

Sport and Active Lifestyles.

State of the Nation.

A statistical release from the National
Survey for Wales 2017-18.

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National Survey for Wales 2017-18:

Sport and Active Lifestyles - State of the Nation Report

Summary

- This release provides headline results for sport participation and latent demand from the National Survey for Wales in 2017-18. This is the second year that results for sport and active lifestyles have been released.
- From 2016-17 onwards the National Survey for Wales has replaced the Active Adults Survey as the source of data on adult sport participation, club membership and volunteering in Wales. Results from the two surveys are not comparable due to the change in survey methodology. Nevertheless, questions asked in 2016-17 and reported on here were also included in the analysis for comparison. For these questions, any significant changes over time are noted.
- 32% of adults participated in a sporting activity three times a week or more. 8% participated approximately twice a week, 11% participated approximately once a week and 50% participated less than once a week. Again, protected characteristics are associated with varying rates of participation.
- The number of people participating in a sporting activity three times a week or more is a national indicator for the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. This has increased from 29% in 2016-17 to 32% in 2017-18.
- In 2017-2018, 59% of adults reported that they had taken part in some sporting activity in the last four weeks. This remains unchanged when compared with the results from the previous year. Age, gender, disability and Welsh speaking characteristics are associated with varying participation rates.
- Adults in Wales are most likely to be taking part in walking (2 miles or more), gym or fitness classes, swimming, running and jogging outdoors, football and cycling.
- 55% of all adults would like to do more sport or physical activity (The proportion was 58% in 2016-17). As in 2016-17 the types of activity in most demand include indoor or outdoor

swimming (20%), cycling (including BMX, and mountain biking;12%) and gym or fitness classes (9%).

- In general, there is an association between Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) scores, representing small area deprivation, and regular participation in sport. The least deprived communities have the highest participation rates and the most deprived communities have the lowest.
- Access to Opportunities – Adults were more likely to participate in sport if there was a sports centre/club, park, and youth club within a fifteen to twenty-minute walk from their home.
- Awareness - A greater proportion of adults participate in sport three or more times a week if they agreed with the following statement 'I know how to find out what services my local authority provides'.
- Adults participating in sport three or more times were more likely to respond positively to the following statements: Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?"; "Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?"; and "Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?". This relationship was reversed for the statement, "Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?".
- The more likely an adult is to participate in sport three or more times a week, the less lonely they feel.
- The survey contains information about specific lifestyle behaviours of adults in Wales. These are smoking and e-cigarette use, alcohol use, fruit and vegetable consumption, physical activity (meeting the Chief Medical Officer guidelines), and body mass index (BMI). In general, adults that exhibit healthy lifestyle behaviours are more likely to participate in sport three or more times a week.
- For more background information on the survey, please see the Welsh Government's web pages (<http://www.gov.wales/nationalsurvey>).

Introduction

The National Survey for Wales involves face-to-face interviews with more than 11,000 randomly-selected adults aged 16 and over. The survey covers a wide range of issues affecting people and their local area.

This release contains only a selection of results; more detailed tables of results have been published, and further analysis on particular topics will be published throughout the year via the Welsh Government.

The Sport and Active Lifestyles results from the National Survey for Wales provides one of the main sources of data used by Sport Wales to strategically monitor and track trends in sport in Wales, as well as forming a base from which to shape policy and practice.

Some of the results are used to measure progress towards the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

Under section (10) (1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must publish indicators (“national indicators”) for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals.

The percentage participating in sporting activities three or more times a week is one of 46 national indicators.

Method

The Welsh Government awarded the contract for conducting the National Survey for Wales to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Field work began in 2016 and is planned to run continuously for a period of five years, with survey results being published annually.

The first wave of the new survey ran between the end of March 2016 and March 2017. This avoided any seasonal effects on the results. It involved conducting more than 10,000 interviews of people aged 16 and over, based on a randomly selected sample of residential addresses across Wales. The second wave of the survey began as the first wave ended. It ran between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018 and contained 11,000 randomly-selected adults aged 16 and over.

The survey questionnaire and all supporting materials were available as standard in both Welsh and English, with interviews also offered in other languages with the help of an interpreter, if required.

