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The 2018 SSF National Sports-Life Survey

Executive Summary March 2019, Japan



SASAKAWA SPORTS FOUNDATION

Overview

1 Introduction

In order to understand the level of participation in sports and physical activities by Japanese, the Sasakawa Sports Foundation (SSF) has examined the statistical data gathered through the “SSF National Sports-Life Survey”, which has been conducted every other year since 1992. This survey measures the number of people aged 18 and over taking part in sports and physical activities across Japan in terms of frequency, duration and intensity. People take part in sports and physical activities in different ways, with many doing a range of activities including sports spectating, sports volunteering.

2 Survey design

- 1) Population: People aged 18 and over who live in Japan
- 2) Sample size: 3,000
- 3) Number of locations: 300 (88 in metro areas; 122 in cities with a population of over 100,000 people; 65 in cities with a population of less than 100,000 people; 25 in towns and villages)
- 4) Extracting method: Quota method

3 Survey period

July 6th - August 10th, 2018

4 Survey methods

Leaving method:

The survey official visits the respondent, distributing the paper-based questionnaire and having the respondent fill out the survey within a certain period. The survey official then returns to the respondent to collect the survey.

5 Survey sample

3,000 (Male : 1,491, Female : 1,509)
 18・19 years old 71 (Male : 37, Female : 34)
 20-29 381 (Male : 194, Female : 187)
 30-39 480 (Male : 245, Female : 235)
 40-49 595 (Male : 303, Female : 292)
 50-59 481 (Male : 242, Female : 239)
 60-69 564 (Male : 276, Female : 288)
 70 and over 428 (Male : 194, Female : 234)

Table of Contents

■ Annual changes in sports and physical activities	1
■ Levels of sports and physical activities	2
■ Types of sports and physical activities	4
■ Sports clubs	6
■ Sports spectating	8
■ Sports volunteering	12

Description of terms

● Range of sports and physical activities

This survey measures a wide range of sporting activities including fitness activities, Strolling/Walking/Cycling for leisure or travel and dance. The school PE classes were excluded whilst sports club activities at schools and workplaces were included.

● Estimated participants

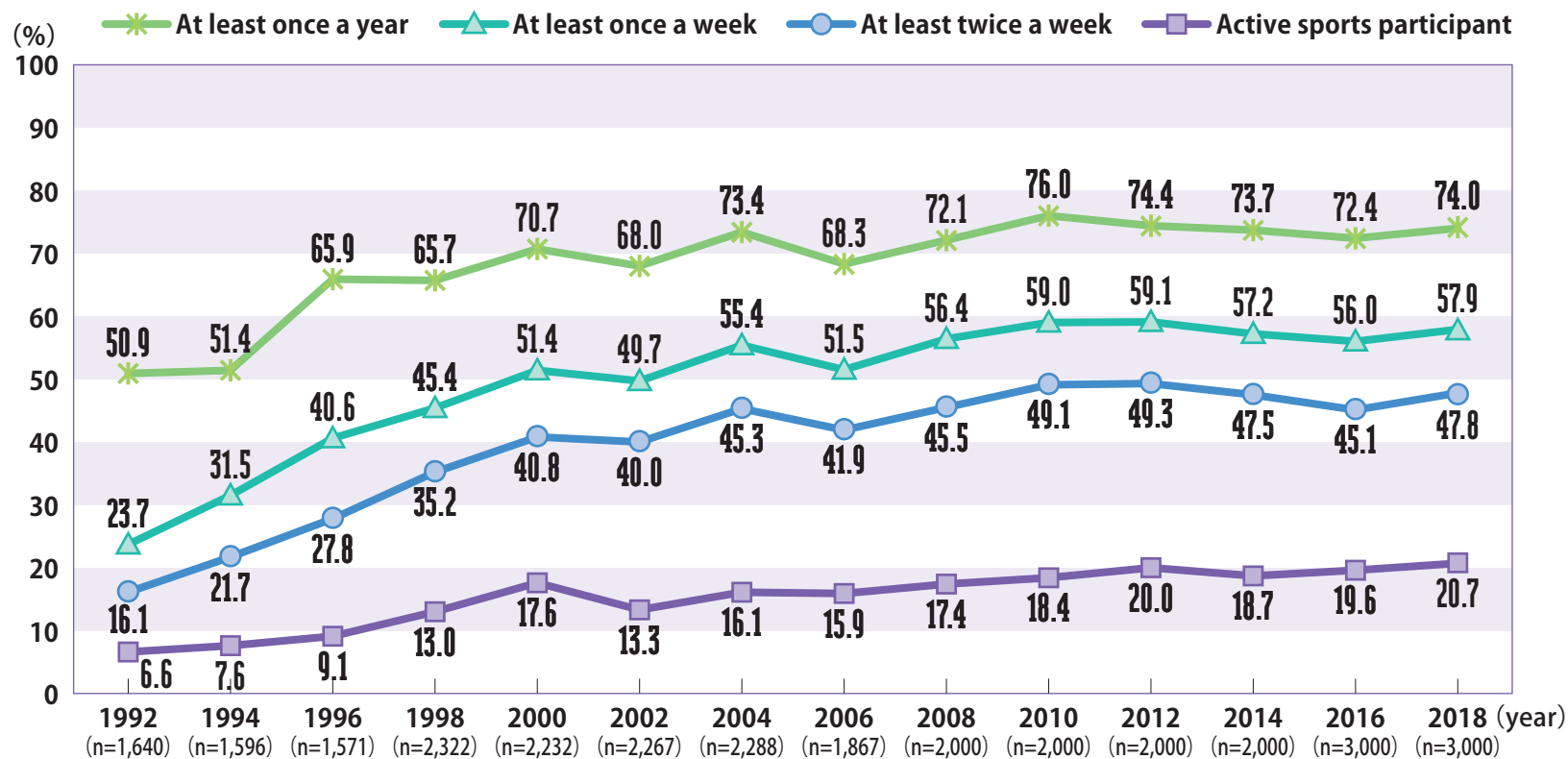
Estimated sports participants are calculated by applying the rate of regular sports and physical activities participation over the past year to the total population of those 18 and over (106,011,547 people in Japan).

● Level of participation in sports and physical activities

In this survey, the participation in sports and physical activities are divided into the following levels; “Level 0” for those who did not participate in any sports or physical activities for the past year; “Level 1” for those who participated at least once during the year, but less than twice a week; “Level 2” for those who participated at least twice a week; “Level 3” for those who participated at least twice a week with a duration of “more than 30 minutes”; and “Level 4” for those who participated at least twice a week, duration of “more than 30 minutes”, and with more than moderate intensity.

Annual changes in sports and physical activities

Annual changes in sports and physical activities



Note 1: Until 2014, the survey targeted people aged 20 years and over; starting in 2016, it targeted those aged 18 years and over.

Note 2: Active sports participants are Level 4 people (those who participated for at least 30 minutes twice a week at moderate intensity or greater).

74.0% of people participated in sports and physical activities at least once in 2018.

The percentage of people who participate at least once a week has risen since 1992, from **23.7%** to **57.9%** in 2018.

Similarly, the percentage for participation at least twice a week in 2018 was **47.8%**, continuing its climb from the **16.1%** recorded in 1992.

