took part in the survey.
Weekly participation	Refers to being physically active in play, exercise, active recreation, or sport at least once in the past seven days.
Young people	Respondents between ages 5–17.

Executive summary

Introduction

This report focuses on participation in play, active recreation and sport among young people and adults in 2021. Drawn from the Active NZ survey, it uses data collected during 2021 from 4824 young people and 23 239 adults.

Selected results are explored through the lenses of age, gender, ethnicity, deprivation and disability.

During 2021, disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic meant the participation landscape differed from earlier years of the Active NZ survey. Results must be considered in this context. This report should be read alongside the *Active NZ Changes in Participation* report.²

Key findings

By age

1. Weekly participation, time spent, and average number of sports and activities participated in peak between ages 12 and 14 and then drop steeply between ages 15 and 17. The proportion meeting the physical activity guidelines drops sharply among young people between ages 15 and 17.³
2. Weekly participation peaks during adult years between ages 35 and 49 and is lowest among adults aged 75-plus.
3. Time spent participating peaks in adult years between ages 50 and 74 and is lowest between ages 25 and 34 and from age 75-plus. The proportion meeting the physical activity guidelines drops sharply among adults aged 75-plus and is also lower among adults between ages 25 and 34.
4. Most young people and adults want to increase their participation. This is most evident between ages 12 and 17 for young people and between ages 18 and 49 for adults.
5. The average number of barriers to increasing participation increases with age among young people, peaking at 3.5 barriers between ages 15 and 17. Among adults, the average number of barriers decreases with age, peaking at 4.3 barriers between ages 18 and 24.

By gender

6. The only difference in weekly participation for young people and adults occurs between ages 5 and 7, where males are less likely to participate than females.
7. An overall pattern is evident of males spending longer being active than females within each age band, except between ages 5 and 11 and from age 65-plus.
8. Between ages 15 and 17 and 35 and 49, males are more likely than females to meet the physical activity guidelines.
9. Between ages 15 and 17, more females than males want to increase their participation.
10. Young and adult females have more barriers to increasing participation than their male counterparts.

² Sport New Zealand. *Active NZ Changes in Participation: The New Zealand Participation Survey 2021*. Wellington: Sport New Zealand, 2022.

³ Meeting the physical activity guidelines is based on the 7-plus hours per week recommendation for young people and the 2.5 hours per week recommendation for adults. Ministry of Health. Physical Activity. How much activity is recommended? 22 November 2021. Retrieved from www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-activity-and-sleep/physical-activity/how-much-activity-recommended (16 May 2022).

By ethnicity

11. Weekly participation, time spent and proportion meeting the physical activity guidelines is lower among young and adult Pacific.
12. Weekly participation, time spent and the proportion meeting the physical activity guidelines is also lower among young and adult Asian.
13. For young and adult Māori, weekly participation, time spent and proportion the meeting physical activity guidelines is the same as for all young people and adults.
14. Young and adult Asian and Pacific young people and adults are more likely to want to increase their participation than all young people and adults.
15. Pacific and Māori adults identify more barriers to participation, compared with all adults.

By deprivation

16. Young people from high deprivation areas have lower levels of weekly participation, are less likely to meet the physical activity guidelines and have a greater appetite to increase their participation.
17. All four indicators of weekly participation, time spent, average number of activities and meeting the physical activity guidelines are lower among adults from high deprivation areas and higher among adults from low deprivation areas. Adults from high deprivation areas have more barriers to participation than other adults.

By disability

18. Young and adult disabled have lower levels of participation than their non-disabled counterparts across all four key indicators (weekly participation, time spent, average number of sports and activities and meeting the physical activity guidelines)
19. Disabled young people and adults have more barriers to participation than non-disabled.

In conclusion

Results continue to highlight inequities in play, active recreation and sport by age, gender, ethnicity, deprivation, and disability.

Participation landscape: 2021

This section updates selected participation results by age, gender, ethnicity, deprivation and disability.

Insights

By age

1. Weekly participation, time spent, and average number of sports and activities participated in peak between ages 12 and 14 and then drop steeply between ages 15 and 17. The proportion meeting the physical activity guidelines drops sharply among young people between ages 15 and 17.⁴
2. Between ages 18 and 24, a new baseline is set in weekly participation. Weekly participation peaks during adult years between ages 35 and 49 and is lowest among adults aged 75-plus.
3. Time spent participating peaks in adult years between ages 50 and 74 and is lowest between ages 25 and 34 and from age 75-plus. The proportion meeting the physical activity guidelines drops sharply among adults aged 75-plus and is also lower among adults between ages 25 and 34.
4. Most young people and adults want to increase their participation. This is most evident between ages 12 and 17 for young people and ages 18 and 49 for adults.
5. The average number of barriers to increasing participation increases with age among young people, peaking at 3.5 barriers between ages 15 and 17. Among adults, the average number of barriers decreases with age, peaking at 4.3 barriers between ages 18 and 24.

By gender

1. The only difference in weekly participation, across both the young people and adult populations, occurs between ages 5 and 7, where males are less likely to participate than females.
2. An overall pattern is evident of males spending longer being active than females within each age band, except between ages 5 and 11 and from age 65-plus.
3. Between ages 15 and 17 and 35 and 49, males are more likely than females to meet the physical activity guidelines.
4. Between ages 15 and 17, more females than males want to increase their participation.
5. Young and adult females identify a higher average number of barriers to increasing participation than their male counterparts.

By ethnicity

1. Weekly participation, time spent and proportion meeting the physical activity guidelines is lower among Pacific young people and Pacific adults.
2. Weekly participation, time spent and proportion meeting the physical activity guidelines is also lower among Asian young people and Asian adults.
3. Māori participation, time spent and proportion meeting the physical activity guidelines is not significantly different from the total among young people and adults.

⁴ Meeting the physical activity guidelines is based on the 7-plus hours per week recommendation for young people and the 2.5 hours per week recommendation for adults. Ministry of Health. Physical Activity. How much activity is recommended? 22 November 2021. Retrieved from www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-activity-and-sleep/physical-activity/how-much-activity-recommended (16 May 2022).

4. Higher proportions of Asian and Pacific young people and adults want to increase their participation.
5. Pacific and Māori adults identify more barriers to participation, compared with all adults

By deprivation

1. Young people living in high deprivation areas have lower levels of weekly participation and of meeting the physical activity guidelines when compared with young people living in other areas. They also have a higher appetite to increase their participation.
2. All four indicators of weekly participation, time spent, average number of activities and meeting the physical activity guidelines are lower among adults from high deprivation areas and higher among adults from low deprivation areas. Adults from high deprivation areas identify more barriers to participation than other adults.

By disability

1. Disabled young people and disabled adults have lower levels of participation than their non-disabled counterparts across all four key indicators.
2. Disabled young people and disabled adults also identify more barriers to participation, on average, than non-disabled.

Ninety-one percent of young people and 73 percent of adults participate weekly.

In comparison with adults, young people spend more than twice as long being active and participate in more than twice as many activities.

Similar proportions of young people (59 percent) and adults (61 percent) meet the respective physical activity guidelines set for these populations (table 1).

Table 1: Key participation indicators

	Young people	Adults
Weekly participation	91%	73%
Average number of hours being active	11.5	5.4
Average number of sports and activities	5.0	2.3
Meeting the physical activity guidelines (7+ hrs any intensity for young people and 2.5+ hrs any intensity for adults)	59%	61%

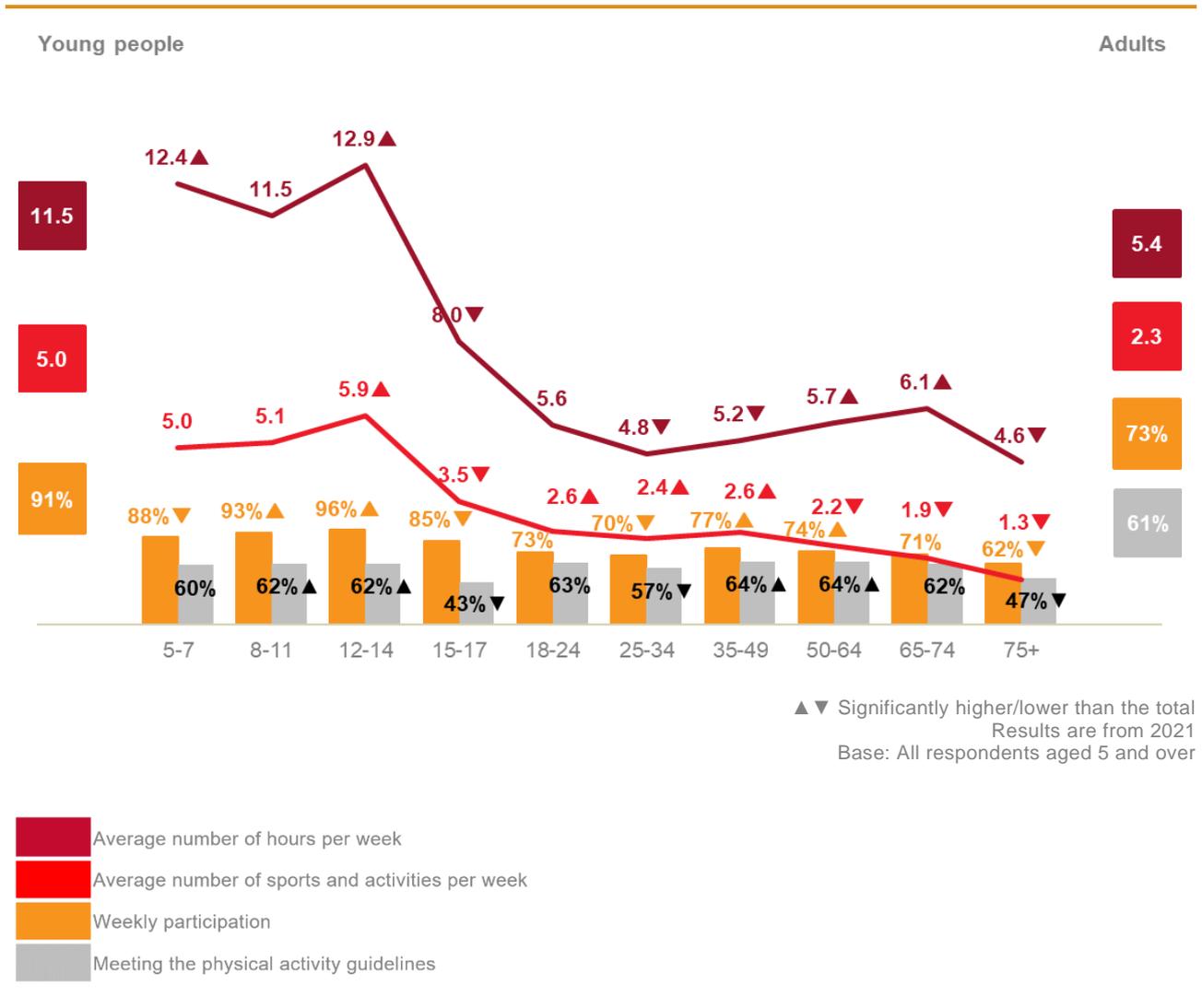
Weekly participation, time spent, and average number of sports and activities participated in peak between ages 12 and 14 and then drop steeply between ages 15 and 17.

Weekly participation peaks during adult years between ages 35 and 49 and is lowest among adults aged 75-plus.

Time spent participating peaks in adult years between ages 50 and 74 and is lowest between ages 25 to 34 and from age 75-plus.

Meeting the physical activity guidelines drops sharply among young people between ages 15 and 17 and among adults aged 75-plus.⁵ The proportion meeting the guidelines is also lower among adults between ages 25 and 34 (figure 1).

Figure 1: Participation by age



⁵ Meeting the physical activity guidelines is based on the 7-plus hours per week recommendation for young people and the 2.5 hours per week recommendation for adults.

Figure 2: Participation by age and gender

The only difference in weekly participation is between ages 5 and 7, where males are less likely to participate than females.