Given the difference in the way the data has been collected, it is not possible to make comparisons between the data collected during the former Active Adult Survey cycles and the new sport data captured as part of the National Survey for Wales. This means that the National Survey 2016-17 results are to be treated as a new baseline from which to measure progress and as an opportunity to explore the links between sport and other policy areas thereafter.

Results on many more topics, including detailed breakdowns, are available in an interactive [results viewer](#) on the National Survey for Wales web pages as part of the Welsh Government website (<http://www.gov.wales/nationalsurvey>). The results which feed into the national indicators for the [Well-being of Future Generations Act](#) are available as open data on [StatsWales](#).

The National Survey for Wales web pages also contain more background information on the survey, the survey method and questionnaire coverage, latest news, results and reports from the development work, and further information on data linkage.

Results

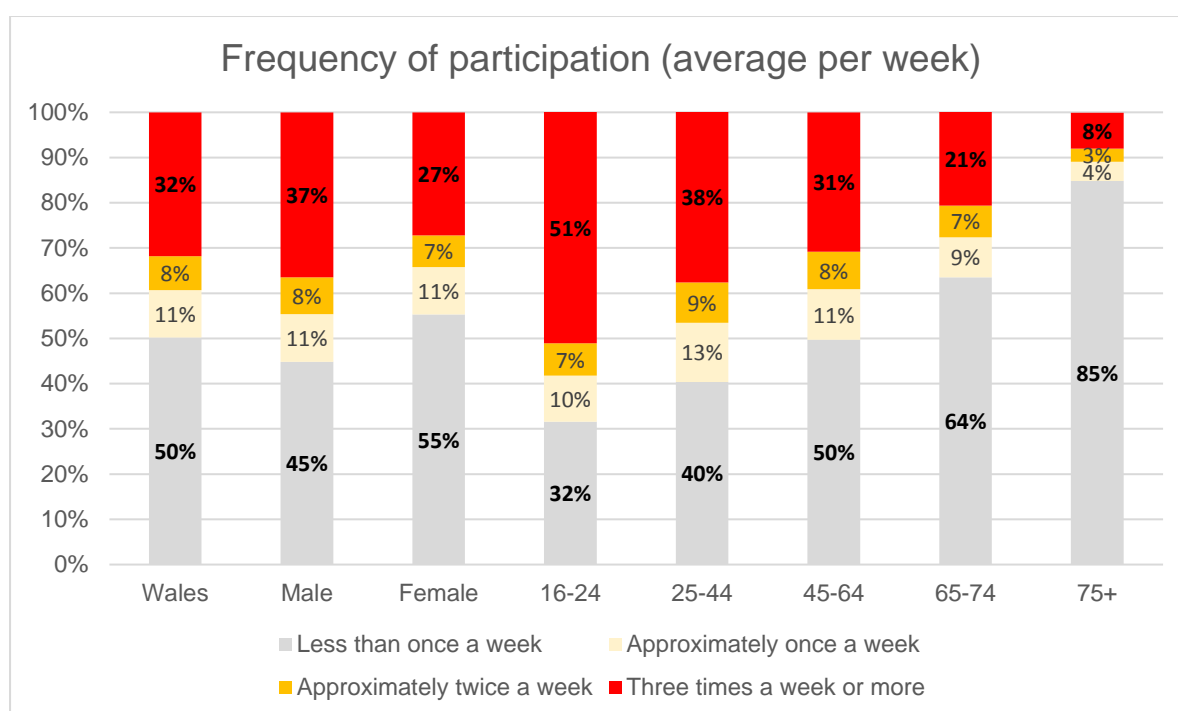
This report provides an overview of the data on:

1. Frequency of participation in sport (average per week)
2. Participation in sport (any participation in the previous four weeks)
3. Latent demand for sport
4. Access to Opportunities and Awareness
5. General Health, Personal Well-being and Loneliness
6. Healthy Behaviours

1. Frequency of participation in sport (average per week)

In 2017-2018, 32% of adults participated in a sporting activity three times a week or more. 8% participated approximately twice a week, 11% participated approximately once a week and 50% participated less than once a week. Males were more likely to participate in sport three times a week (37%) and less likely to participate less than once a week (45%) than females (of whom 27% participated in sport three times a week and 55% participated less than once a week respectively). Similarly, younger people were more likely to participate in sport three times a week and less likely to participate less than once a week than older people. **Figure 1** shows frequency of participation by gender and age.