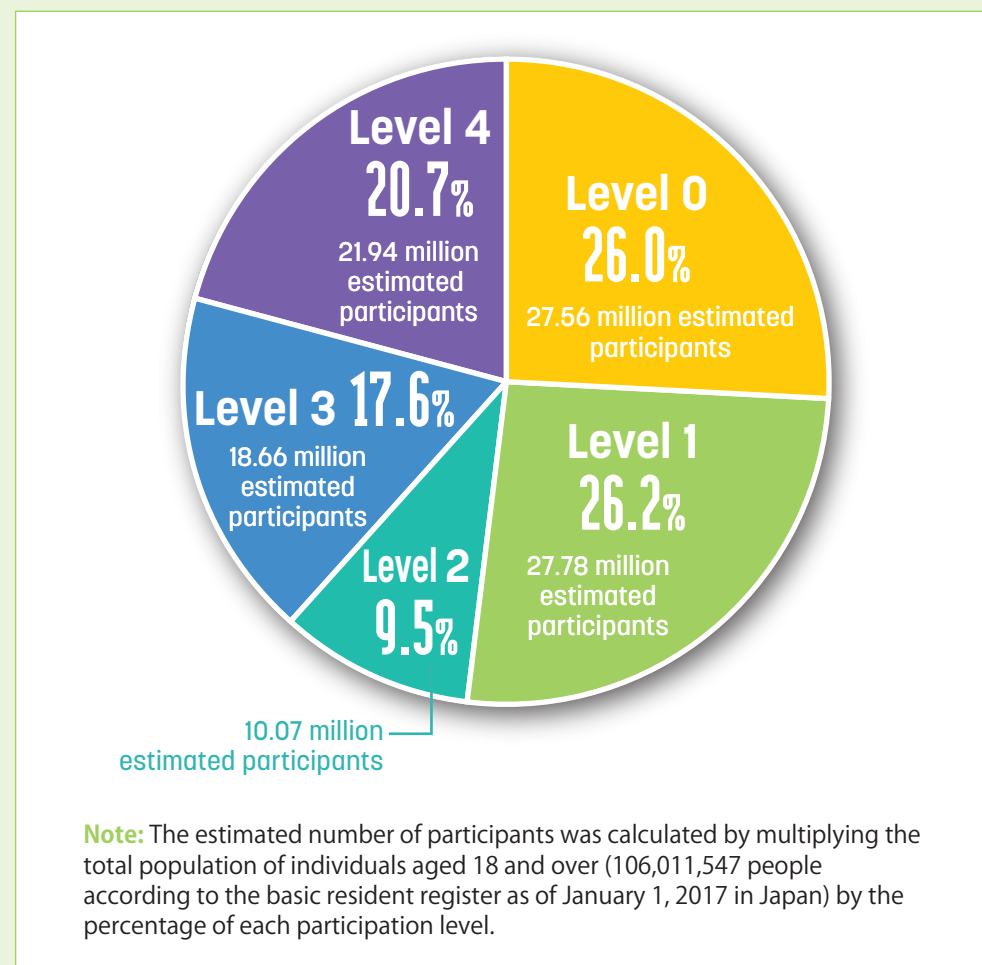
The number of active sports participants was at an all-time high of **20.7%**.

Levels of sports and physical activities

Definition of levels

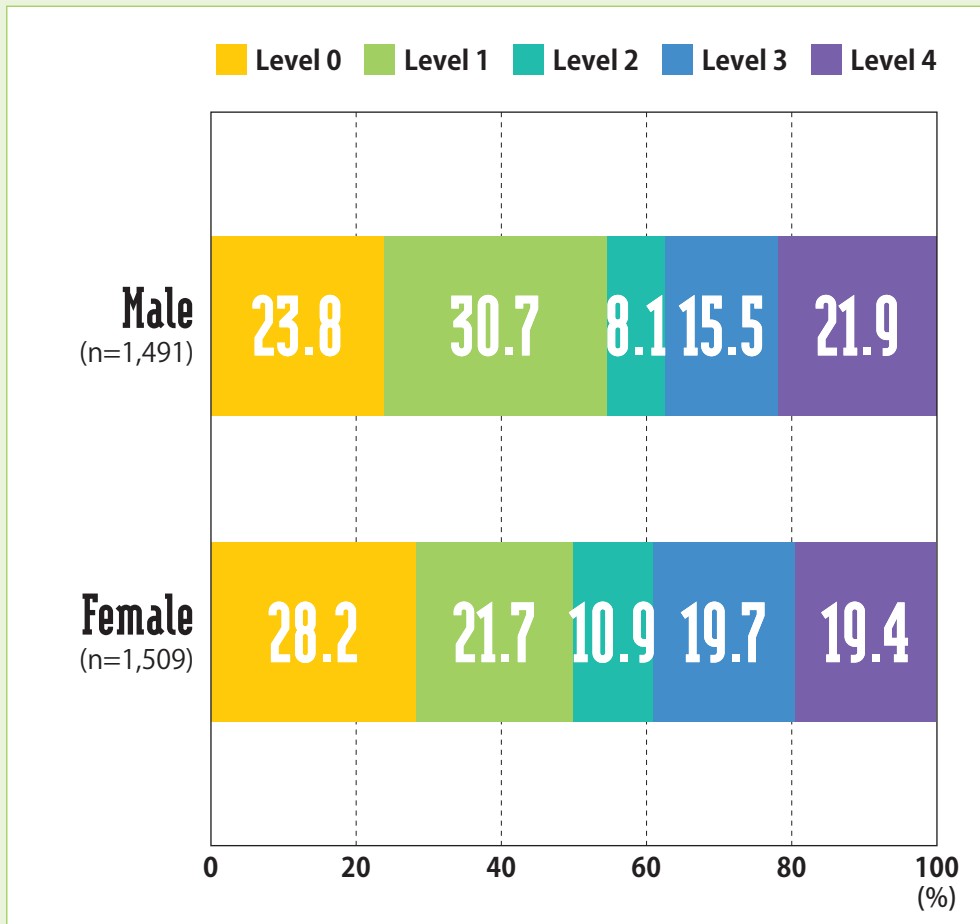
Level	Definition
Level 0	For the past year, no sports/physical activities at all
Level 1	At least once a year, less than twice a week (1-103 times a year)
Level 2	At least twice a week (at least 104 times a year)
Level 3	At least twice a week, at least 30 min at a time
Level 4 (Active Sports Participant)	At least twice a week, at least 30 min at a time, moderate intensity at least slightly hard

Levels of sports and physical activities



26.0% of people (27.56 million) were Level 0, meaning that they did not participate in sports and physical activities at all in the past year. **26.2%** of people (27.78 million) were Level 1, **9.5%** (10.07 million) were Level 2, and **17.6%** (18.66 million) were Level 3. **20.7%** of people (21.94 million) were Level 4, meaning that they participated with the most frequency and intensity.