Adult males spend 48 minutes more than adult females being physically active. The difference of 36 minutes in time spent between male and female young people is not significant.

The overall pattern for time spent being physically active shows males being active for longer than females within each age band, except between ages 5 and 11 and from age 65-plus. Significant differences in time spent occur between ages 25 and 49. Among young people, the largest gap occurs between ages 15 and 17.⁶

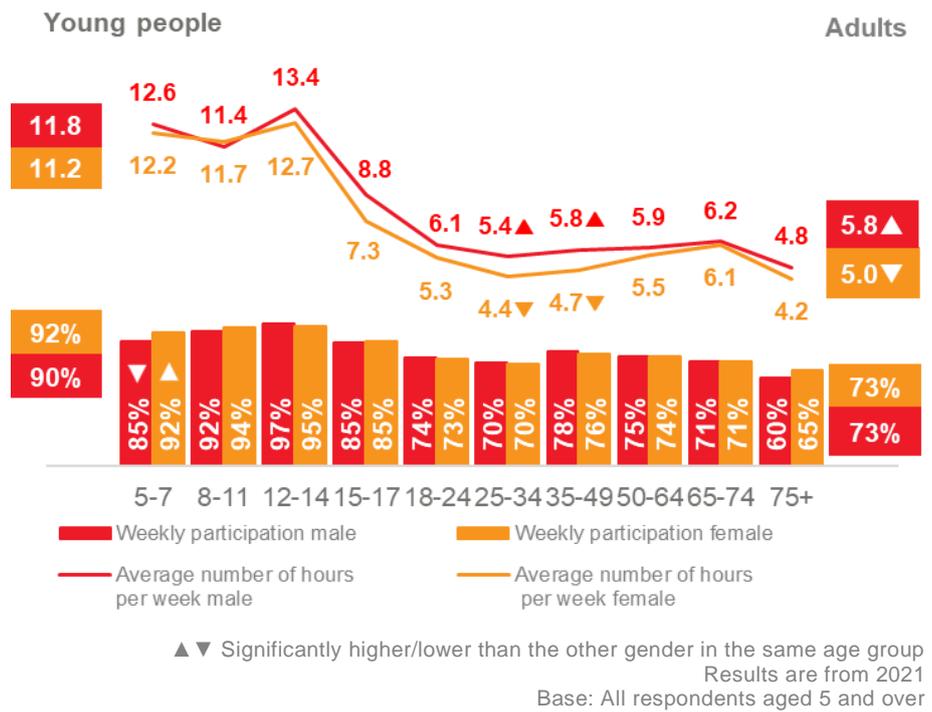
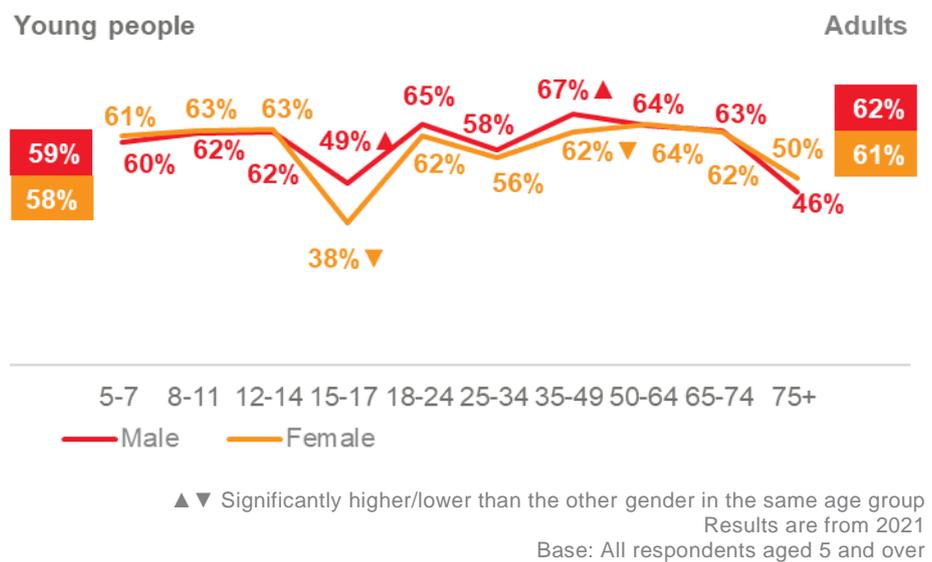


Figure 3: Meeting physical activity guidelines by age and gender

A gender gap is apparent among young people between ages 15 and 17 and adults between ages 35 and 49, where males are more likely than females to meet the physical activity guidelines.

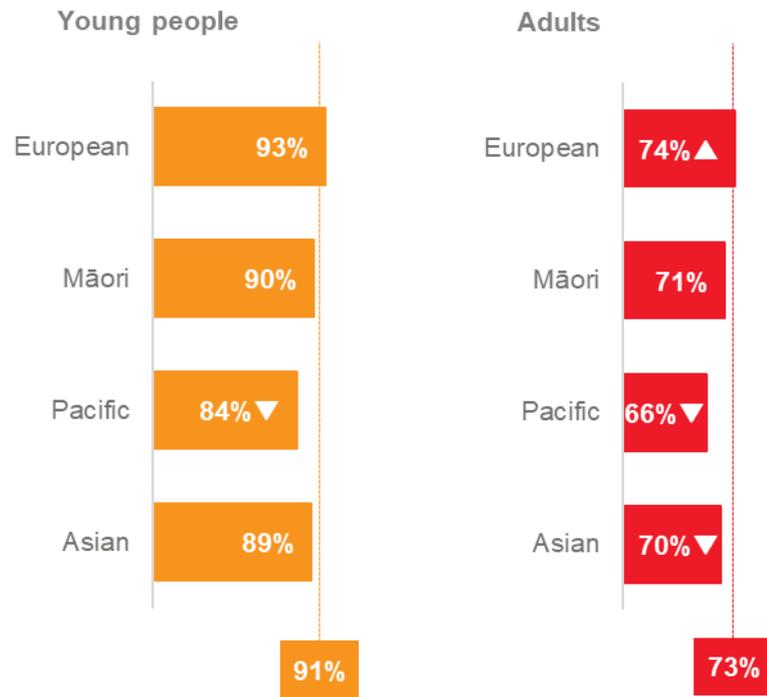


⁶ This difference is not statistically significant but supports other indications of a gender gap between ages 15 and 17.

Figure 4: Weekly participation by ethnicity

Weekly participation is lower among young Pacific.

Participation is also lower among Pacific and Asian adults, while European adults have higher participation.



▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
Results are from 2021
Base: All respondents aged 5 and over

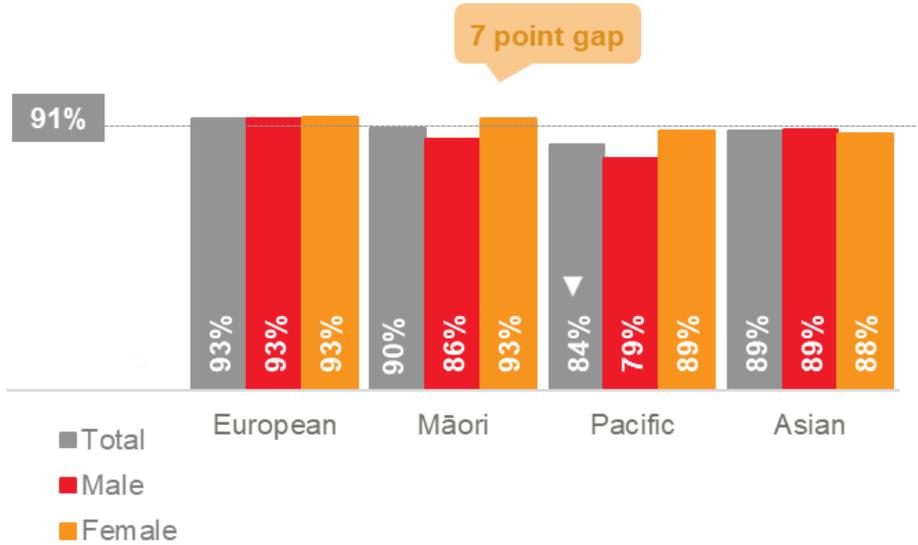
Figure 5: Weekly participation by ethnicity and gender

More females than males participate weekly among young Māori and Pacific.⁷

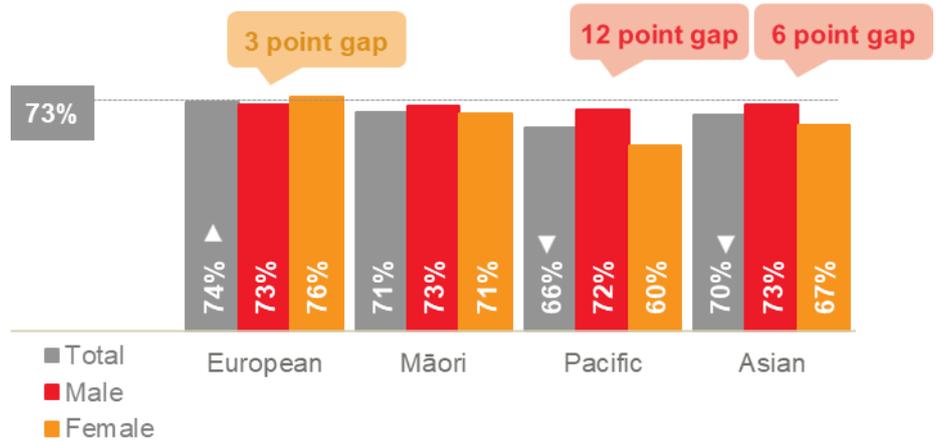
Among Pacific and Asian adults, males have higher levels of weekly participation than females.

For European adults, the gender gap is reversed, with females having higher levels of participation than males.

Young people



Adults



Significant gender difference
 ▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total

Results are from 2021
 Base Young people: All young people aged 5 to 17
 Base Adults: All adults aged 18 and over

⁷ The difference between young Pacific males and females is not statistically significant but adds to a consistent picture across other indicators.

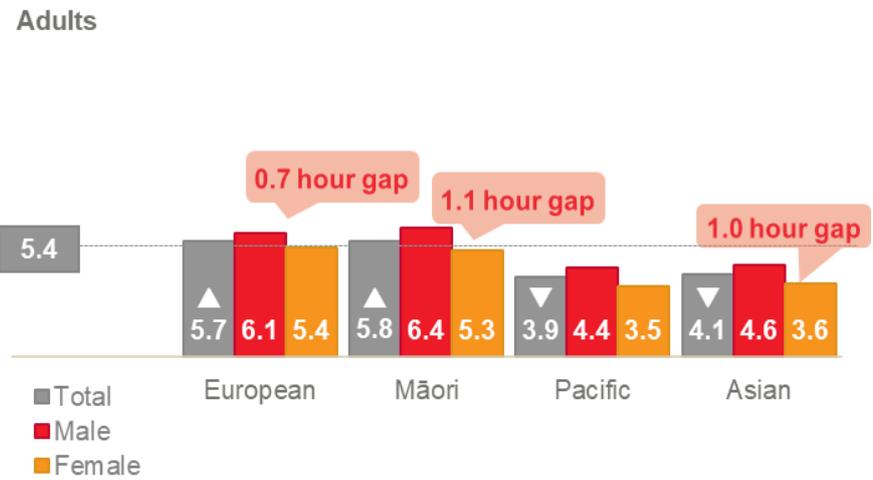
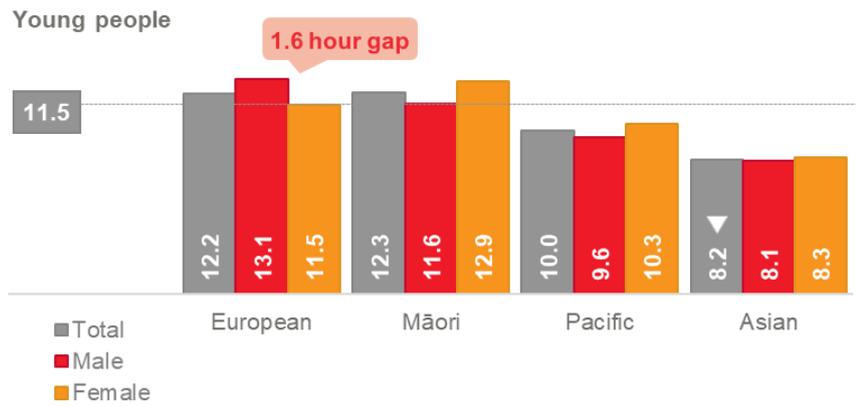
Figure 6: Time spent being physically active by ethnicity and gender (hours)

Young Asian spend less time being physically active, compared with total young people.