Figure 1: Frequency of participation (week) – by gender and age



Disability, employment status and other characteristics were also linked to differences in frequency of participation. For example:

- Adults with a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity were less likely to participate in sport three times a week (23%) and more likely to participate less than once a week (62%) than those without a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity (of whom 39% participated in sport three times a week and 39% participated less than once a week).
- Those in employment were more likely to have participated three times a week (39%) and less likely to have participated less than once a week (39%) than the unemployed or economically inactive (of the unemployed, 30% participated three times a week and 56% participated less than once a week, and of the economically inactive, 24% participated less than once a week, and of the economically inactive 64% participated less than once a week).
- People using the Welsh language daily were more likely to participate in sport three times a week (37%) and less likely to participate less than once a week (43%) than others (of whom 31% participated three times a week and 51% participated less than once a week).
- Those living in households in material deprivation were less likely to have participated three times a week (22%) and more likely to have participated less than once a week (64%) than others (of whom 34% participated three times a week and 47% participated less than once a week).

The proportion of adults that participate in sport three or more times a week also varies by local authority (**Table 1**):

Table 1: Participation in sport three times a week or more, by area

	2017-2018 (%)	Number of Adults
Isle of Anglesey	34	19,000
Gwynedd	33	32,000
Conwy	30	28,000
Denbighshire	32	24,000
Flintshire	28	34,000
Wrexham	28	30,000
Powys	32	34,000
Ceredigion	31	18,000
Pembrokeshire	32	32,000
Carmarthenshire	35	52,000
Swansea	37	71,000
Neath Port Talbot	27	30,000
Bridgend	28	31,000
Vale of Glamorgan	39	40,000
Cardiff	37	103,000
Rhondda Cynon Taf	21	40,000
Merthyr Tydfil	25	12,000
Caerphilly	32	46,000
Blaenau Gwent	24	13,000
Torfaen	31	23,000
Monmouthshire	38	29,000
Newport	36	42,000

The proportion of adults that participated in sport three times a week or more ranged from 21% to 39%. The highest rate of participation was found for the Vale of Glamorgan while the lowest was RCT.¹

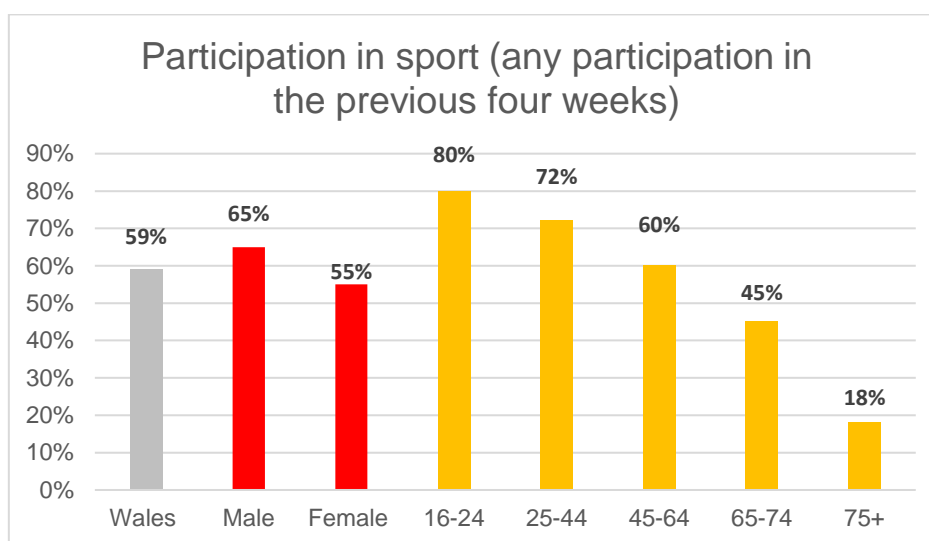
¹ Note that although the percentages for these local authorities are different they both equate to approx. 40,000 adults that participate in sport three or more times a week.