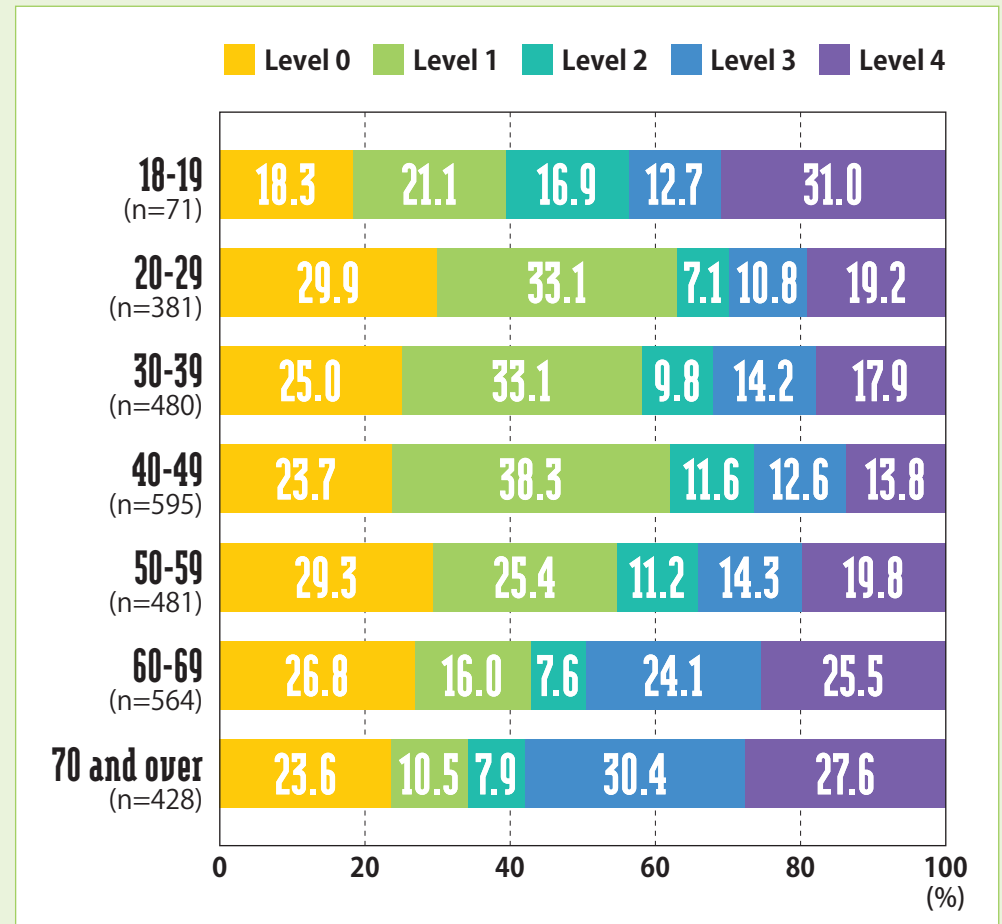
Levels of sports and physical activities : By gender



45.5% of males and **50.0%** of females participated in sports and physical activities at least twice a week (Level 2 or greater), with females holding a higher percentage by 4.5points.

23.8% of males and **28.2%** of females did not participate in sports and physical activities at all (Level 0), with females holding a higher percentage by 4.4 points.

Levels of sports and physical activities : By age



Of the people who participated in sports and physical activities at least twice a week (Level 2 or greater), **60.6%** were aged 18-19, **37.1%** were in their 20-29, **41.9%** were in their 30-39, **38.0%** were in their 40-49, **45.3%** were in their 50-59, **57.2%** were in their 60-69, and **65.9%** were in their 70 and over.

The percentage of people who participated at least twice a week increased along with the percentage of people in their 40s and over who participated.

Types of sports and physical activities

Types of sports and physical activities

Total (n=3,000)			
Rank	Types of sports	Participation rate (%)	Estimated participants (in 10,000s)
1	Strolling	30.9	3,276
2	Walking	25.4	2,693
3	Calisthenics and light exercises	19.6	2,078
4	Weight training	15.2	1,611
5	Bowling	9.9	1,050
6	Jogging and Running	9.6	1,018
7	Golf on a course	8.1	859
8	Fishing	7.2	763
9	Swimming	6.9	731
10	Golf practice on a driving range	6.6	700
11	Sea bathing	6.4	678
12	Cycling	5.9	625
	Table tennis	5.9	625
14	Playing catch	5.7	604
15	Yoga	5.5	583
16	Badminton	5.2	551
17	Football	4.7	498
18	Jumping rope	4.5	477
19	Hiking	4.2	445
20	Baseball	3.8	403

Note: The estimated number of participants was calculated by multiplying the total population of individuals aged 18 and over (106,011,547 people according to the basic resident register as of January 1, 2017 in Japan) by the percentage of each participation level.

Of the sports and physical activities performed in the past year, "Strolling" came in first place at **30.9%** (32.76 million people), followed by "Walking" in second place at **25.4%** (26.93 million people), "Calisthenics and light exercises" in third place at **19.6%** (20.78 million people), "Weight training" in fourth place at **15.2%** (16.11 million people), and "Bowling" in fifth place at **9.9%** (10.50 million people).

Types of sports and physical activities : By gender

Male (n=1,491)			Female (n=1,509)		
Rank	Types of sports	Participation rate (%)	Rank	Types of sports	Participation rate (%)
1	Strolling	26.0	1	Strolling	35.8
2	Walking	24.1	2	Walking	26.6
3	Weight training	17.4	3	Calisthenics and light exercises	25.0
4	Golf on a course	14.8	4	Weight training	13.1
5	Calisthenics and light exercises	14.0	5	Yoga	9.7
6	Jogging and Running	13.3	6	Bowling	8.7
7	Golf practice on a driving range	11.7	7	Table tennis	6.6
8	Fishing	11.6	8	Badminton	6.4
9	Bowling	11.1	9	Swimming	6.1
10	Playing catch	8.1	10	Jogging and Running	6.0
				Jumping rope	6.0

Among females, participation in "Strolling", "Walking", "Calisthenics and light exercises", and "Weight training" was high.

For males, participation in those four activities as well as "Golf on a course", "Jogging and Running", "Golf practice on a driving range", "Fishing", and "Bowling" all exceeded 10%.