Young European males spend more time than females being physically active.

Asian and Pacific adults spend less time being physically active than European and Māori adults.

Across all ethnicities, adult males spend more time being physically active than females.⁸



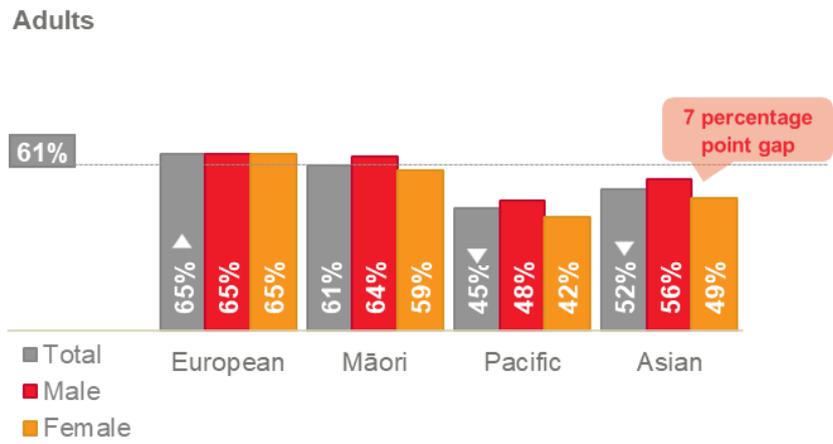
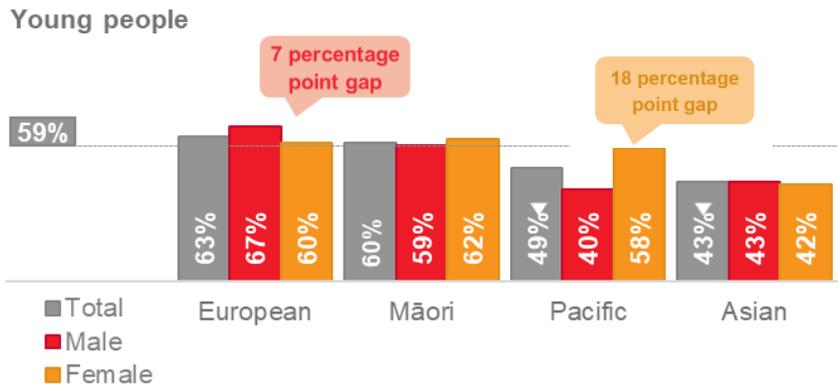
■ Significant gender difference
▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
 Results are from 2021
 Base Young people: All young people aged 5 to 17
 Base Adults: All adults aged 18 and over

⁸ The difference between Pacific males and females is not statistically significant.

Figure 7: Meeting guidelines by ethnicity and gender

A smaller proportion of young Asian and adult Asian and Pacific meet the physical activity guidelines. A higher proportion of European adults meet the physical activity guidelines.

Gender gaps are evident among young European and young Pacific. Among young European, a higher proportion of males meet the physical activity guidelines, while the reverse is true among young Pacific.

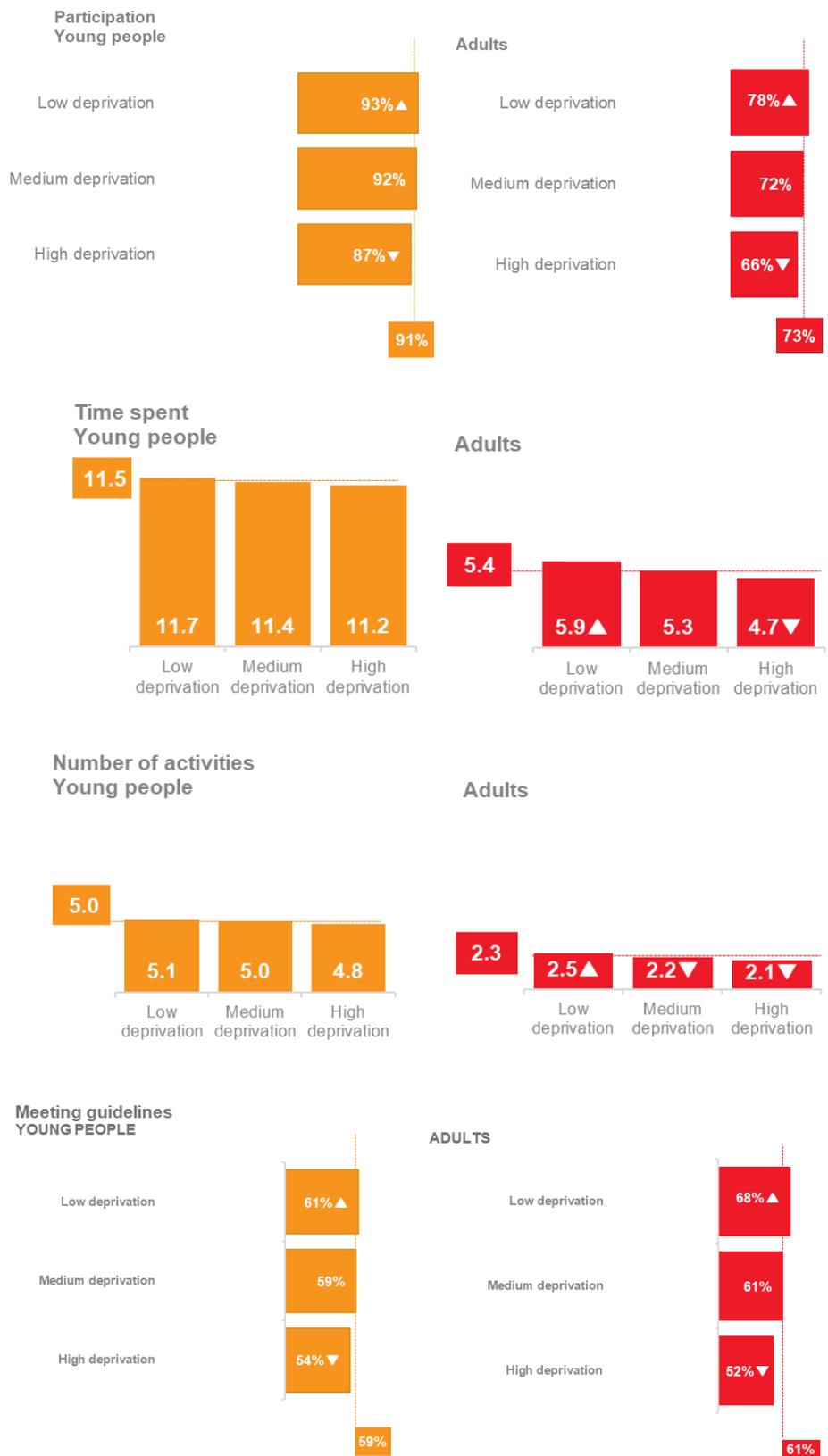


▭ ▭ Significant gender difference
▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
 Results are from 2021
 Base Young people: All young people aged 5 to 17
 Base Adults: All adults aged 18 and over

Figure 8: Participation by deprivation

Young people from high deprivation areas have lower levels of weekly participation and of meeting the physical activity guidelines. The reverse is true for those from low deprivation areas, who have higher levels of participation and of meeting the guidelines.

All four indicators of weekly participation, time spent, average number of activities and meeting the physical activity guidelines are higher among adults from low deprivation areas and lower among adults from high deprivation areas.

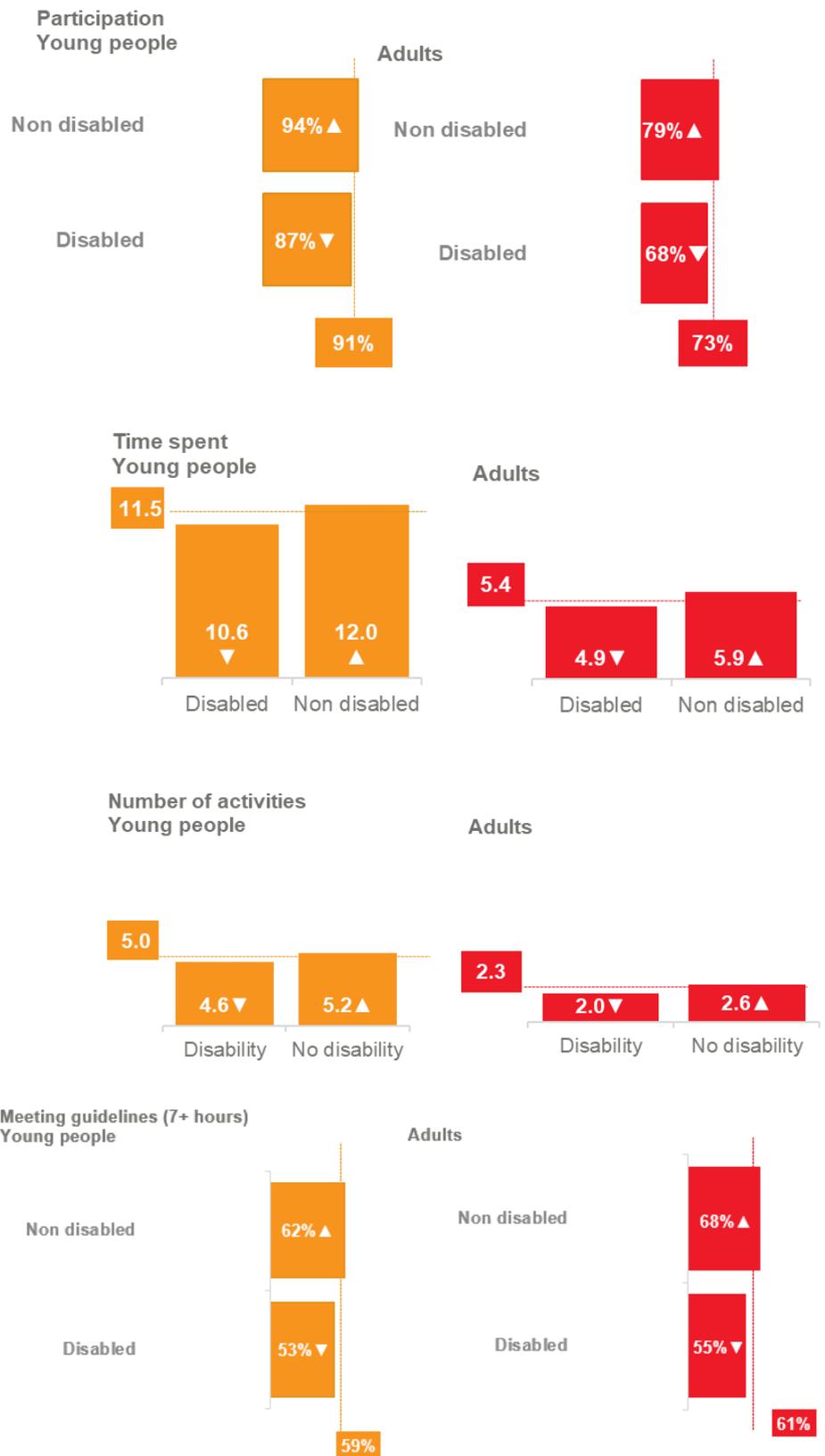


▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
 Results are from 2021
 Base Young people: All young people aged 5 to 17
 Base Adults: All adults aged 18 and over

Figure 9: Participation by disability

A significant gap can be seen in all four indicators of weekly participation, time spent, average number of activities and meeting the physical activity guidelines, with disabled people having lower levels of participation than non-disabled people.

