

Women's involvement and participation in sport and physical activity

SPORT FOR EQUALITY



Health benefits

74%

of women achieved the WHO¹ requirement of at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week for substantial health benefits.

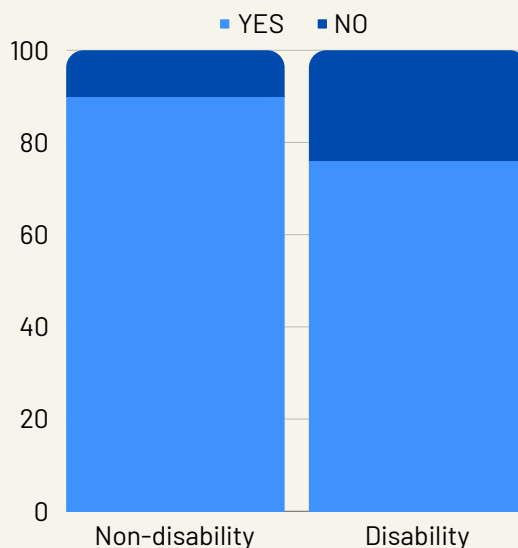
Women with disabilities, older women, transgender women, and migrant women tended to participate less in physical activity or sport.

Level of physical activity

Example:

women with disabilities

Regular physical activity or sport/s



¹ WHO: Bull, F. C., Al-Ansari, S. S., Biddle, S., Borodulin, K., Buman, M. P., Cardon, G., ... & Willumsen, J. F. (2020). World Health Organization 2020 guidelines on physical activity and sedentary behaviour. British journal of sports medicine, 54(24), 1451-1462. [Link](#)

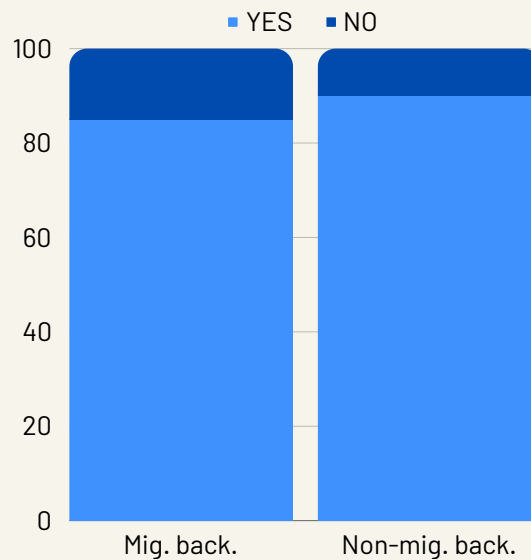
Example: age

| Participation in sport | | 18-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55+ |
|------------------------|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| Yes | # | 47 | 178 | 111 | 50 | 47 |
| | % | 87% | 91% | 93% | 83% | 81% |
| No | # | 7 | 18 | 8 | 10 | 111 |
| | % | 13% | 9% | 7% | 17% | 9% |

Example:

migrant background

Regular physical activity or sport/s



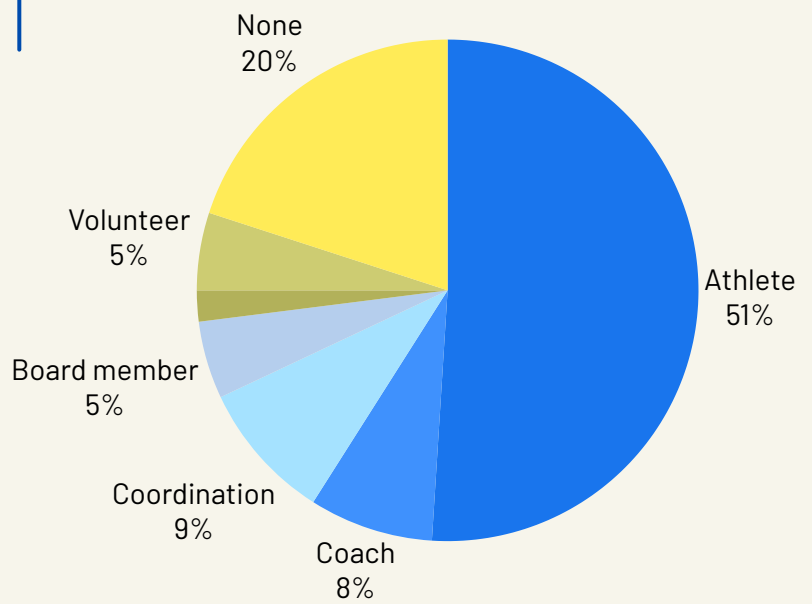
Competition

80%

As the competitive level of sport increases, the number of women participants decreases, with almost 80% of women in the study preferring physical activity or recreational sport.