Types of sports and physical activities : By age

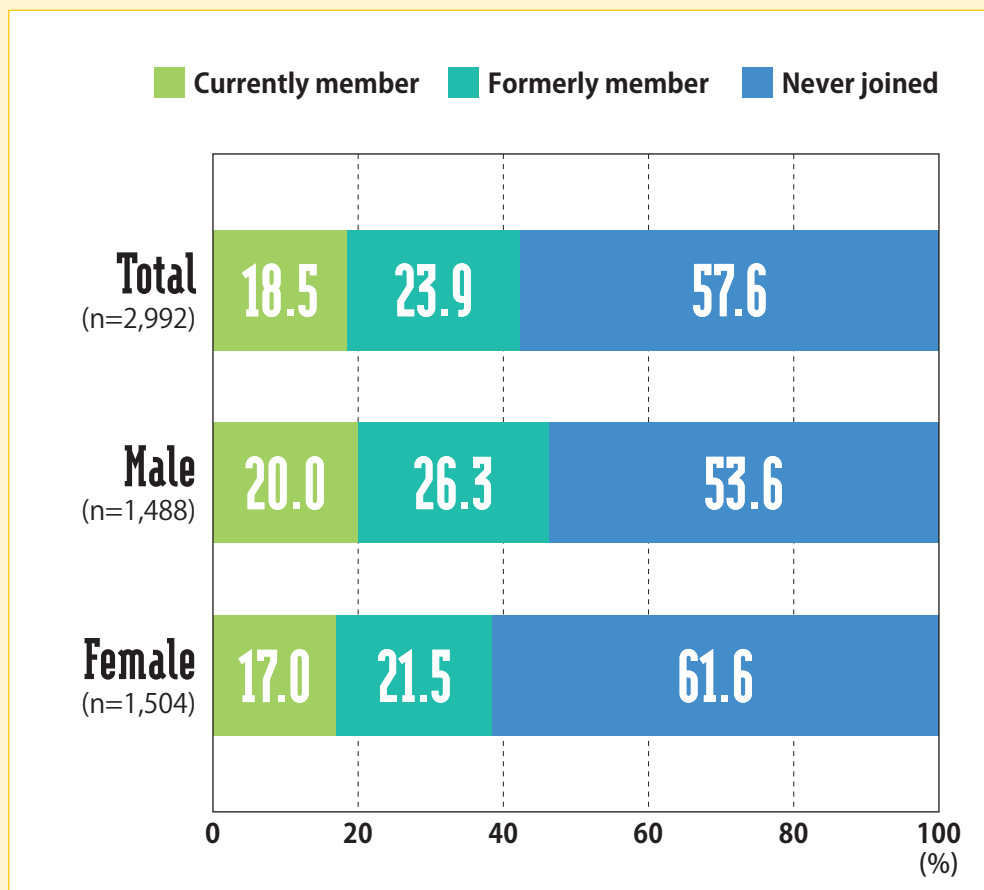
18-19 (n=71)			20-29 (n=381)			30-39 (n=480)			40-49 (n=595)		
Rank	Types of sports	Participation rate (%)	Rank	Types of sports	Participation rate (%)	Rank	Types of sports	Participation rate (%)	Rank	Types of sports	Participation rate (%)
1	Bowling	25.4	1	Strolling	26.5	1	Strolling	28.8	1	Strolling	29.2
2	Football	23.9	2	Bowling	20.5	2	Walking	19.4	2	Walking	20.5
3	Jogging and Running	22.5	3	Weight training	19.9	3	Weight training	18.5	3	Calisthenics and light exercises	19.7
	Weight training	22.5	4	Jogging and Running	15.2	4	Calisthenics and light exercises	17.3	4	Weight training	15.3
5	Strolling	21.1	5	Walking	13.9	5	Jogging and Running	15.2	5	Bowling	13.6
6	Table tennis	18.3	6	Football	10.0	6	Sea bathing	12.1	6	Sea bathing	11.3
7	Badminton	16.9	7	Table tennis	9.4	7	Bowling	10.8	7	Golf on a course	11.1
	Basketball	16.9	8	Badminton	9.2	8	Fishing	9.6	8	Fishing	9.4
9	Volleyball	15.5	9	Baseball	8.9		8	Football	9.6	8	Jogging and Running
10	Playing catch	14.1	10	Swimming	8.7	10	Playing catch	9.4	8	Playing catch	9.4
	Walking	14.1									

50-59 (n=481)			60-69 (n=564)			70 and over (n=428)		
Rank	Types of sports	Participation rate (%)	Rank	Types of sports	Participation rate (%)	Rank	Types of sports	Participation rate (%)
1	Strolling	29.5	1	Walking	36.9	1	Strolling	36.9
2	Walking	25.6	2	Strolling	35.3	2	Walking	35.5
3	Calisthenics and light exercises	20.2	3	Calisthenics and light exercises	24.5	3	Calisthenics and light exercises	26.6
4	Weight training	14.3	4	Weight training	12.1	4	Weight training	11.2
5	Jogging and Running	9.4	5	Golf on a course	9.8	5	Golf on a course	9.8
6	Golf on a course	9.1	6	Golf practice on a driving range	7.3		Ground golf	9.8
7	Fishing	7.9	7	Fishing	6.0	7	Golf practice on a driving range	5.8
8	Golf practice on a driving range	7.5	8	Hiking	5.7	8	Swimming	5.6
9	Bowling	7.1	9	Jogging and Running	5.1	9	Hiking	4.4
10	Cycling	6.4		Swimming	5.1	10	Cycling	4.2
	Yoga	6.4				10	Yoga	4.2

Participation in "Strolling", "Walking", "Calisthenics and light exercises", and "Weight training" was high across all age groups, both young and old. In addition, team ball sports such as "Football" and "Basketball" ranked highly among people aged 18 to 39. Those activities were replaced by "Golf on a course", "Golf practice on a driving range", and "Cycling" for people in their 40s and over.