There is no significant difference between urban and rural Wales² (both 32%).

2. Participation in sport (any participation in the previous four weeks)

In 2017-2018, 59% of adults reported that they had taken part in some sporting activity in the last four weeks. Males (65%) were more likely to have participated than females (55%), and younger people were more likely to have participated than older people. This is shown in **Figure 2**.

Figure 2: Any participation in sport in the last four weeks – by gender and age



Disability, employment status and other characteristics were also linked to differences in participation. For example:

- Adults with a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity were less likely to have participated in a sporting activity in the last four weeks (46%) than those without (71%).
- Those in employment were more likely to have participated in a sporting activity in the last four weeks (73%), than those who were unemployed (55%) or economically inactive (44%).
- People using the Welsh language in their everyday life were more likely to have participated in a sporting activity in the last four weeks (67%) than others (59%).
- Those living in a household in material deprivation were less likely to have participated in a sporting activity in the last four weeks (46%) than those who weren't (62%).

² Using the ONS definition of Urban and Rural Wales. This is a method of assigning small areas to rural / urban areas based on the size of the physical settlement, those having a population above 10,000 being classed as urban and the remainder as rural. For further detail please see: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/geography/geographicalproducts/ruralurbanclassifications/2011ruralurbanclassification>

Most common sporting activities

Table 2 shows the opportunities that adults in Wales were most likely to be accessing. The most popular activity for both males and females in Wales was walking (over two miles). Swimming, running and jogging were also popular activities among both genders.

Table 2: Popular activities – percentage and by gender

Sporting activity	Wales (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Walking (over 2 miles)	33	32	33
Gym or fitness classes	16	15	16
Swimming (indoor or outdoor)	15	14	17
Any cycling (inc. BMX, or mountain biking)	11	16	6
Jogging	11	12	9
Football (indoor, outdoor or futsal)	8	14	2
Pool	6	9	3
Rambling/ hill & fell walking	6	6	5
Road running/cross country	5	7	4
Golf (inc. pitch and putt)	4	7	2
Dance (any)	3	1	5

For more information on participation by sport or activity please see the National Survey for Wales 'Results Viewer'.

3. Latent demand for sport

55% of all adults would like to do more sport or physical activity. This data is referred to by the sport sector as 'latent demand'. The greatest demand can be seen for swimming (20%), cycling (including BMX, and mountain biking;12%) and gym or fitness classes (9%). Other types of activities in demand by gender are shown in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Percentage of adults reporting a latent demand for sports and activities by gender

Latent demand for...	Wales (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Swimming (indoor or outdoor)	20	16	23
Any cycling (inc. BMX, or mountain biking)	12	15	10
Gym or fitness classes	9	7	11
Walking (over 2 miles)	8	7	9
Canoeing/kayaking	7	9	6
Skiing	7	8	6
Climbing/mountaineering/ rock climbing	6	7	5
Tennis	6	6	6
Archery	5	7	4
Horse Riding / jumping	5	3	8
Football (indoor/outdoor/futsal)	5	9	1
Badminton	5	5	5
Dance (any)	5	1	7

For more information on latent demand for sport and activity please see the National Survey for Wales 'Results Viewer'.

Table 4 displays the proportion of adults with a demand to do more sport in each local authority in Wales. The percentage of adults with a demand to do more sport ranged from 41% in Gwynedd to 70% in Monmouthshire.

Table 4: Demand to do more sport, by area

	2017-2018 (%)	Number of Adults
Isle of Anglesey	68	38,000
Gwynedd	41	40,000
Conwy	51	49,000
Denbighshire	56	43,000
Flintshire	52	64,000
Wrexham	56	61,000
Powys	55	58,000
Ceredigion	52	31,000
Pembrokeshire	42	42,000
Carmarthenshire	58	87,000
Swansea	53	103,000
Neath Port Talbot	45	50,000
Bridgend	52	58,000
Vale of Glamorgan	55	56,000
Cardiff	64	180,000
Rhondda Cynon Taf	42	80,000
Merthyr Tydfil	36	17,000
Caerphilly	62	90,000
Blaenau Gwent	51	28,000
Torfaen	66	49,000
Monmouthshire	70	53,000
Newport	68	79,000

The remainder of the report will focus on WFG Indicator 38 – participation in sport three or more times a week. This variable will be explored across other 2017-18 survey questions.