This pattern is seen among young people as well as adults.



▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
Results are from 2021

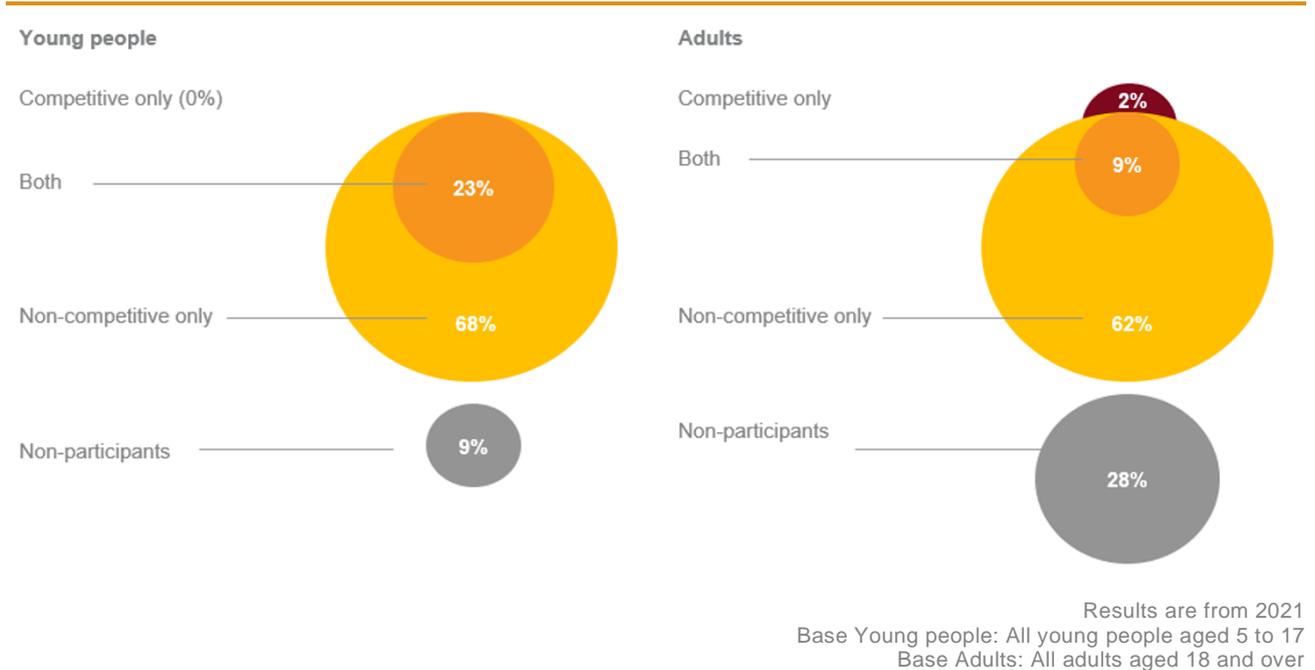
Base Young people: All young people aged 5 to 17
Base Adults: All adults aged 18 and over

How people participate

Young people and adults who participate in competitive sports and activities also participate in non-competitive sports and activities, except for 2 percent of adults

- Most weekly participation is in non-competitive sports and activities
- Young people continue to have higher levels of participation in competitive sports and activities than adults: a ratio of nearly 2 to 1 (figure 10).

Figure 10: Participation in competitive and non-competitive sports and activities



By age

- Between ages 8 and 11, participation in competitive sports and activities reaches 26 percent, peaks at 31 percent among ages 12 and 14 before dropping to 22 percent between ages 15 and 17.
- For adults, participation in competitive sports and activities is highest between ages 18 and 24, at 19 percent, before dropping to 12 percent between ages 25 and 34 and 10 percent between ages 35 and 49. Beyond this age, participation in competitive sports and activities remains at a similar level (between 8 percent and 9 percent).
- Participation in non-competitive sports and activities **only** (no competitive activity) is highest between ages 5 and 7, at 76 percent, then drops with age to be 62 percent between ages 15 and 17.
- For adults, participation in non-competitive sports and activities **only** is highest between ages 35 and 64, at 66 percent and 67 percent, and lower among young adults between ages 18 and 24 (54 percent) and older adults aged 75-plus (51 percent).
- Among young people, non-participation is highest between ages 15 and 17, at 15 percent. Among adults, non-participation from age 75-plus is 40 percent

Figure 11: Participation in competitive sports and activities by age and gender

Among young people, a gender difference can be seen in participation in competitive sports and activities between ages 15 and 17, where participation by males is higher than females.

During adult years, males are nearly twice as likely to participate in competitive sports and activities than females. A gender difference can be seen within every age band.

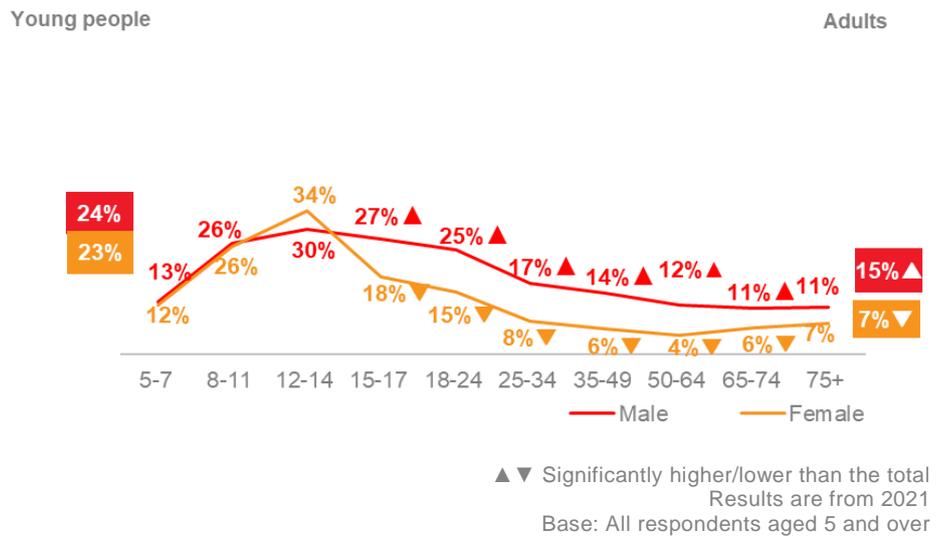
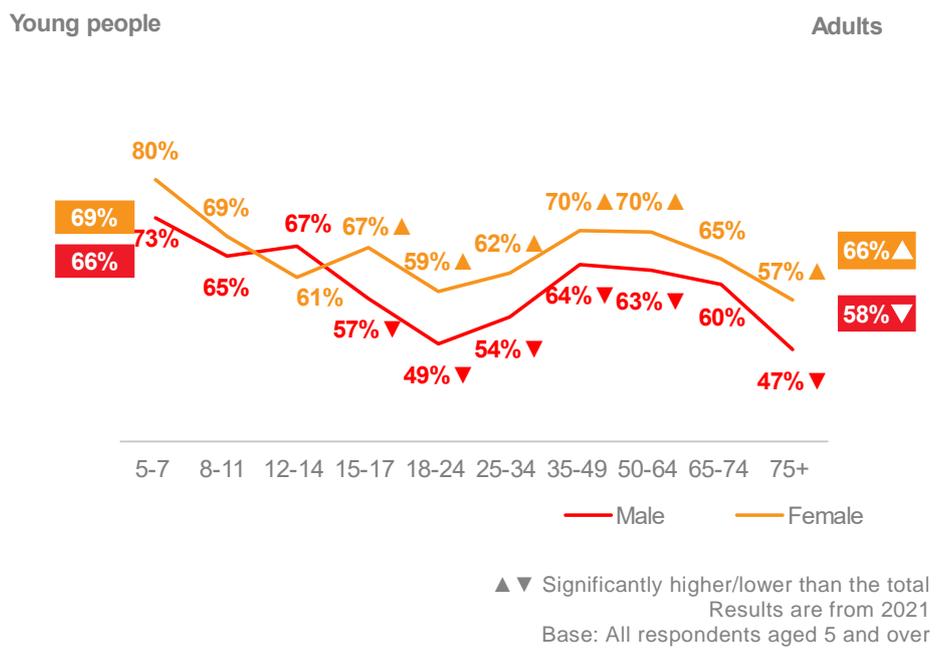


Figure 12: Participation in non-competitive sports and activities only by age and gender

Participation in non-competitive sports and activities only (no competitive activity) is higher among females than males between ages 15 and 17.

During adult years, participation by females in non-competitive sports and activities only is higher than that of males within every age band.



By ethnicity

- Young and adult Asian have lower participation in competitive sports and activities, with participation rates of 14 percent among young Asian, compared with 23 percent among total young people, and 8 percent among adult Asian, compared with 11 percent among total adults.
- No significant differences are evident in participation rates in competitive sports and activities among young European, Māori and Pacific. Among adults, participation in competitive sports and activities is higher among Māori and Pacific, at 13 percent and 14 percent respectively.

By deprivation

- Among young people, participation in competitive sports and activities is higher for those living in low deprivation areas (27 percent, compared with 21 percent among young people living in high deprivation areas).
- Among adults, competitive participation is consistent at 11 percent across people living in low, medium and high deprivation areas.

By disability

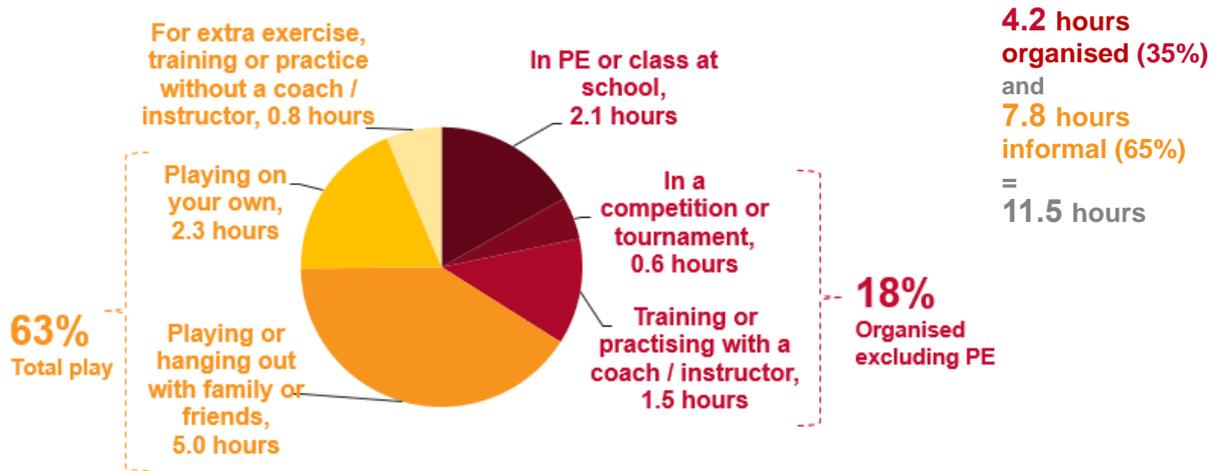
- Competitive participation is lower among disabled young people at 21 percent, compared with 25 percent among non-disabled young people.
- Competitive participation is also lower among disabled adults at 10 percent, compared with 11 percent among non-disabled adults.

Young people

Each week, young people spend an average of 11.5 hours being physically active

Of the hours young people spend participating weekly, 65 percent are spent in informal participation and 35 percent in organised participation (figure 13).