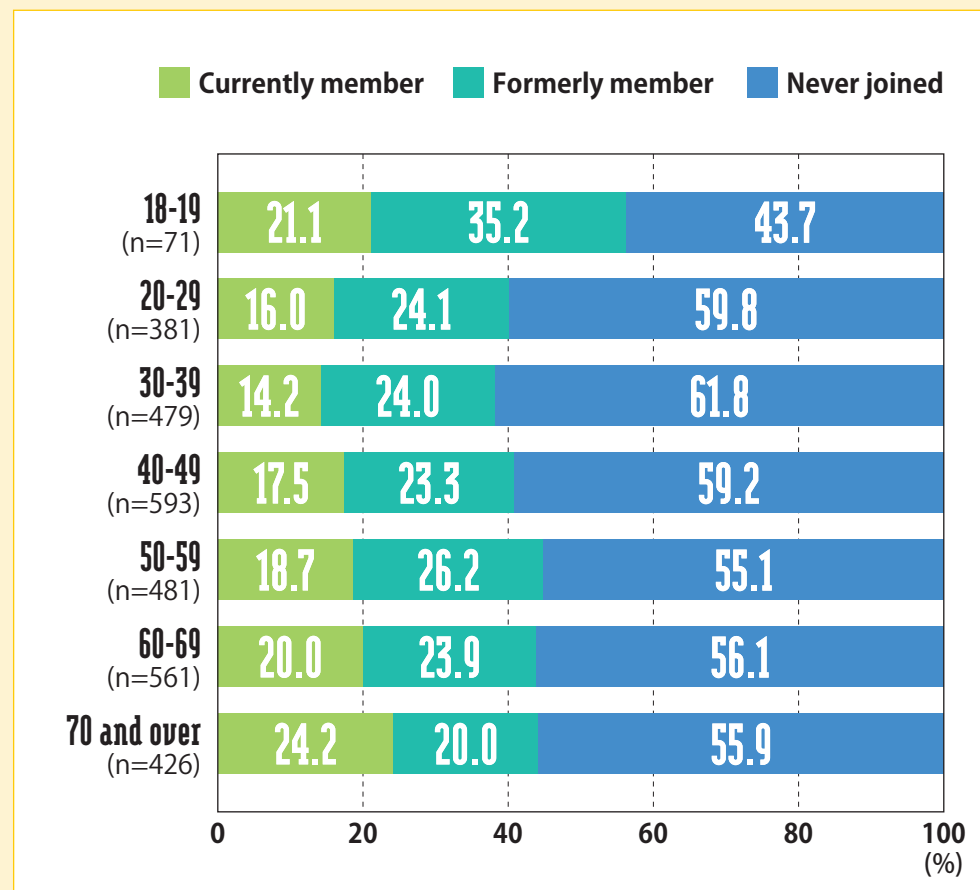
Sports clubs

Sports club membership: Total and by gender



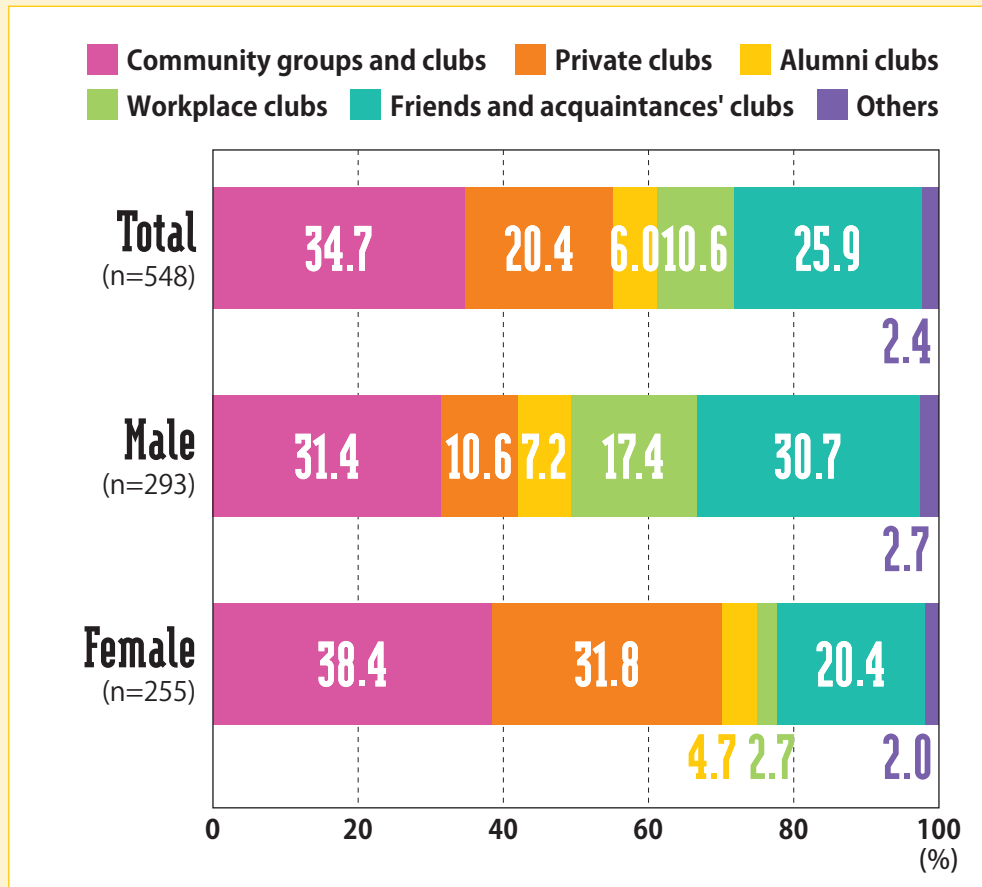
18.5% of people are members of sports clubs, **23.9%** are former members of sports clubs, and **57.6%** have never joined sports clubs. In terms of gender, **20.0%** of males and **17.0%** of females are members of sports clubs. This difference of 3points between males and females has narrowed since the first survey was conducted in 1992, when the gap was 8.6points.

Sports club membership: By age



The rate of sports club membership of the people over the age of 70 (**24.2%**) was the highest, followed by those aged 18-19 (**21.1%**), those in their 60-69 (**20.0%**), and those in their 50-59 (**18.7%**). Starting with people in their 30-39, the rate of sports club membership increased as age increased.

Types of sports clubs : Total and by gender

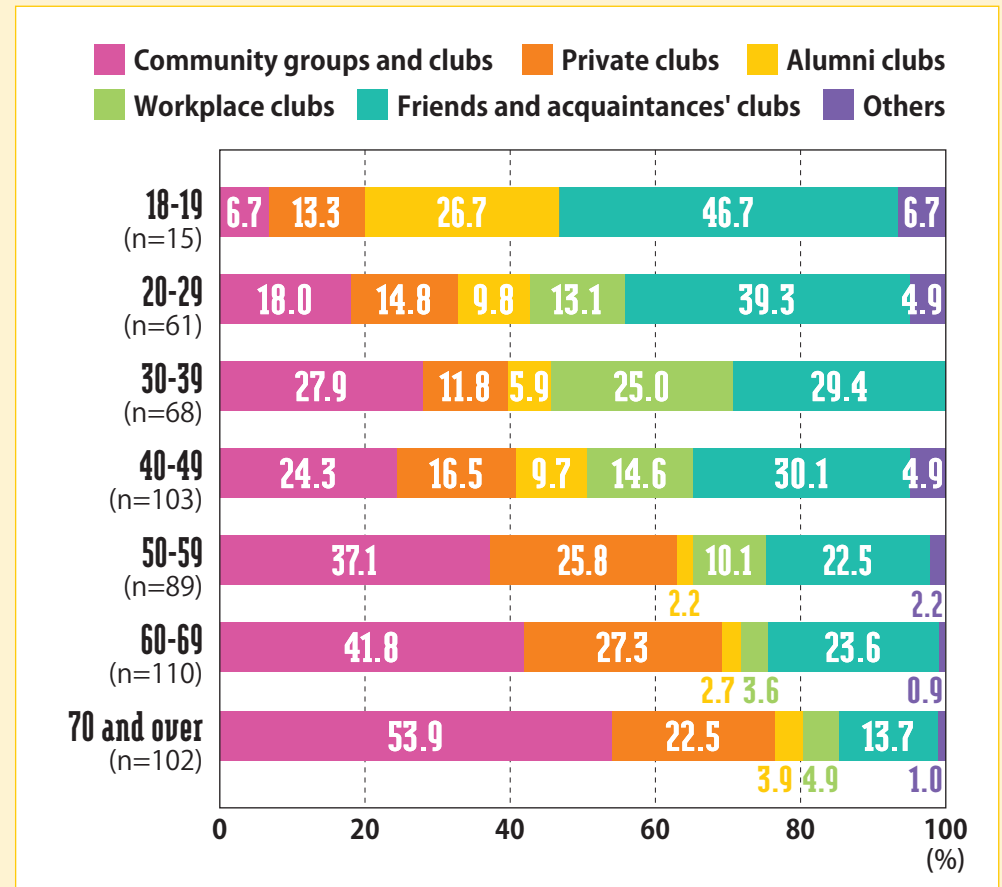


The rate of membership in “Community groups and clubs” was the highest at **34.7%**, followed by “Friends and acquaintances’ clubs” at **25.9%** and “Private clubs” at **20.4%**.

Among males, membership in “Community groups and clubs” was the highest at **31.4%**, followed by “Friends and acquaintances’ clubs” at **30.7%** and “Workplace clubs” at **17.4%**.

Among females, membership in “Community groups and clubs” was the highest at **38.4%**, followed by “Private clubs” at **31.8%** and “Friends and acquaintances’ clubs” at **20.4%**.

