



SPÓRT ÉIREANN
SPORT IRELAND

Ipsos MRBI



Impact of Covid-19 Restrictions on Sport and Recreational Walking Report 2

May 2020

Introduction & Key Findings

Key Findings



Throughout this period Irish adults have become increasingly active making use of additional free time and good weather conditions. Half of all adults are currently meeting the physical activity guidelines by being sufficiently active for 30 minutes each day on 5 days each week.



The numbers playing sport have increased during each wave of this research and are now back to the levels before the restrictions were introduced.

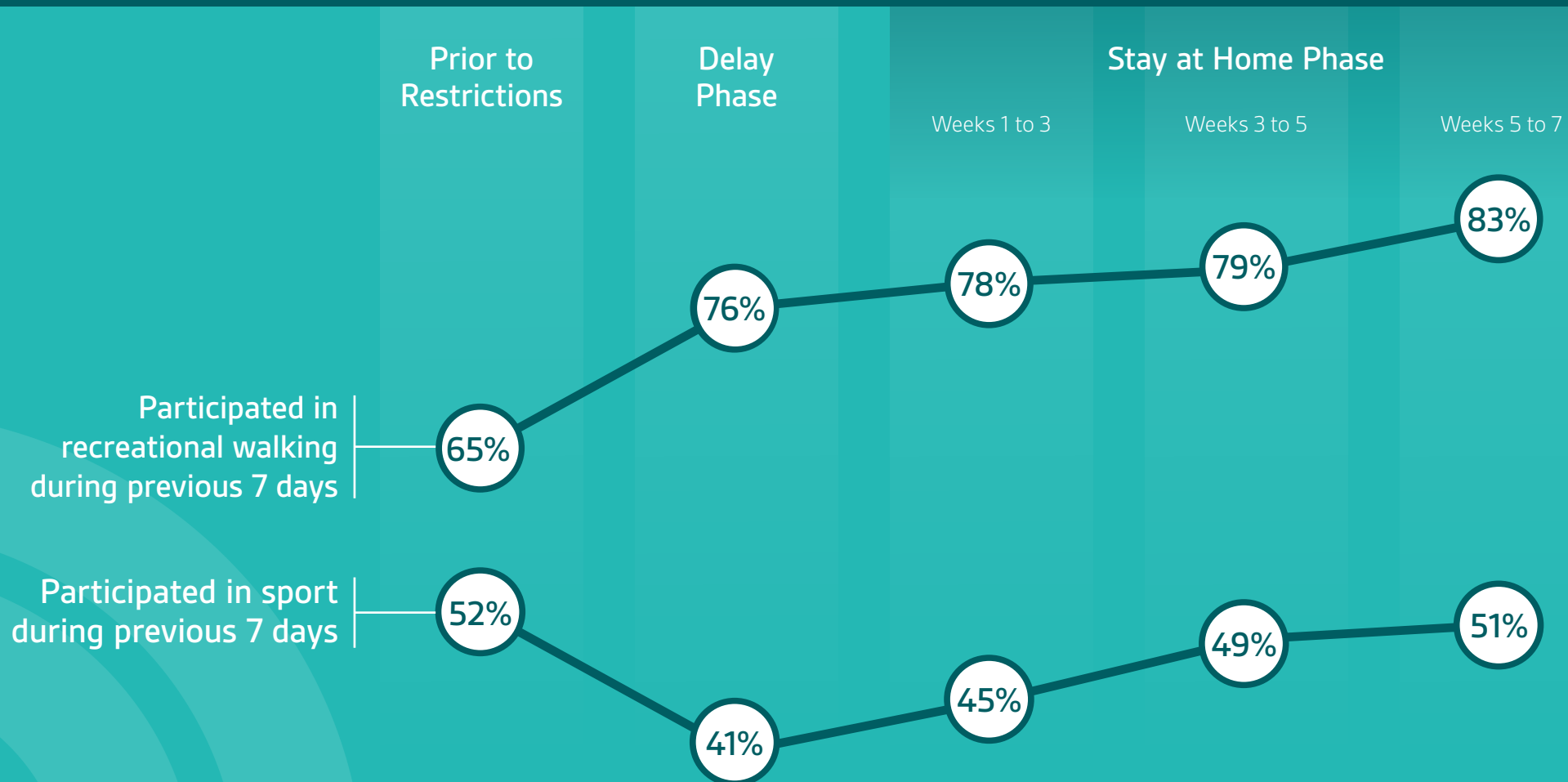


The proportion that are running is notably higher than previously, and the numbers walking for recreation are at unprecedented levels.