4. Access to Opportunities and Awareness

In general, adult participation in sport is associated with deprivation. The less deprived the community, the more likely it is that adults in that community will participate in sport three or more times a week.

WIMD is the Welsh Government's official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in Wales. It is designed to identify those small areas where there are the highest concentrations of several different types of deprivation. It does so by combining multiple indicators to provide each small area in Wales a deprivation score.

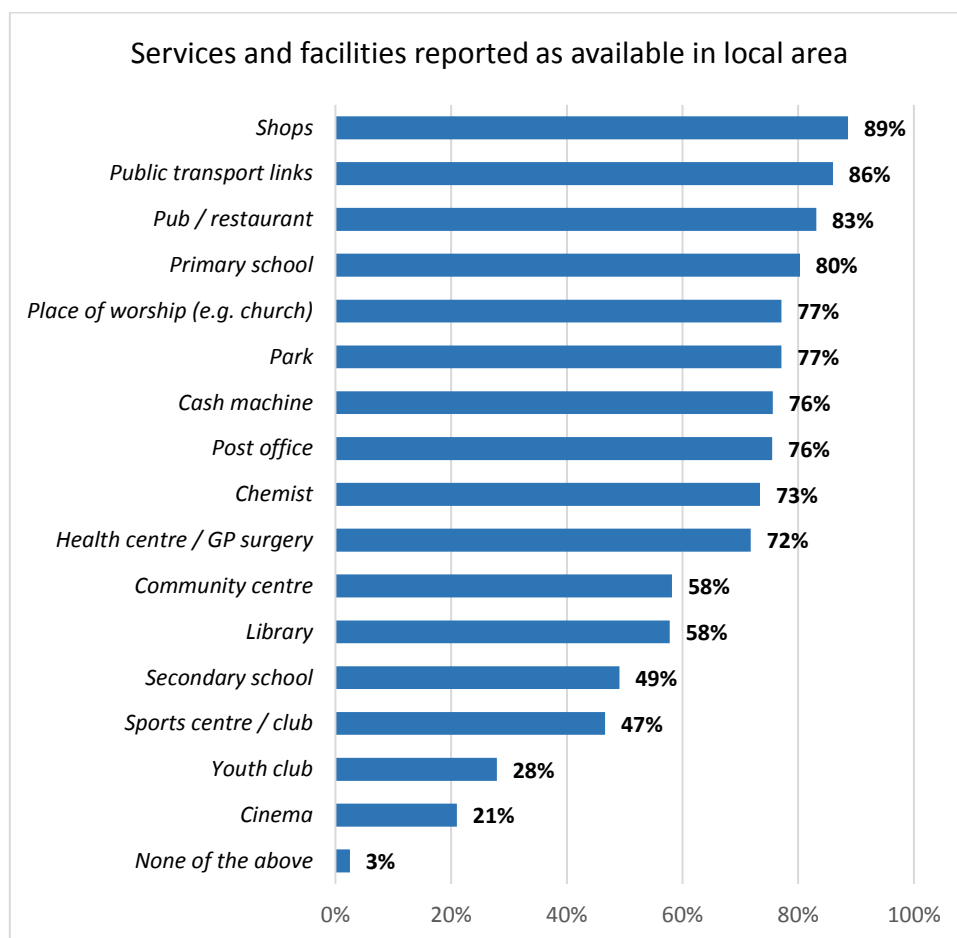
In Wales, adults in the most deprived 20% of communities are less likely to participate in sport three or more times a week (24%) than adults living in the least deprived communities (39%).

As noted above the WIMD is made up of multiple domains that contain multiple measures that combine to provide an overall score. More detailed analysis of these domains reveals that the association between frequency of participation and deprivation does not occur for all domains in the WIMD.