Types of sports clubs : By age



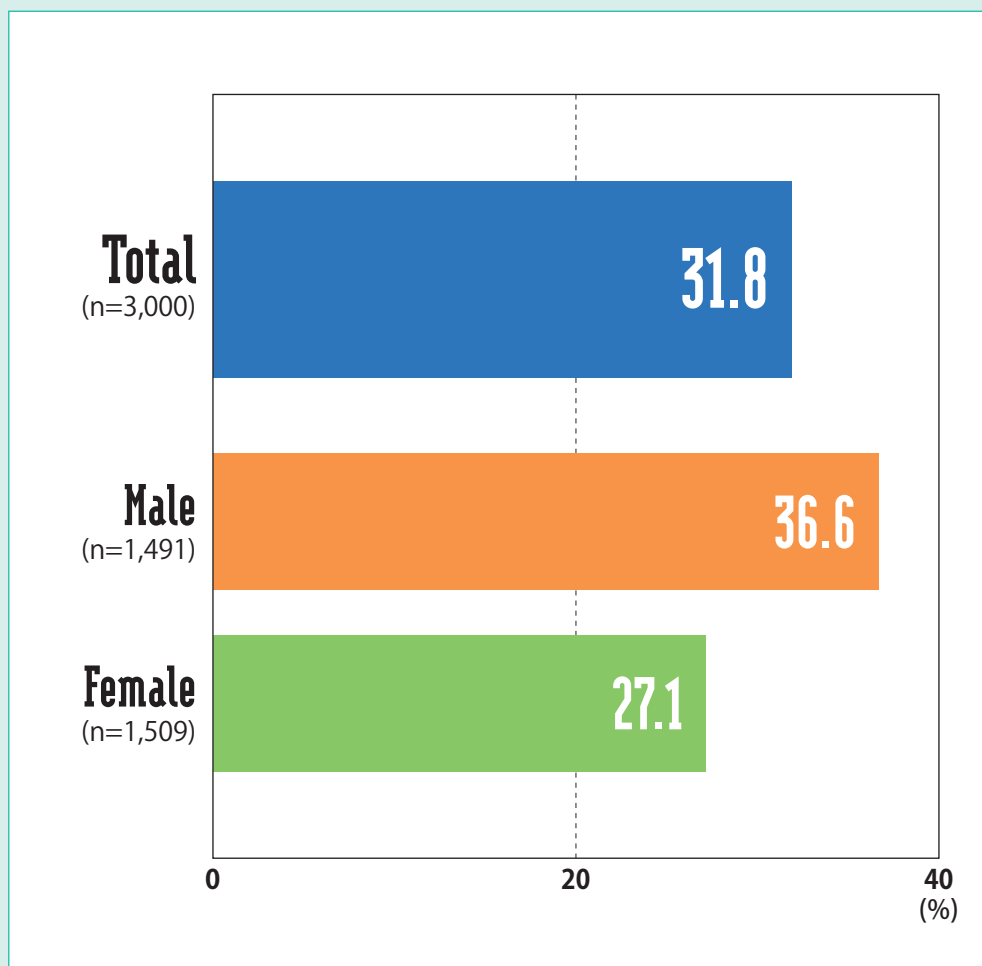
The rate of membership in “Friends and acquaintances’ clubs” was the highest among the younger age groups– **46.7%** for those aged 18-19 and **39.3%** for those in their 20-29.

The membership rate in “Workplace clubs” was relatively high (**25.0%**) for people in their 30-39 compared to other age groups.

Starting with the 40-49 age group, membership in “Community groups and clubs” increased as age increased–**24.3%** for those in their 40-49, **37.1%** for those in their 50-59, **41.8%** for those in their 60-69, and **53.9%** for those over the age of 70.

Sports spectating

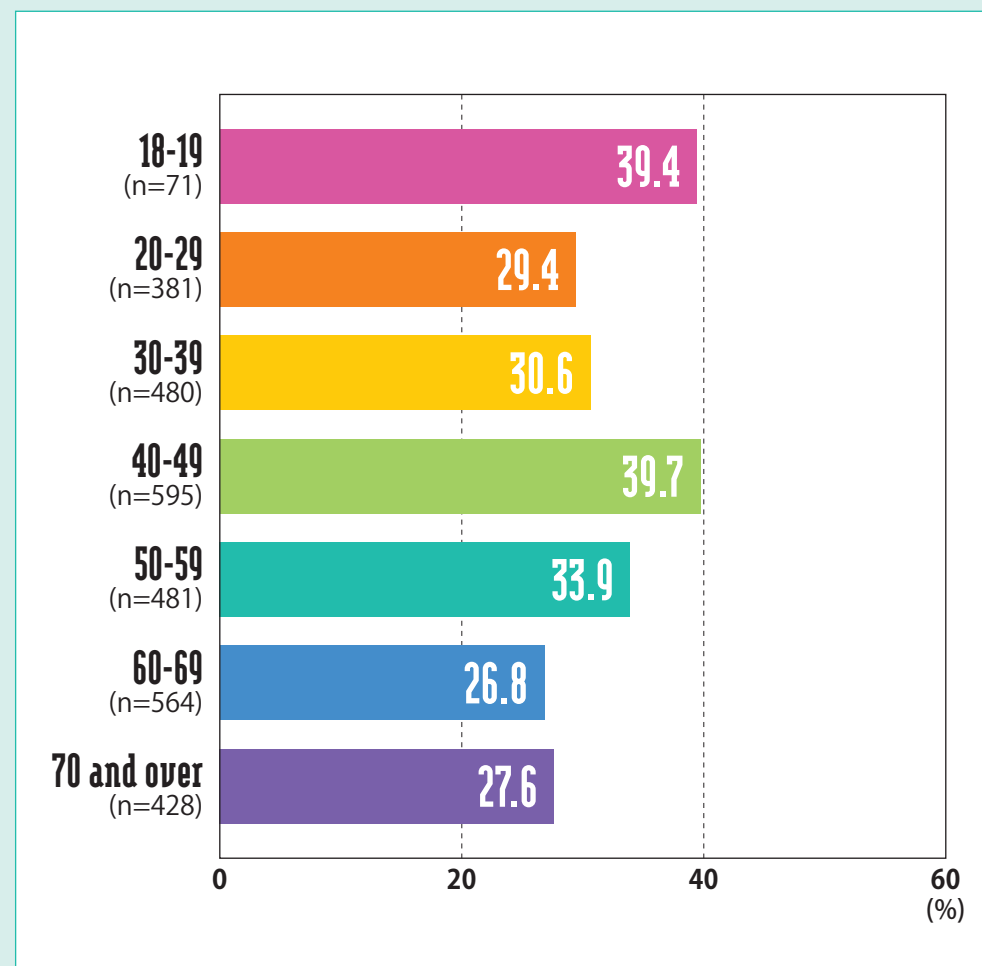
Live sports spectating : Total and by gender



The percentage of people who attended a live sporting event at a stadium or arena in the past year was **31.8%**. In terms of gender, **36.6%** of males and **27.1%** of females attended a live sporting event, a difference of 9.5points.

This trend of males attending live sporting events more than females has remained unchanged since this survey item was added in 1994.

Live sports spectating : By age



Live sports spectating was the highest for people in their 40-49 (**39.7%**), followed by those aged 18-19 (**39.4%**) and those in their 50-59 (**33.9%**).

This trend of a high percentage of people in their 40-49 attending live sporting events was also seen in past surveys.

Live spectator sports types

Total (n=3,000)					
Rank	Types of sports	Attendance rate (%)	① Estimated spectators (in 10,000s)	② Frequency (times/year)	③ Estimated annual total (①×②) (in 10,000s)
1	Professional baseball (NPB※)	13.7	1,452	2.09	3,035
2	High-school baseball	5.8	615	3.03	1,863
3	Professional football (J League)	5.5	583	2.82	1,644
4	Marathon and Ekiden road relay	3.8	403	1.34	540
5	Football (High-school, University, JFL, etc.)	1.9	201	7.14	1,435

Note: The estimated number of participants was calculated by multiplying the total population of individuals aged 18 and over (106,011,547 people according to the basic resident register as of January 1, 2017 in Japan) by the percentage of each attendance level.

※NPB:Nippon Professional Baseball

“Professional baseball (NPB)” had the highest attendance rate at **13.7%**. It was followed by “High-school baseball” at **5.8%**, “Professional football (J League)” at **5.5%**, and “Marathon and Ekiden road relay” at **3.8%**.

Live spectator sports types : By gender

Male (n=1,491)			Female (n=1,509)		
Rank	Types of sports	Attendance rate (%)	Rank	Types of sports	Attendance rate (%)
1	Professional baseball (NPB※)	16.6	1	Professional baseball (NPB※)	10.9
2	High-school baseball	7.7	2	Professional football (J League)	4.4
3	Professional football (J League)	6.5	3	High-school baseball	3.9
4	Marathon and Ekiden road relay	4.2	4	Marathon and Ekiden road relay	3.3
5	Amateur baseball (University, Company teams, etc.)	2.2	5	Football (High-school, University, JFL, etc.)	1.7
				Volleyball (High-school, University, V League, etc.)	1.7

※NPB:Nippon Professional Baseball

For both male and female, “Professional baseball (NPB)” had the highest attendance rate (**16.6%** for males and **10.9%** for females).