Figure 13: Time spent being physically active per week in organised and informal sports and activities (hours)



Results are from 2021
Base: All young people aged 5 to 17

By age

- Average time spent being active is higher between ages 5 and 7 and ages 12 and 14 and lowest between ages 15 and 17.
- Time spent in informal activities is highest between ages 5 and 7, at 10.2 hours, declining to 7.7 hours and 7.6 hours between ages 8 and 14 before dropping again to 5.2 hours between ages 15 and 17.
- Time spent in organised activities peaks between ages 12 and 14 and is lower between ages 5 and 7 and ages 15 and 17. Between ages 5 and 7, this is the result of lower participation in organised activities outside of physical education (PE), while less time spent in PE accounts for the lower organised participation between ages 15 and 17 (table 2).

Table 2: Average time spent per week participating in organised and informal sports and activities by age (hours)⁹

2021	Total	5–7	8–11	12–14	15–17
Organised					
Physical education or class at school	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.7▲	1.1▼
Competition or tournament	0.6	0.2▼	0.5▼	1.0▲	0.8▲
Training or practising with a coach	1.5	1.0▼	1.4	2.1▲	1.5
Informal					
Playing or hanging out with friends or family	5.0	7.1▲	5.6▲	4.4▼	2.3▼
Playing on your own	2.3	3.5▲	2.0▼	2.1	1.7▼
Extra exercise, training, practice without a coach or instructor	0.8	0.3▼	0.3▼	1.3▲	1.4▲
Total time	11.5	12.4▲	11.5	12.9▲	8.0▼
Organised combined	4.2	3.2▼	4.0	5.8▲	3.4▼
Informal combined	7.8	10.2▲	7.7	7.6	5.2▼
Organised excluding physical education	2.1	1.2▼	1.9▼	3.1▲	2.3
Play combined	7.3	10.6▲	7.6	6.5▼	4.0▼

▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
Results are from 2021
Base: All young people aged 5 to 17

By gender

- Young males spend an average of 11.8 hours being active, compared with 11.2 hours among young females.¹⁰
- This gap is mostly accounted for by longer time spent in play between ages 12 and 14, with 7.4 hours for males, compared with 5.8 hours for females.

⁹ The individual breakdown of hours may not add to the total time spent being active due to rounding and the treatment of outliers.

¹⁰ This difference is not statistically significant.

By ethnicity

- Young Asian spend less time in both organised (2.7 hours, compared with 4.2 hours among all young people) and informal participation (5.6 hours compared with 7.8 hours).
- Young Māori spend more time in PE at school (2.6 hours, compared with 2.1 hours among all young people), with time spent in all forms of organised participation being 4.8 hours, compared with 4.2 hours.¹¹

By deprivation

- Average time spent participating overall is not significantly different when young people living in high, medium and low deprivation areas are compared.
- Young people from low deprivation areas spend more time in organised participation outside of PE at school than young people from medium or high deprivation areas (2.5 hours, compared with 1.9 hours).
- Young people from high deprivation areas spend more time playing alone than those from low or medium deprivation areas (2.8 hours, compared with 2.1 hours).

By disability

- Time spent participating overall is lower for disabled young people than for non-disabled young people, 10.6 hours, compared with 12 hours.
- Time spent in organised participation is comparable (4.3 hours for disabled young people and 4.1 hours for non-disabled).
- Non-disabled young people spend longer in informal participation (8.4 hours, compared with 6.8 hours among disabled young people). The most notable difference is in time spent playing with family or friends, where disabled young people spend an average 4.3 hours, compared with 5.4 hours by non-disabled young people.

By region

Disruptions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic varied in different regions of New Zealand in 2021. The greatest impact can be seen in organised participation among young people.

- In Auckland, 61 percent of young people participate in organised sports and activities.
- In the North Island outside of Auckland, this is 70 percent.
- In the South Island, this is 78 percent.

¹¹ The difference between hours spent by young Māori in all forms of organised participation is not statistically significantly different compared to hours spent by all ethnicities.

Motivations

Sixty-four percent of young people and 76 percent of adults want to increase their participation (figure 14).

Figure 14: Proportion who want to increase participation

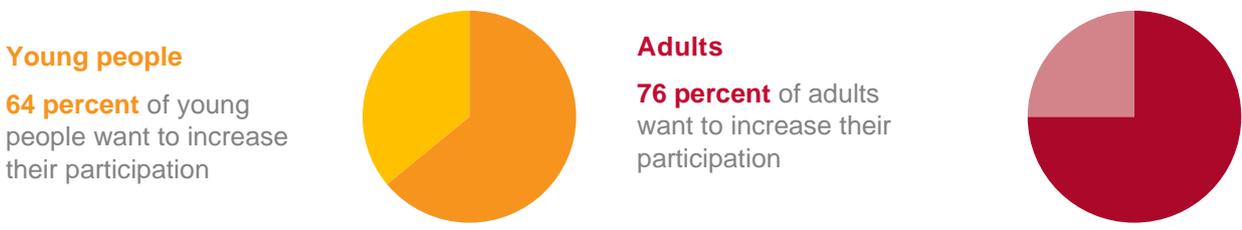
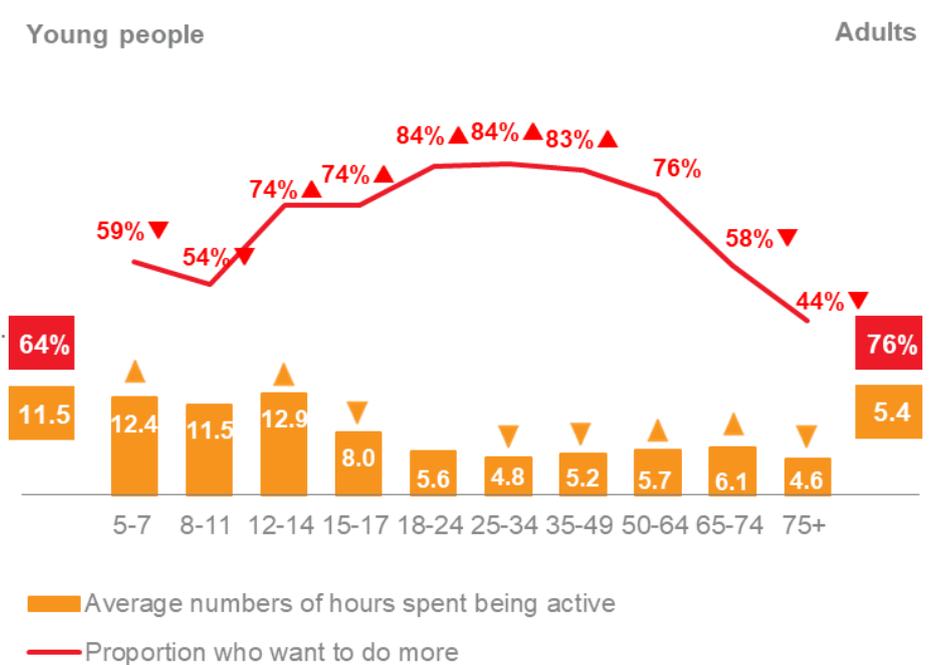


Figure 15: Time spent and proportion who want to increase participation by age (hours)

Young people between ages 12 and 17 have a greater appetite to increase participation, compared with children between ages 5 and 11.

Adults between ages 18 and 49 have a higher appetite to increase participation than older adults.

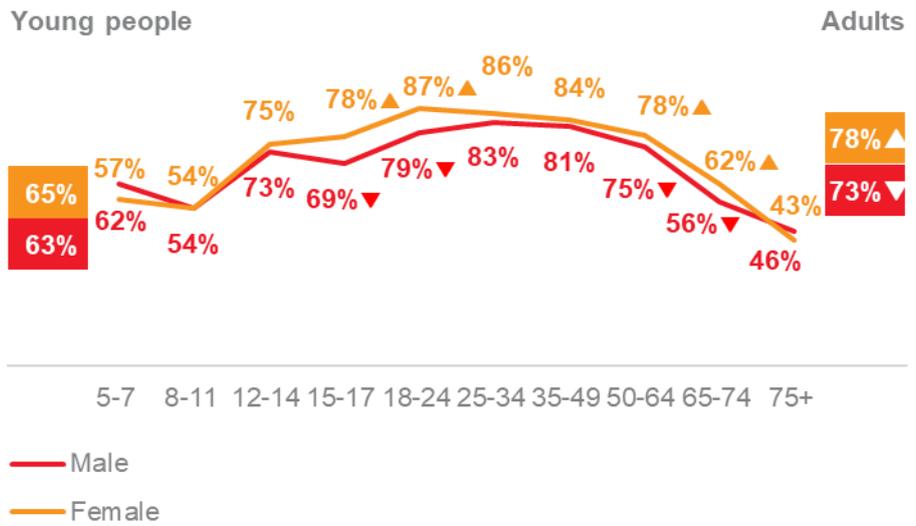
No direct correlation can be seen between time spent in weekly participation and desire to increase participation.



▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
 Results are from 2021
 Base: All respondents aged 5 and over

Figure 16: Proportion who want to increase participation by gender within age

Among young people overall, no significant difference is evident between the proportion of young males and young females wanting to increase their participation. Between ages 15 and 17, this proportion is higher for females than males.

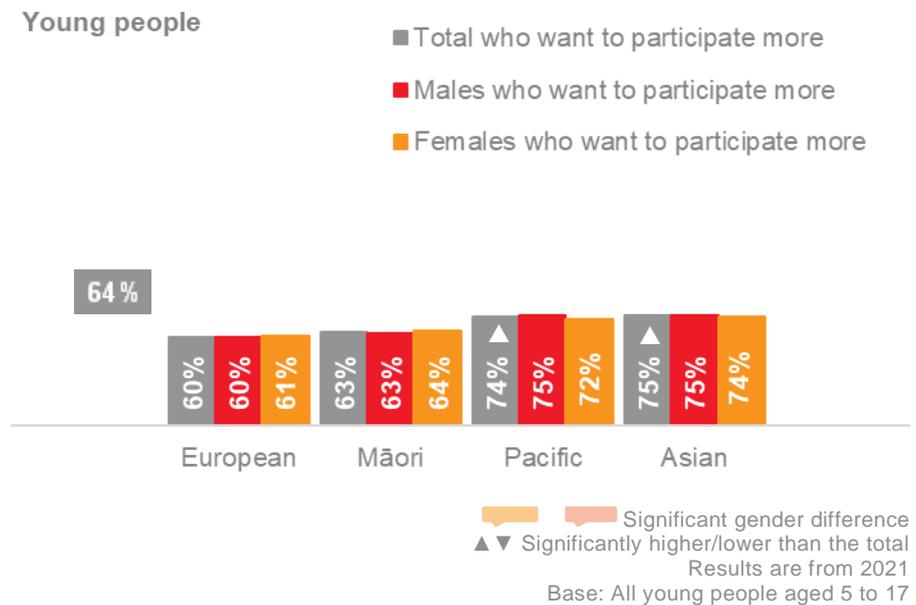


Among adults, a higher proportion of females than males want to increase their participation, particularly between ages 18 and 24 and 65 and 74.

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the other gender in the same age group
 Results are from 2021
 Base: All respondents aged 5 and over

Figure 17: Proportion of young people who want to increase participation by gender within ethnicity

A higher proportion of young Pacific and Asian want to increase their participation, compared with total young people.



Significant gender difference
 ▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
 Results are from 2021
 Base: All young people aged 5 to 17

Figure 18: Proportion of adults who want to increase participation by gender within ethnicity

A higher proportion of adult Asian and Pacific would like to participate more.

European, Māori and Pacific females are more likely than males of the same ethnicity to want to increase participation.