Indeed, adults living in health deprived communities (most deprived 20%, WIMD Health Domain) were less likely to participate in sport three or more times a week (25%) compared to those in the healthiest communities (39%). The same pattern was also found for the income domain (25% and 35% respectively), the employment domain (25% and 35% respectively), the education domain (26% and 39% respectively), and the community safety domain (28% and 35%). So, in general, if communities are not deprived with respect to health, income, employment, education, or community safety the proportion of adults regularly participating in sport is greater. However, frequency of participation in sport was not associated with the housing domain, the physical environment domain, or the access to services domain. This is an interesting finding and warrants further investigation. New questions added to the 2017-18 survey help to demonstrate that there is a bit more to this story.

In 2017-18 adults in the NSW were asked to think about the area within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance from their home and if any of the following facilities/services were available: Shops, Pub / restaurant, Cinema, Park, Library, Community centre, Sports centre / club, Youth club, Health centre / GP surgery, Chemist, Post office, Primary school, Secondary school, Place of worship (e.g. church), Cash machine, Public transport links (e.g. train station or bus route). A summary of availability is shown in **Figure 3**.

Figure 3: Services and facilities available in local area



Adults with a **Park** or a **Sport Centre/Club** in their local area were more likely to participate in sport three or more times a week. However, there was no statistical difference between other types of services/facilities (e.g. shops, schools, GPs), with youth clubs and pubs/restaurants being the exceptions. These significant differences are shown in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Regular participation in sport, by facility/service type

	Proportion of adults that participate in sport three or more times a week:	
	With facility/service in local area	Without facility /service in local area
Youth club	38%	31%
Sports centre / club	37%	30%
Park	35%	28%
Pubs/Restaurants	34%	26%

Adults who agreed with the following statement 'I know how to find out what services my local authority provides' were more likely to participate in sport three or more times a week when compared to those that disagreed. The results are shown in **Table 6**.

Table 6: Regular participation in sport, by awareness of local authority services

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree
'I know how to find out what services my local authority provides'	33%	33%	33%	27%	25%

More generally, adults that participated in sport three or more times a week were more likely to use the internet; and use it for multiple activities (e.g. use a search engine such as Google, send an email, download an app, watch an online video, shop, etc.) than adults who participated less frequently. One in five adults that participated less frequently had not used the internet in the last four weeks.

5. General Health, Personal Well-being and Loneliness

The ONS uses 4 survey questions to measure personal well-being (sometimes referred to as subjective well-being). The four questions are: "Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?"; "Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?"; "Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?"; "Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?". People are asked to respond to the questions on a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'completely'.

Table 7 shows how the proportion of adults who participate in sport three or more times a week varies according to how they responded to each of the four questions.

Table 7: Regular participation in sport, by personal well-being questions (ONS 4).

	Low (0-4)	Medium (5-6)	High (7-8)	Very high (9-10)
Overall satisfaction with life	17%	25%	34%	33%
Overall extent of feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile	19%	23%	34%	34%
Overall happiness	24%	29%	33%	33%
Overall anxiousness	33%	34%	30%	29%

Firstly, survey respondents were asked about their overall satisfaction with life. Adults with high or very high life satisfaction were more likely to participate in regular sport than those with medium or low satisfaction.

Similarly, respondents were then asked 'Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?'. Adults with high or very high score were more likely to participate in regular sport (both 34%) than those with medium or low score (23% and 19% respectively).

Adults were also asked about their overall happiness. This too was associated with frequency of participation; higher happiness scores were associated with a greater proportion of adults participating in sport on a regular basis.

Conversely, frequency of participation in sport was inversely correlated with how anxious adults felt (on the previous day). Adults who were more anxious (i.e. higher scores) were less likely to regularly participate in sport. So, for example, only 29% of adults that scored very high on the scale (i.e. very anxious) participated in sport three or more times a week. Compare this to those with low scores (i.e. not very anxious), where a higher proportion of adults participate in sport three or more times a week (33%).

In general, there was greater chance adults were satisfied with life, felt that things done in life were worthwhile, were happy, and were not anxious if they participate in sport three or more times a week.

A survey question was also asked about general health - 38% of adults with very good or good health participate in sport three or more time a week. This is significantly higher than for those with fair (20%) and bad/very bad health (7%).