This was followed by “High-school baseball” in the case of males (**7.7%**), and “Professional football (J League)” in the case of females (**4.4%**).

Also, “Marathon and Ekiden road relay” ranked highly among both male (**4.2%**) and female (**3.3%**).

Live spectator sports types: By age

18-19 (n=71)			20-29 (n=381)			30-39 (n=480)			40-49 (n=595)		
Rank	Types of sports	Attendance rate (%)	Rank	Types of sports	Attendance rate (%)	Rank	Types of sports	Attendance rate (%)	Rank	Types of sports	Attendance rate (%)
1	High-school baseball	12.7	1	Professional baseball (NPB [※])	16.5	1	Professional baseball (NPB [※])	14.8	1	Professional baseball (NPB [※])	14.1
2	Professional football (J League)	9.9	2	Professional football (J League)	6.6	2	Professional football (J League)	7.7	2	High-school baseball	9.1
3	Football (High-School, University, JFL, etc.)	7.0	3	High-school baseball	5.2	3	High-school baseball	3.3	3	Professional football (J League)	6.7
	Professional baseball (NPB [※])	7.0	4	Amateur baseball (University, Company teams, etc.)	3.4	4	Professional basketball (B League)	3.1	4	Marathon and Ekiden road relay	5.2
5	Basketball (High-School, University, WJBL, etc.)	4.2	5	Football (High-School, University, JFL, etc.)	2.6	5	Marathon and Ekiden road relay	1.9	5	Football (High-School, University, JFL, etc.)	3.5

50-59 (n=481)			60-69 (n=564)			70 and over (n=428)		
Rank	Types of sports	Attendance rate (%)	Rank	Types of sports	Attendance rate (%)	Rank	Types of sports	Attendance rate (%)
1	Professional baseball (NPB [※])	14.3	1	Professional baseball (NPB [※])	11.0	1	Professional baseball (NPB [※])	12.9
2	Professional football (J League)	6.4	2	Marathon and Ekiden road relay	5.0	2	High-school baseball	6.1
3	High-school baseball	4.6	3	High-school baseball	4.8	3	Marathon and Ekiden road relay	4.0
4	Marathon and Ekiden road relay	3.5	4	Professional football (J League)	3.0	4	Sumo wrestling	2.6
5	Sumo wrestling	2.9	5	Professional golf	1.8	5	Professional golf	2.3
				Sumo wrestling	1.8			

※NPB: Nippon Professional Baseball

“High-school baseball” had the highest attendance rate for ages 18-19, while “Professional baseball (NPB)” had the highest attendance among people who aged 20 and over.

This was followed by “Professional football (J League)” and “High-school baseball” in second and third place for the age groups spanning 20 to 59; for people 60 and over, “High-school baseball” then “Marathon and Ekiden road relay” were second and third place.

“Sumo wrestling” also made it into the top five for the group who aged 50 and over, while “Professional golf” did the same for the group who aged 60 and over.

Types of sports spectating on TV: Total and by gender

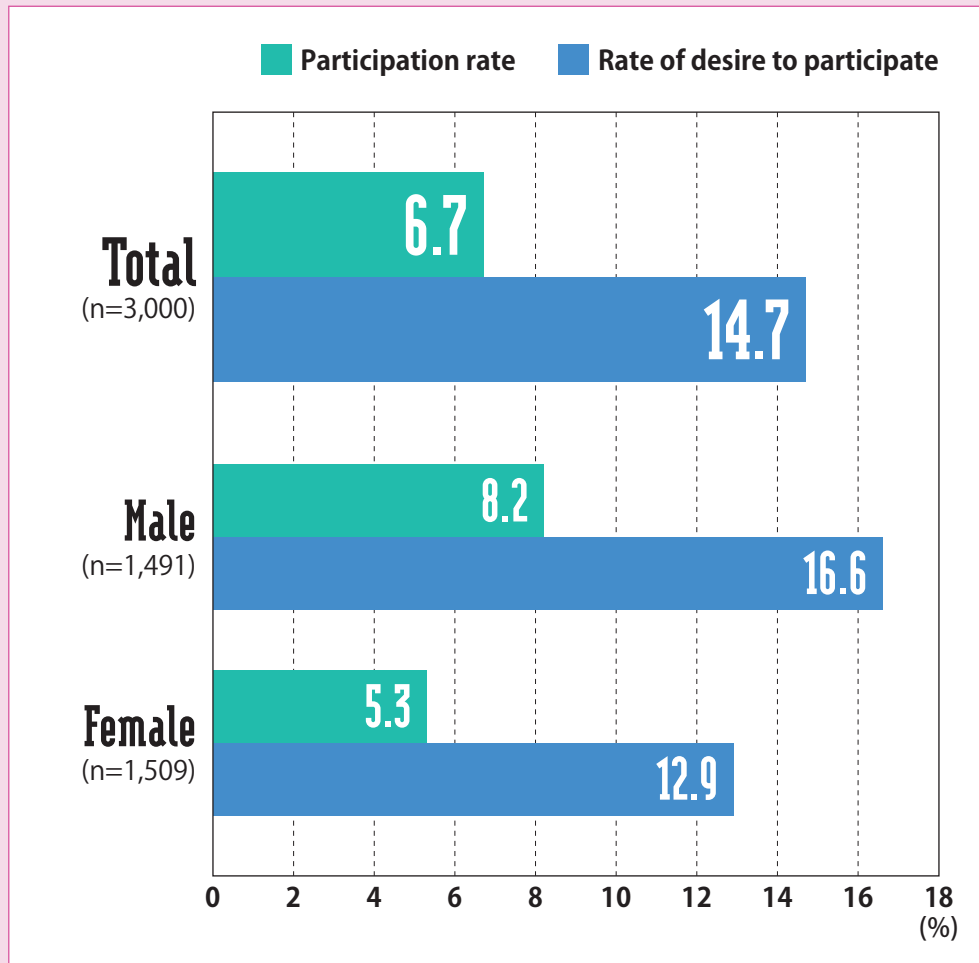
Total (n=3,000)			Male (n=1,491)			Female (n=1,509)		
Rank	Types of sports	Viewing rate (%)	Rank	Types of sports	Viewing rate (%)	Rank	Types of sports	Viewing rate (%)
1	Japan National Football Team games including the Olympics	64.0	1	Japan National Football Team games including the Olympics	67.3	1	Figure skating	63.2
2	Professional baseball (NPB※)	51.8	2	Professional baseball (NPB※)	63.2	2	Japan National Football Team games including the Olympics	60.7
3	Figure skating	48.2	3	High-school baseball	51.4	3	Professional baseball (NPB※)	40.6
4	High-school baseball	44.8	4	Marathon and Ekiden road relay	41.8	4	Marathon and Ekiden road relay	39.8
5	Marathon and Ekiden road relay	40.8	5	Sumo wrestling	39.9	5	High-school baseball	38.2
	Didn't watch any sports on TV	10.1		Didn't watch any sports on TV	8.5		Didn't watch any sports on TV	11.7

※NPB:Nippon Professional Baseball

Of the sports that were watched on TV in the past year, the most popular was “Japan National Football Team games including the Olympics” at **64.0%**, followed by “Professional baseball (NPB)” at **51.8%**, “Figure skating” at **48.2%**, “High-school baseball” at **44.8%**, and “Marathon and Ekiden road relay” at **40.8%**. Among males, “Japan National Football Team games including the Olympics” was the most watched on TV at **67.3%**, followed by “Professional baseball (NPB)” at **63.2%** and “High-school baseball” at **51.4%**. Among females, “Figure skating” was the most watched on TV at **63.2%**, followed by “Japan National Football Team games including the Olympics” at **60.7%** and “Professional baseball (NPB)” at **40.6%**.