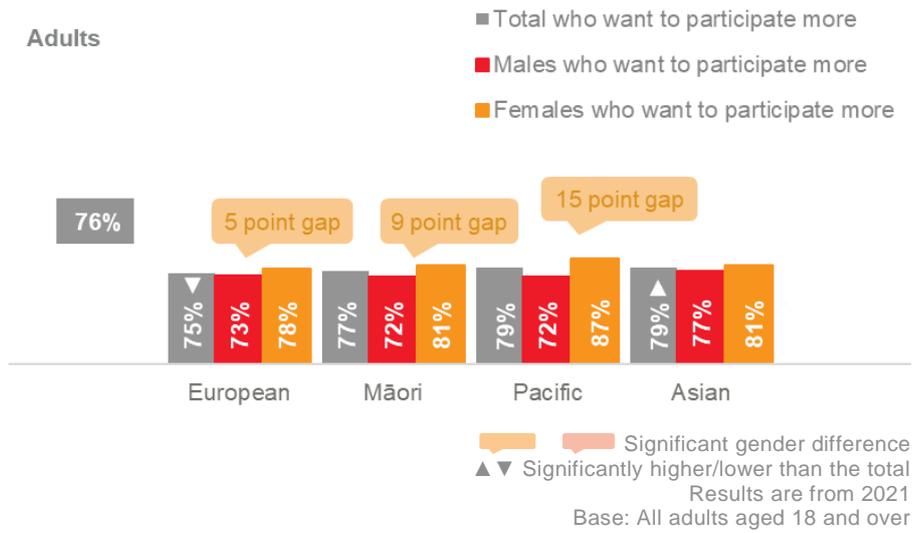


Figure 19: Proportion who want to increase participation by deprivation

A higher proportion of young people living in high deprivation areas want to increase their participation, compared with all young people.

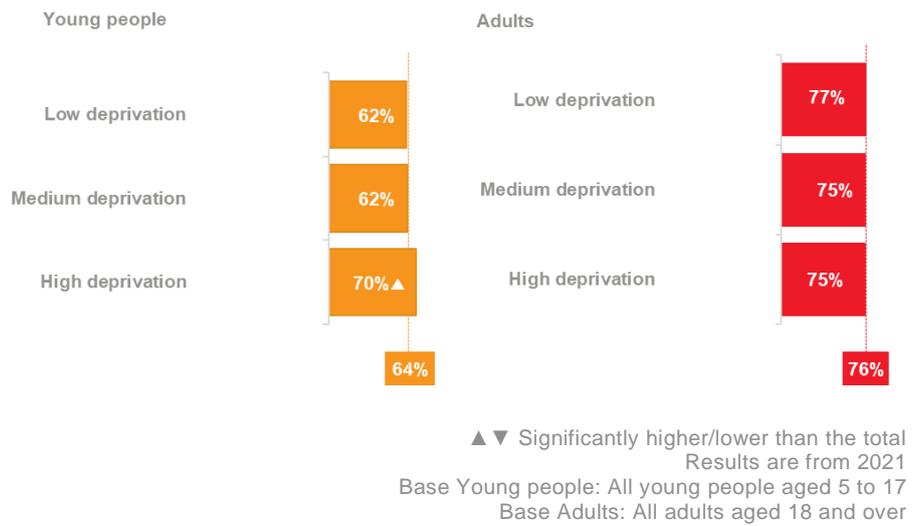
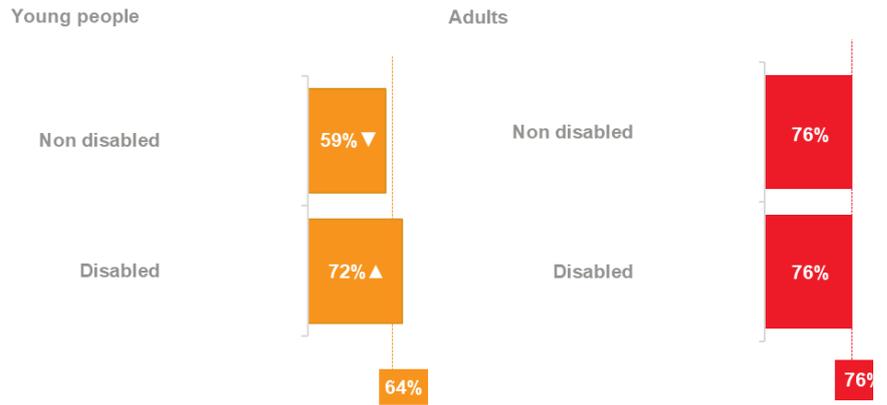


Figure 20: Proportion who want to increase participation by disability

Young disabled have a greater appetite for increasing participation than non-disabled.



▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
Results are from 2021
Base Young people: All young people aged 5 to 17
Base Adults: All adults aged 18 and over

Barriers

The average number of barriers varies by age, gender, ethnicity, deprivation, and disability

On average, young people identify 3.0 barriers and adults identify 3.2 barriers to increasing participation.

By age

The average number of barriers increases with age for young people and decreases with age for adults.

The average number of barriers is:

- 2.4 between ages 8 and 11, increasing to 3.3 between ages 12 and 14 and 3.5 between ages 15 and 17.
- 4.3 between ages 18 and 24, dropping to 2.2 for age 75-plus.

By gender

Females have more barriers than males:

- young females identify 3.3 barriers and young males 2.6
- adult females identify 3.5 barriers and adult males 2.9.

By ethnicity

No significant differences are evident in the average number of barriers by ethnicity among young people. Among adults, Pacific identify 4.1 barriers and Māori 3.4 barriers, higher than the average number identified by all adults.

By deprivation

Adults from high deprivation areas have more barriers than those from low deprivation areas (3.5 barriers in high deprivation areas and 2.9 in low deprivation areas). The number of barriers among young people from high deprivation areas is significantly higher than the total (2.8 barriers in high deprivation areas).

By disability

Among the disabled population:

- young disabled people identify 3.7 barriers on average, compared with 2.5 among non-disabled young people
- adult disabled people identify 3.5 barriers on average, compared with 2.8 among non-disabled adults.

Other commitments taking priority or being too busy is the top barrier to increasing participation for young people and adults

For nearly six in 10 adults and one in three young people, other commitments taking priority or being too busy is a barrier to increasing participation.

Struggle for motivation and tiredness or fatigue are also prevalent barriers, as is a preference for doing other things.

Nineteen percent of adults say they have got out of the habit of being more active, an emerging barrier in 2021 (table 3).

Table 3: Most prevalent barriers to increasing participation

Young people		Adults	
34%	Too busy	57%	Other commitments take priority
23%	It's too hard to motivate myself	27%	I am too tired / no energy
21%	I'm too tired / no energy	27%	I struggle to motivate myself
19%	I prefer to do other things	20%	I prefer to spend my time on other interests / hobbies
16%	I already do a good amount of physical activity	19%	I've got out of the habit
3.0 barriers on average		3.2 barriers on average	

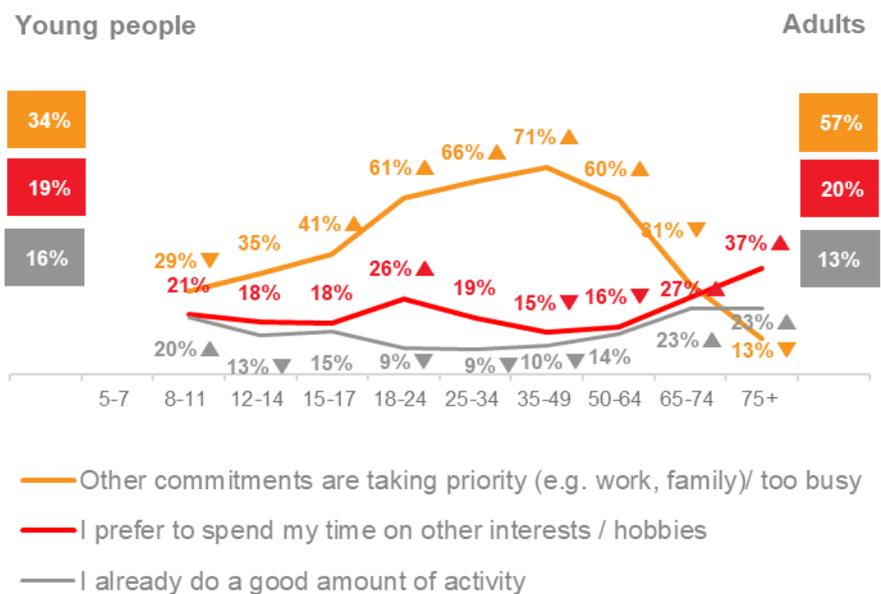
Results are from 2021
Base: All respondents aged 8 and over

Figure 21: Other commitments, preference for other things and already doing enough

Other commitments and being too busy, as a barrier, is higher among young people between ages 15 and 17 and adults between ages 18 and 64.

Preferring to spend time on other things becomes more prevalent as a barrier from age 65-plus and is also mentioned by a higher proportion of adults between ages 18 and 24.

Young people between ages 8 and 11, and older adults from age 65-plus, are more likely than average to say they already do a good amount of activity.



▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
Results are from 2021
Base: All respondents aged 8 and over

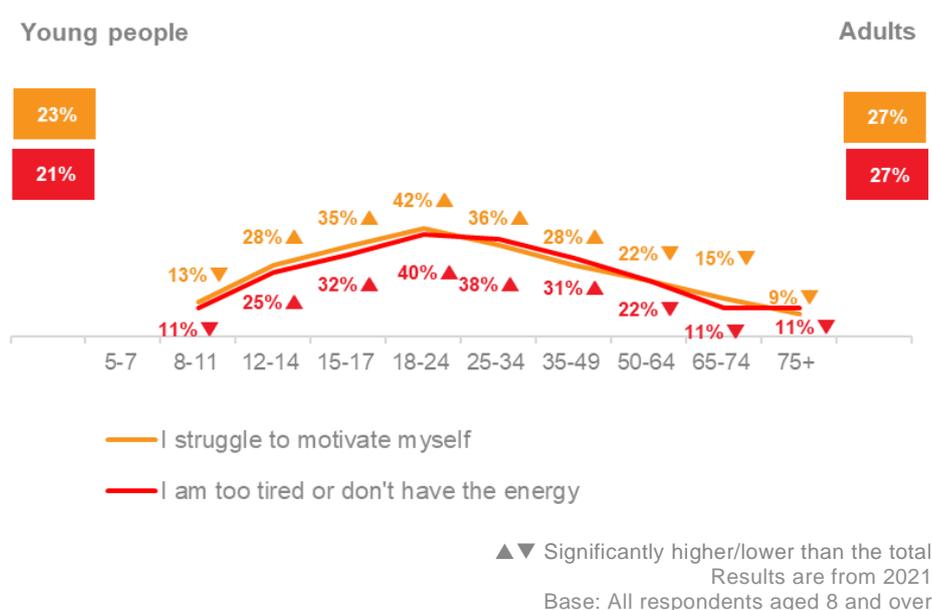
Figure 22: Too tired and lacking motivation

Among young people, being too tired or struggling for motivation as barriers are more prevalent between ages 12 and 17 and less prevalent among younger children.

Among adults, these barriers are most prevalent between ages 18 and 24 and then decrease with age.

Between ages 18 and 24:

- 49 percent of females feel too tired, compared with 29 percent of males
- 51 percent of females struggle for motivation, compared with 31 percent of males.



Among both young people and adults, a higher proportion of females than males identify the barriers of being too busy, too tired and struggling for motivation (table 4).

Other barriers are also prevalent among both young and adult females, when compared with their male counterparts:

- not being fit enough (12 percent of young females and 9 percent of young males, 18 percent of adult females and 13 percent of adult males)
- having no one to do it with (11 percent of young females and 8 percent of young males, 12 percent of adult females and 8 percent of adult males)
- a lack of confidence (16 percent of young females and 9 percent of young males, 9 percent of adult females and 4 percent of adult males). The gender gap in confidence is most evident between ages 12 and 17 (19 percent of young females, compared with 8 percent of males) and between ages 18 and 24 in adults (25 percent of adult females, compared with 9 percent of males).

Among young people, other less common barriers are mentioned more by young females than young males. These include having friends who are not physically active, not wanting to fail, not liking others seeing them being physically active, PE classes not being fun and school not offering activities that interest them.

Among adults, a higher proportion of females than males also mention less common barriers, including getting out of the habit, the activity of choice being too expensive or not fitting their routine.