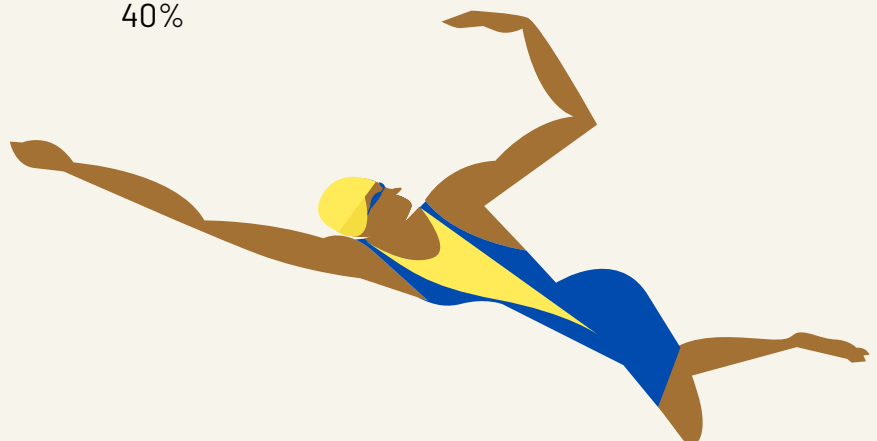
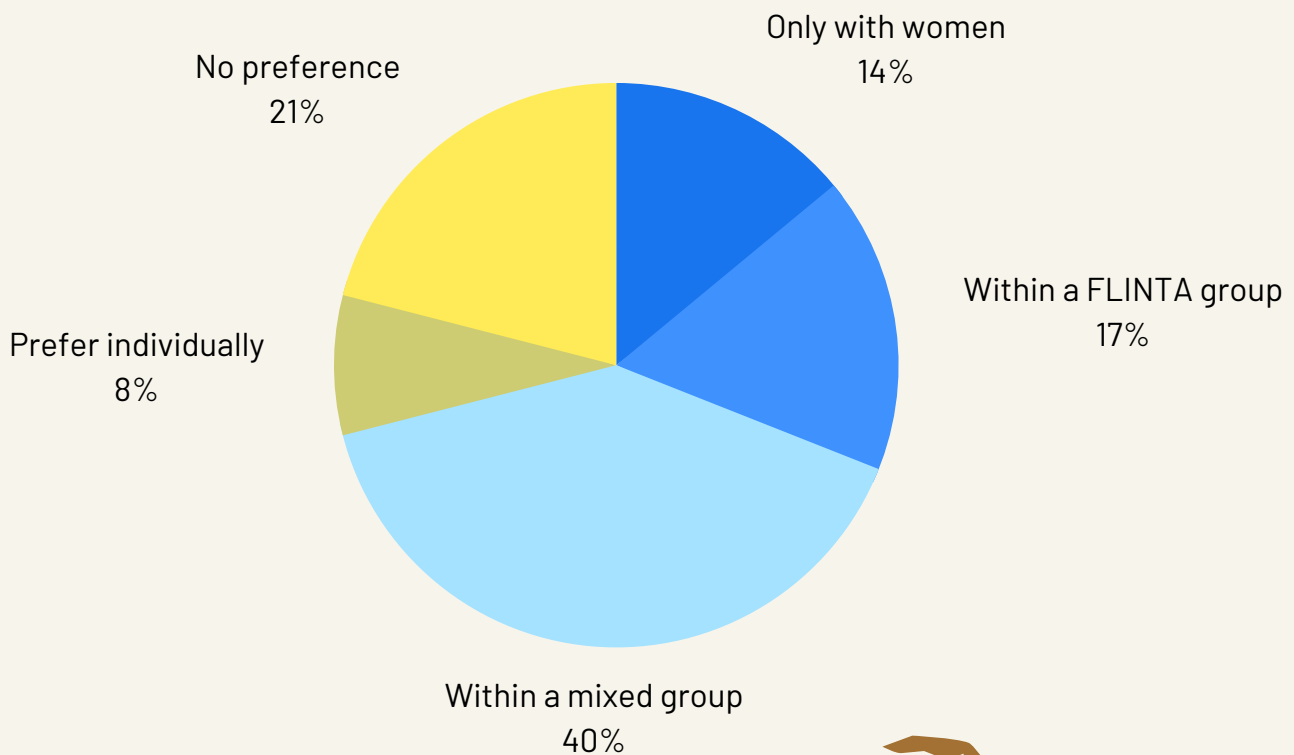
Among the women respondents, the majority (51%) were athletes, followed by those in coordination or management roles (9%), coaches (8%), board members (5%), volunteers (5%), and referees (2%). 20% of the women did not hold any role in a sport organisation in the previous 12 months.

Role in the sport organisation



Preference for engaging in physical activity or sports with others.

40% of respondents preferred mixed spaces, where all genders train or compete, or they do not pay particular attention to their workout companions (21%). Nonetheless, it's worth noting that 17% preferred spaces exclusively for FLINTA² groups (for example, spaces excluding individuals identifying as cisgender men), 14% preferred to exercise only with women and 8% preferred to exercise individually.



² FLINTA: German acronym stands for Female, Lesbian, Intersex, Trans and Agender. It stands for anyone who is not a cisgender man.

In general, women's participation in professional sports clubs was low, with cisgender women at 10% and transgender women at 2%, whereas their participation in informal groups increased to 24%. Lesbian women primarily participated in LGBTQI+ sports clubs (30%) when heterosexual women mostly engaged in amateur clubs (35%).

Types of sport organisation

| Sport organisation | | Professional sports club | Amateur sports club | LGTBIQ+ sports club | Profit organisation | Informal group | Club + informal |
|--------------------|---|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Yes | # | 1 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 11 | 7 |
| | % | 2% | 26% | 20% | 13% | 24% | 15% |
| No | # | 39 | 99 | 66 | 45 | 57 | 66 |
| | % | 10% | 27% | 18% | 12% | 15% | 18% |

“The research: “Women's participation in sport across Europe”

These findings are the results of a survey conducted in 2023 by the Equality Within Sport (EWS) committee of the European Non-Governmental Sport Organisation (ENGSO). The answers analysed came from 487 respondents above 18 years old who either fully or partially identified as women, from 30 countries in Europe. The study focused on women and adopted an intersectional³ perspective, specifically taking into account six socio-demographic aspects: age, gender identity, sexual orientation, migrant background, disability and social status. [Read the full report here.](#)

³ Intersectionality: first coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, is known as a powerful theoretical framework for examining how diverse patterns of identity-based inequality, such as sexism, racism, ableism, and nationalism are mutually constituted (Crenshaw, 1989).