Survey respondents were asked a range of questions to identify loneliness. If adults participate in sport three or more times a week they are less likely to lonely.

Table 8: *Regular participation and demand for sport, by loneliness*

	Not lonely (0)	Sometimes lonely (1-3)	Lonely (4-6)
Participation in sport (3 or more times a week)	33%	34%	28%
Latent demand for sport	49%	58%	63%

In addition, adults who are lonely are more likely to want to do more sport or physical recreation. The results are displayed in **Table 8**.

6. Healthy Behaviors

Physical activity guidelines - The guidelines for physical activity have been summarized, for the purpose of analysis, as undertaking 150 minutes' worth of moderate/vigorous activity in a week. 53% of adults are sufficiently active for at least this amount of time (81% of adults that participate in sport three or more times in a week meet this guideline in terms of duration and time).

As a result, 47% of adults fall short of this recommended guideline (i.e. do less than 150 minutes of moderate/vigorous activity in a week). Of these, 37% would like to do more sport or physical recreation.

Adults who are active for at least 150 minutes in a week are most likely to participate in sport three or more times a week.

Body Mass Index (BMI) - In terms of BMI measurement, 60% of adults are classified as overweight or obese. Adults who were classified as overweight or obese were less likely to participate in sport three or more times a week than those that measured a healthy weight.

Smoking - 19% of adults currently smoke. Adults who currently smoke are less likely to participate in sport three or more times a week than those have never smoked.

Fruit and vegetable consumption - 23% of adults eat at least five portions of fruit or vegetables daily. Adults who consumed this amount of fruit and vegetables were more likely to participate in sport three or more times a week than those who did not eat at least five portions.

Alcohol Consumption - 47% of adults did not drink in the previous week, however, 18% of adults exceeded weekly drinking guidelines (historic). There is a correlation between weekly alcohol units consumed and frequency of participation. Adults that consume more weekly units of alcohol are more likely to have participated three or more times a week.

Key quality information

Background

The National Survey for Wales is carried out by the Office for National Statistics on behalf of the Welsh Government. The results reported in this bulletin are based on interviews completed between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018.

23,517 addresses were chosen randomly from the Royal Mail's Small User Postcode Address File. Interviewers visited each address and randomly selected one adult (aged 16+) in the household. They then carried out a 45-minute face-to-face interview with them, covering a range of views, behaviours, and characteristics. A total of 11,381 interviews were achieved with a response rate of 54.5%.

More information on the method is available in the [technical report](#).

Interpreting the results

Figures quoted in this bulletin are based on only those respondents who provided an answer to the relevant question. Some topics in the survey were only asked of a sub-sample of respondents and other questions were not asked where the question was not applicable. Missing answers can also occur for several reasons, including a refusal or an inability to answer a particular question.

Where a relationship has been discussed between two factors, this does not mean it is a causal relationship. More detailed analysis is required to identify whether one factor causes change in another, or if other factors are actually more important.

The results are weighted to ensure that the results reflect the age and sex distribution of the Welsh population.

Quality report

A summary [Quality report](#) is available, containing more detailed information on the quality of the survey as well as a summary of the methods used to compile the results.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10) (1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must publish indicators ("national indicators") for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals.

The National Survey collects information for 15 of the [46 indicators](#), 9 of these are reported on here:

3. Percentage of adults, who have fewer than two healthy lifestyle behaviours (not smoking, healthy weight, and meet guidelines on fruit and vegetables, drinking, and physical activity).
19. Percentage living in households in material deprivation.
20. Percentage moderately or very satisfied with their jobs.
24. Percentage satisfied with their ability to get to/ access the facilities and services they need.
28. Percentage who volunteer.
30. Percentage who are lonely.
35. Percentage attending or participating in arts, culture or heritage activities at least 3 times a year.
36. Percentage who speak Welsh daily and can speak more than just a few words of Welsh.
38. Percentage participating in sporting activities three or more times a week.

Results for these indicators are available as open data on [StatsWales](#). Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the well-being goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](#).

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

Next update

This release presents a small selection of results. There will be a number of more detailed, topic-specific outputs published throughout the year. Publication plans are on the [National Survey webpages](#).

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics: email insight@sport.wales