Table 4: Most prevalent barriers by gender

	Young males	Young females	Adult males	Adult females
Too busy/other commitments take priority	30%	38%▲	56%	59%▲
Too tired or don't have the energy	16%	24%▲	22%	32%▲
Struggle to motivate myself	20%	26%▲	23%	30%▲
Prefer to spend time on other things	20%	18%	22%▲	18%

▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the other gender
 Results are from 2021
 Base: All respondents aged 5 and over

By ethnicity

Among young people:

- higher proportions of young Māori and young Pacific identify the barriers of a lack of confidence and family not being able to afford for them to do more
- young Pacific are also more likely to cite their friends not being active as a barrier, as well as disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic
- young Asian are more likely to identify the barriers of being too busy and parents wanting them to focus on schoolwork, as well as not having the equipment needed and/or no nearby facilities. Young Asian are also more likely than other ethnicities to be deterred by the weather.

Among adults:

- various barriers are more prevalent among Pacific adults, compared with total adults. These include being too tired, struggling for motivation, getting out of the habit, a lack of fitness, activity of choice being too expensive, a lack of equipment, a lack of confidence, fear of being judged and health issues
- among Māori, higher mention is made of a lack of fitness, of activity of choice being too expensive, a lack of equipment, a lack of confidence, and health or injury issues, compared with total adults
- Asian are more likely to mention a preference for other activities, as well as a lack of equipment, of nearby facilities, and/or people to participate with. Asian adults are also more likely to mention the expense of their activity of choice and, like their young counterparts, the weather as a barrier to doing more.

By deprivation

Some variations in barriers were identified for young people.

- Higher proportions of young people from high deprivation areas mention several less prevalent barriers, including a lack of confidence, their family being unable to afford for them to do more, a lack of equipment or lack of places nearby to do what they want.
- Higher proportions of young people from low deprivation areas identify the barriers of being too busy, a preference for other things or already doing a good amount.

When adults from high deprivation areas are compared with adults from low deprivation areas:

- higher proportions of adults from high deprivation areas mention several barriers, including being too tired, struggling for motivation, preferring other things, not being fit enough, the activity of choice being too expensive, not having the equipment needed and health not being good enough
- higher proportions of adults from low deprivation areas mention other commitments taking priority and already doing a good amount.

By disability

Several barriers are more prevalent among disabled people:

- the most common barriers of being too tired and struggling for motivation are more prevalent among disabled adults than non-disabled adults. A lack of fitness is also mentioned by a higher proportion of disabled adults as a barrier (19 percent, compared with 10 percent of non-disabled adults)
- the barriers of being too tired and struggling for motivation are twice as prevalent among disabled than non-disabled young people. Disabled young people are also more likely to mention a lack of confidence as a barrier (21 percent, compared to 8 percent of non-disabled young people).

Appendices

A	Participation in sports and activities	Page 34
B	Participation by region	Page 38
C	Research objectives and method	Page 40
D	Question wording and base descriptions	Page 41

Appendix A: Participation in sports and activities

Table 5: Young people's participation in sports and activities in the last 7 days

	Total (%)	Age				Gender			Ethnicity		
		5–7 (%)	8–11 (%)	12–14 (%)	15–17 (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	European (%)	Māori (%)	Pacific (%)	Asian (%)
Running, jogging or cross country (Net) (data from 2017 onward)	53	49▼	53	62▲	45▼	53	53	54	53	55	52
Playing (eg, running around, climbing trees, make-believe)	36	54▲	44▲	29▼	9▼	35	38▲	40	35	28▼	25▼
Walking for fitness	33	23▼	29▼	41▲	38▲	28▼	37▲	31	33	43▲	33
Cycling (Net)	32	42▲	34	30	18▼	36▲	28▼	36	31	20▼	25▼
Playing on playground (eg, jungle gym)	32	5▲	41▲	19▼	5▼	29▼	35▲	36	33	25▼	20▼
Games (eg, four square, tag, bull rush, dodgeball)	32	30	34▲	41▲	15▼	32	32	34	35	27	22▼
Swimming	29	41▲	35▲	23▼	13▼	27▼	32▲	32	30	25	20▼
Trampoline	24%	34▲	29▲	21▼	6▼	23	24	28	24	15▼	13▼
Scootering	21%	35▲	26▲	16▼	4▼	25▲	18▼	22	25	12▼	14▼
Football/ Soccer/ Futsal (Net) (data from 2017 onward)	15	13	16	19▲	11▼	21▲	9	17	12▼	7▼	16
Dance/dancing (eg, ballet, hip hop etc)	15	19▲	13▼	16	12▼	5▼	24▲	15	14	15	12
Workout (weights or cardio)	14	1▼	4▼	25▲	36▲	14	15	14	15	16	14
Basketball or mini-ball	11	4▼	9▼	19▲	12	15▲	7▼	10	15▲	15	11
Tramping or bush walks	11	12	11	11	7▼	10	12	12	9	7	9
Group exercise class (e.g. aerobics, CrossFit, Jump Jam)	10	8	8	14▲	8	7▼	13▲	9	12	12	5▼
Netball	9	3▲	8	17▲	7	2▼	17▲	9	10	19▲	6▼

▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
Results are from 2021
Base: All young people aged 5 to 17

Table 6: Young people's participation in each sport or activity in the last 7 days

	Total (%)	Deprivation			Disability	
		Low (%)	Medium (%)	High (%)	Disabled (%)	Non-disabled (%)
Running, jogging or cross country (Net) (data from 2017 onward)	53	52	54	54	49▼	56▲
Playing (eg, running around, climbing trees, make-believe)	36	38	37	32▼	29▼	40▲
Walking for fitness	33	34	30▼	34	36▲	30▼
Cycling (Net)	32	35▲	33	26▼	24▼	36▲
Playing on playground (eg, jungle gym)	32	33	34▲	26▼	24▼	36▲
Games (eg, four square, tag, bull rush, dodgeball)	32	31	32	32	30	33
Swimming	29	30	30	26	23▼	33▲
Trampoline	24	25	25	19▼	19▼	26▲
Scootering	21	22	21	22	17▼	24▲
Football/ Soccer/ Futsal (Net) (data from 2017 onward)	15	18▲	15	12▼	13▼	17▲
Dance/dancing (eg, ballet, hip hop etc)	15	14	16	14	14	15
Workout (weights or cardio)	14	15	14	14	18▲	12▼
Basketball or mini-ball	11	11	9▼	13	13▲	10▼
Tramping or bush walks	11	12	12	8▼	9	11
Group exercise class (eg, aerobics, CrossFit, Jump Jam)	10	9	10	10	11	9
Netball	9	8	10	10	9	9

▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
 Results are from 2021
 Base: All young people aged 5 to 17

Table 7: Adult participation in sports and activities in the last 7 days

	Total (%)	Age						Gender		Ethnicity			
		18–24 (%)	25–34 (%)	35–49 (%)	50–64 (%)	65–74 (%)	75+ (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	European (%)	Māori (%)	Pacific (%)	Asian (%)
Walking	60	60	59	63▲	61▲	58	45▼	57▼	63▲	62▲	58	51▼	55▼
Individual workout using equipment	24	39▲	30▲	26▲	20▼	14▼	8▼	27▲	22	24▼	29▲	31▲	25
Gardening	24	8▼	16▼	25	31▲	35▲	22	22▼	26▲	26▲	21▼	14▼	18▼
Running / jogging	21	36▲	28▲	27▲	16▼	4▼	1▼	23▲	18▼	20	23▲	26▲	20
Playing games (eg, with kids)	13	9▼	17▲	24▲	9▼	7▼	2▼	12▼	15▲	14	17▲	15	12
NET: Cycling (incl. BMX, excl. e-bikes)	11	8▼	9▼	15▲	14▲	8▼	4▼	15▲	8▼	13▲	9▼	5▼	6▼
NET: Cycling (excl. BMX, excl. e-bikes)	11	7▼	9▼	15▲	14▲	8▼	4▼	15▲	8▼	13▲	9▼	5▼	6▼
NET: Pilates/yoga	10	9	11	11▲	12▲	8▼	3▼	5▼	15▲	11▲	9	5▼	10
Group fitness class (eg, aerobics, CrossFit)	9	10	11▲	10▲	7▼	5▼	7▼	5▼	12▲	9▲	12▲	9	7▼
Swimming	8	11▲	7	9▲	7	7	4▼	7	8	8▲	10▲	5▼	5▼
NET: Tramping	5	4	6	5	5	5	2▼	5	5	5▲	5	2▼	4
Golf	4	4	3▼	2▼	5▲	7▲	5	6▲	2▼	4▲	4	4	2▼
Dance/dancing (eg, ballet, hip hop, etc)	4	6▲	5▲	4	3▼	3▼	2▼	1▼	6▲	3▼	6▲	6▲	5
NET: Fishing	3	3	2	3	3	3	1▼	4▲	1▼	3▲	4▲	2	1▼
Football (soccer)	2	5▲	3▲	2	1▼	0▼	0▼	3▲	1▼	2▲	1▼	3▲	1
Tennis	2	2	1	2▲	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1

▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
Results are from 2021
Base: All adults aged 18 and over

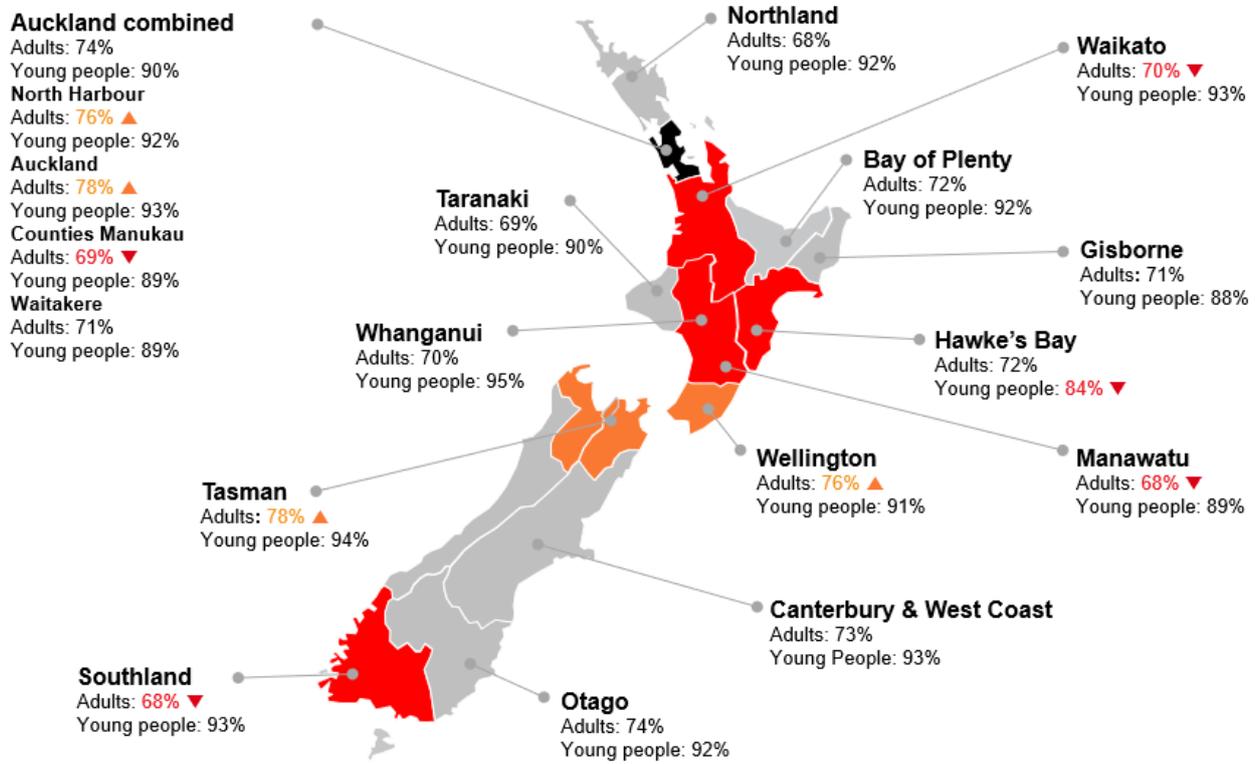
Table 8: Adult participation in sports and activities in the last 7 days