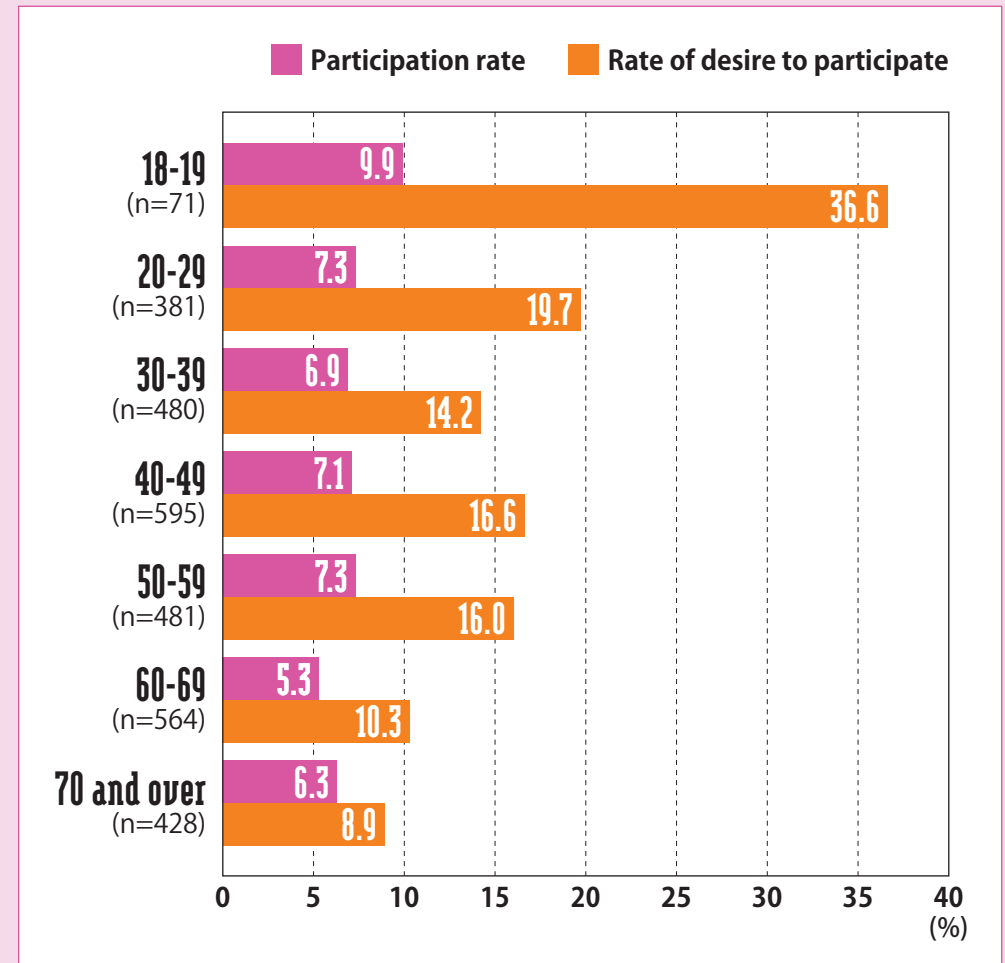
Sports volunteering

Sports volunteering : Total and by gender



6.7% of people participated in sports volunteering in the past year. There has been almost no change in this statistic since the survey began in 1994. In terms of gender, **8.2%** of males and **5.3%** of females participated in sports volunteering. This trend of higher volunteer participation among males than females was also seen in past surveys.

Sports volunteering : By age



The sports volunteering participation rate was the highest for people aged 18-19 (**9.9%**), followed by those in their 20-29 and 50-59 (**7.3%** for both those age groups). The rate of desire to participate was also the highest for people aged 18-19 (**36.6%**), followed by those in their 20-29 (**19.7%**) then those in their 40-49 (**16.6%**).

Towards the Realization of “Sport for Everyone” Society

The Sasakawa Sports Foundation (SSF) has continued to pursue research and survey activities, human resource development, and collaboration with local governments and sports promotion institutions under the banner of a “think tank specializing in sports.” Our dream is to create a society in which everyone living in Japan can enjoy sports in their own way, whether through participating or watching or volunteering. To put it another way, we want to create a “Sport for Everyone” society.

Over the past several years, many books have attempted to predict Japan’s future. Trends often mentioned include Japan’s population decline, declining birth rate, aging society, and the social, economic, and financial effects engendered by these multiple factors.

In response to these challenges, SSF proposes solutions based on the value of sports. This is because we believe sports offer characteristics and values capable of changing people’s lives, changing society, connecting to the wider world, and contributing to a better future. Activating the solutions inherent in sports will require an understanding of these values among the widest possible portion of society and a translation of these values into everyday life. Ultimately, this will lead to government policies that promote a culture of health and longevity, with the entire population involved in sports.

SSF seeks to function as a think tank which collaborates with various figures and organizations, operating beyond a narrowly defined concept of sports in order to convert its inherent value into a force that can challenge a wide range of societal issues both now and in the future.

As we look to the future, we will continue doing everything possible to develop a “Sport for Everyone” society.

Kazutoshi Watanabe, President
Sasakawa Sports Foundation

Outline of Activities

1. Research and surveys

The Institute of Sports Policy, established in SSF carries out fact-finding surveys, case studies and empirical research.

The institute gathers and analyses quantitative data and advanced cases in the country as well as overseas, which are essential for the national government and local governments to draft sports policy and for various organizations to plan sports promotion programs. SSF proactively makes proposals for policies to governments and for plans to sports organizations, based on evidence obtained from the research and survey.

2. Collaboration with local governments

SSF promotes a nationwide sport program, which aims to encourage people to participate in sports and physical activities, called Challenge Day. In this program, municipal communities with similar size of populations compete over the percentage of their residents who did some kind of sports and physical activities for a minimum of fifteen minutes on the last Wednesday of May. Through Challenge Day, SSF is able to forge closer links with local governments and other organizations, and to verify that sports are beneficial in building local communities and promoting relationships between people of different generations, and to propose a system in which individual residents can enjoy sports in their communities.

Furthermore, in collaboration with local governments who participate in Challenge Day and with other local governments nationwide, SSF draws up sports promotion plans for local communities and offers the results of its surveys and research.

3. Public relations

SSF disseminates the information about its initiatives as described above, and releases the latest sports information in the country and overseas that is beneficial for sports policy research, through its official website, social media, symposiums, seminars, and international conferences.

As part of its public relations activities, SSF publishes the results of the National Sport and Lifestyle Survey, which is biannually conducted to understand the state of participation and involvement in sports by Japanese, by means of a report called the SSF National Sports-Life Survey.

SSF also brings out and extensively distributes Sport White Paper, in which the latest data in the country and overseas is printed.

The 2018 SSF National Sports-Life Survey

Executive Summary

March 2019, Japan