	Total (%)	Deprivation			Disability	
		Low (%)	Medium (%)	High (%)	Disabled (%)	Non-disabled (%)
Walking	60	65▲	59	53▼	55▼	65▲
Individual workout using equipment	24	26▲	23	23	20▼	28▲
Gardening	24	26▲	23	20▼	23▼	25▲
Running / jogging	21	23▲	20	19	16▼	26▲
Playing games (eg, with kids)	13	15▲	13	13	12▼	15▲
NET: Cycling (incl. BMX, excl. e-bikes)	11	14▲	11	8▼	9▼	14▲
NET: Cycling (excl. BMX, excl. e-bikes)	11	14▲	11	8▼	9▼	14▲
NET: Pilates/yoga	10	12▲	10	8▼	8▼	12▲
Group fitness class (eg, aerobics, CrossFit)	9	9	8	8	7▼	10▲
Swimming	8	9▲	7	6▼	7▼	8▲
NET: Tramping	5	5	5	4	4▼	5▲
Golf	4	5▲	4	3▼	4	4
Dance/dancing (eg, ballet, hip hop, etc)	4	4	3▼	5▲	3▼	4
NET: Fishing	3	3▲	2	2	3	3
Football (soccer)	2	3▲	2	2	2▼	2▲
Tennis	2	2▲	2	1▼	1▼	2▲

▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
 Results are from 2021
 Base: All adults aged 18 and over

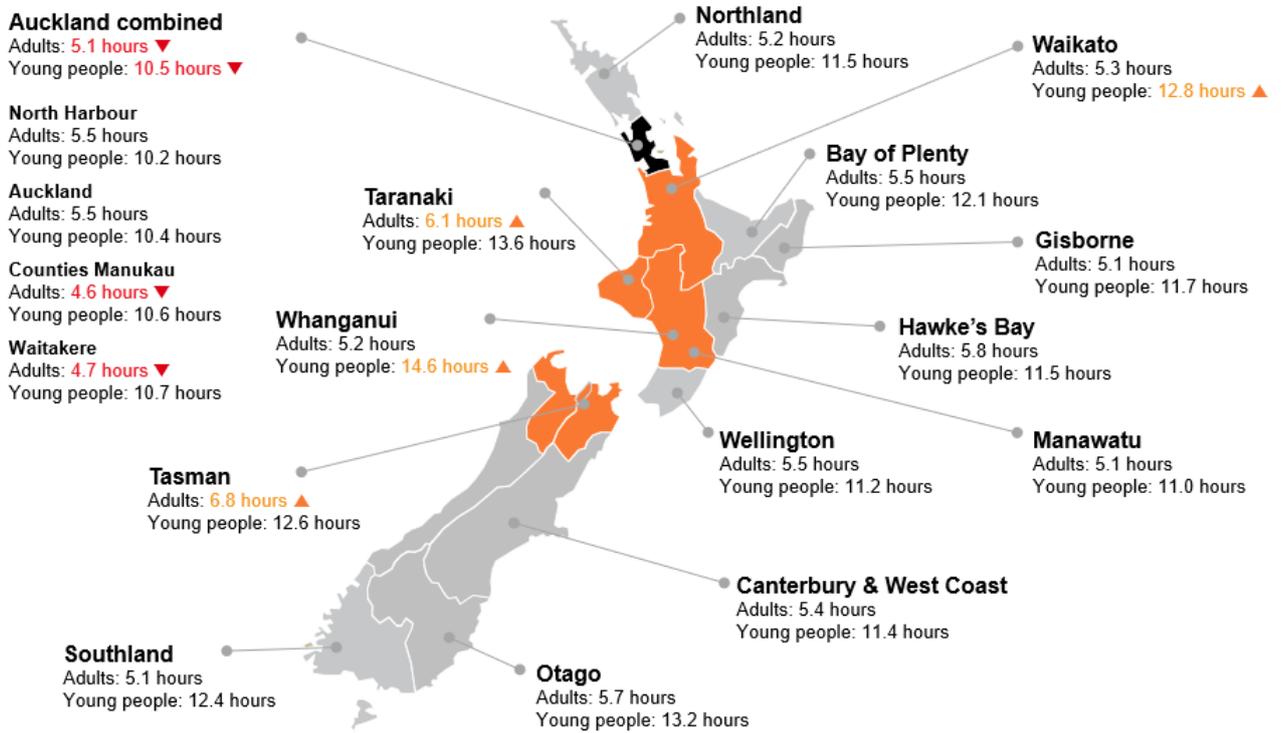
Appendix B: Participation by region

Figure 23: Participation by region



▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
 Results are from 2021
 Base: All respondents aged 5 and over

Figure 24: Time spent by region



▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
 Results are from 2021
 Base: All respondents aged 5 and over

Appendix C: Research objectives and method

This research aims to:

- collect information on the 'who', 'what', 'how' and 'where' young people and adults participate
- identify and describe links between participation (and non-participation) and other influential factors; the 'why' and 'why not' people participate
- measure the quality of participation and the contribution participation makes to an individual's health and wellbeing
- understand the value placed on participation by people in New Zealand.

Survey method

Online and postal self-completion using sequential mixed methods, we are targeting 20 000 adults and 5000 young people per annum.

Fieldwork period

The 2021 survey was conducted between 5 January 2021 and 4 January 2022.

Completed responses

In 2021, responses have been received from n=23 239 adults aged 18-plus and n=4824 young people aged between 5 and 17.

Weighting

Results have been weighted to the total New Zealand Regional Sports Trust population using 2013 Census statistics for the data between 2017 and 2019, and 2018 Census statistics for the data of 2021.

A sequential mixed method is used for this research

ELECTORAL ROLL	INVITATION LETTER	REMINDER POSTCARD 1	SURVEY PACK	REMINDER POSTCARD 2
Sample selected from Electoral Roll	<p>Invitation letters are sent to the named adults (aged 18-plus) inviting them to complete the questionnaire online (with instructions and log-in provided).</p> <p>A postcard is included to encourage young people aged 12 to 17 to complete the children and young people's questionnaire online.</p> <p>A 0800 number and email address are provided for questions.</p>	<p>About a week later, a reminder postcard is sent thanking respondents and acting as a reminder to those still to respond.</p> <p>This communication is targeted to adults only.</p>	<p>A week after the postcard, non-respondents are sent a survey pack with a hardcopy of the questionnaire, letter and a reply-paid envelope.</p> <p>A flyer is included for ages 12 to 17 to complete the survey online (no paper questionnaire is available for the children and young people's survey).</p>	A final reminder is sent to adults who have not yet taken part in the survey.

Note: Parents or caregivers are asked to respond on behalf of ages 5 to 11 in their household (and encouraged to do the survey with their child and/or check responses with them).

Appendix D: Question wording and base descriptions

Table 1 and figures 1, 8, 9

Base: All respondents aged 5 and over

Q12 (5–17) In the last 7 days (not including today) have you done any physical activity specifically for sport, physical education (PE), exercise or fun?

Q7 (18+) Thinking back over the last 7 days (not including today) have you done any physical activity that was specifically for the purpose of sport, exercise or recreation?

Note: The Physical Activity Guidelines were agreed to by the Ministry of Health and Sport NZ and they outline the minimum levels of physical activity required to gain physical health benefits:

- Young people need to do at least 7 hours of activity per week at any intensity.
- Adults need to do at least 150 minutes of activity per week at any intensity.

Q16b (5–17) About how many minutes did you spend doing <insert activity> in the last 7 days in <this way / these ways>?

Q19 (18+) Still thinking about the physical activity you have done in the last 7 days, in total how many hours did you spend being physically active for sport, exercise or recreation?

Q16not7 (5–17) Please tick all the ways you have been physically active for sport, PE, exercise or fun in the last 7 days (not including today).

HQ13/HQ8AQ97 (18+) Which of the following have you done in the last 7 days and which have you done in the last 12 months? Please only select the activities where you have been physically active specifically for sport, exercise or recreation. Note: reporting is based on responses to the 7 days component of the question. AND Q97 Please select the additional activities you have done in the last 7 days.

Figure 2

Base: All respondents aged 5 and over

Q12 (5–17) In the last 7 days (not including today) have you done any physical activity specifically for sport, physical education (PE), exercise or fun?

Q7 (18+) Thinking back over the last 7 days (not including today) have you done any physical activity that was specifically for the purpose of sport, exercise or recreation?

Note: The Physical Activity Guidelines were agreed to by the Ministry of Health and Sport NZ and they outline the minimum levels of physical activity required to gain physical health benefits:

- Young people need to do at least 7 hours of activity per week at any intensity.
- Adults need to do at least 150 minutes of activity per week at any intensity.

Q16b (5–17) About how many minutes did you spend doing <insert activity> in the last 7 days in <this way / these ways>?

Q19 (18+) Still thinking about the physical activity you have done in the last 7 days, in total how many hours did you spend being physically active for sport, exercise or recreation?

Figures 3, 6, 7, 24**Base: All respondents aged 5 and over****Q16b** (5–17) About how many minutes did you spend doing <insert activity> in the last 7 days in <this way / these ways>?**Q19** (18+) Still thinking about the physical activity you have done in the last 7 days, in total how many hours did you spend being physically active for sport, exercise or recreation?**Figures 4, 5, 23****Base: All respondents aged 5 and over****Q12** (5–17) In the last 7 days (not including today) have you done any physical activity specifically for sport, physical education (PE), exercise or fun?**Q7** (18+) Thinking back over the last 7 days (not including today) have you done any physical activity that was specifically for the purpose of sport, exercise or recreation?**Figures 10, 11, 12****Base: All respondents aged 5 and over****Q16** (5–17) Where or how did <you/name> do <activity> in the last 7 days?**Q15** (18+) In the last 7 days, have you done this as a competitive sport or a competitive activity?**Figure 13 and table 2****Base: All young people aged 5 to 17****Q16** (5–17) Where or how did <you/name> do <activity> in the last 7 days?**Q16b** (5–17) About how many minutes did you spend doing <insert activity> in the last 7 days in <this way / these ways>?**Figures 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20****Base: All respondents aged 5 and over****Q22** (5–17) Would you like to be doing more physical activity for sport, PE, exercise or fun than what you do now?**Q31** (18+) Overall, would you like to be doing more physical activity for sport, exercise or recreation than you are currently doing?**Figure 15****Base: All respondents aged 5 and over****Q22** (5–17) Would you like to be doing more physical activity for sport, PE, exercise or fun than what you do now?**Q31** (18+) Overall, would you like to be doing more physical activity for sport, exercise or recreation than you are currently doing?**Q16b** (5–17) About how many minutes did you spend doing <insert activity> in the last 7 days in <this way / these ways>?**Q19** (18+) Still thinking about the physical activity you have done in the last 7 days, in total how many hours did you spend being physically active for sport, exercise or recreation?

Tables 3, 4 and figures 21, 22**Base: All respondents aged 8 and over**

Q23 (8–17) Why are you not doing as much physical activity as you would like? For what reasons do you not want to do more than you are currently doing?

Q71 (8–17) What is it that you prefer doing? What other hobbies are you spending time on?

Q32 (18+) For what reasons are you not doing as much physical activity as you would like? For what reasons do you not want to do more physical activity than you are currently doing?

Q88 (18+) What is it that you prefer doing? What other hobbies are you spending time on?

Tables 5, 6**Base: All young people aged 5 to 17**

Q16not7 (5–17) Please tick all the ways you have been physically active for sport, PE, exercise or fun in the last 7 days (not including today).

Tables 7, 8**Base: All adults aged 18 and over**

HQ13/HQ8AQ97 (18+) Which of the following have you done in the last 7 days? Please only select the activities where you have been physically active specifically for sport, exercise or recreation.

Note: reporting is based on responses to the 7 days component of the question. AND Q97 Please select the additional activities you have done in the last 7 days.