Introduction

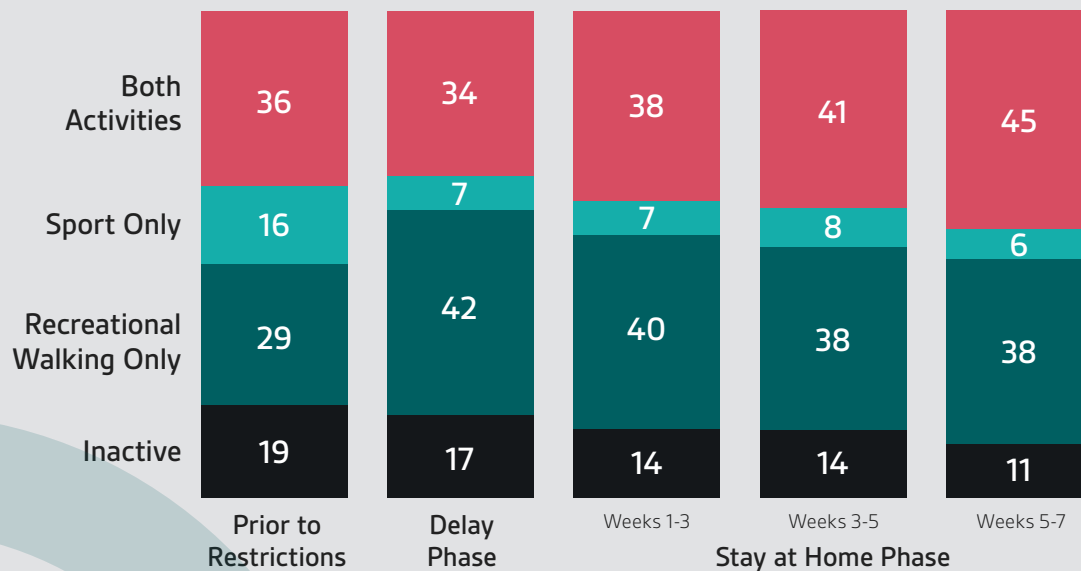
- This report presents the findings of research conducted by Ipsos MRBI on behalf of Sport Ireland to measure participation in sport and recreational walking between March and May 2020.
- The research includes the same questions asked on the Irish Sports Monitor.
- The survey was undertaken over five waves between 28 February and 12 May. The “Delay” phase of Ireland’s response to Covid-19 commenced on 12 March (school closures, limited outdoor gatherings, work from home if possible, etc.) while the “Stay at Home” enhanced lockdown phase commenced on 27 March.
- Given that the survey asks people to report on their activity in the previous 7 days, this means that the first wave of the survey pre-dated most of the limitations on movement. The second wave happened mostly under the “Delay” phase and the subsequent waves happened mostly during the “Stay at Home” phase.
- Just over 1,000 respondents took part in each survey wave.
- Full technical details are provided in the Appendix.

Participation levels in sport are back to the level they were at before the restrictions were introduced



Overall, the number of inactive people has declined by 8% over the period of Covid-19 restrictions

Types of Activity Participated In



Inactive means taking part in no sport or recreational walking. It has the same meaning as sedentary in the National Sports Policy.

Commentary

- Since the introduction of the restrictions the proportion that is active has increased by 8 points.
- The proportion of men taking part in both activities has increased from 30% to 44%, while the proportion of women doing so has increased from 42% to 46%.
- The proportion in the higher socio-economic group ABC1 that is inactive has declined from 15% to 7%, while the proportion in the C2DE group has declined from 21% to 15%.

Increases in sports participation among most groups during the “Stay at Home” phase

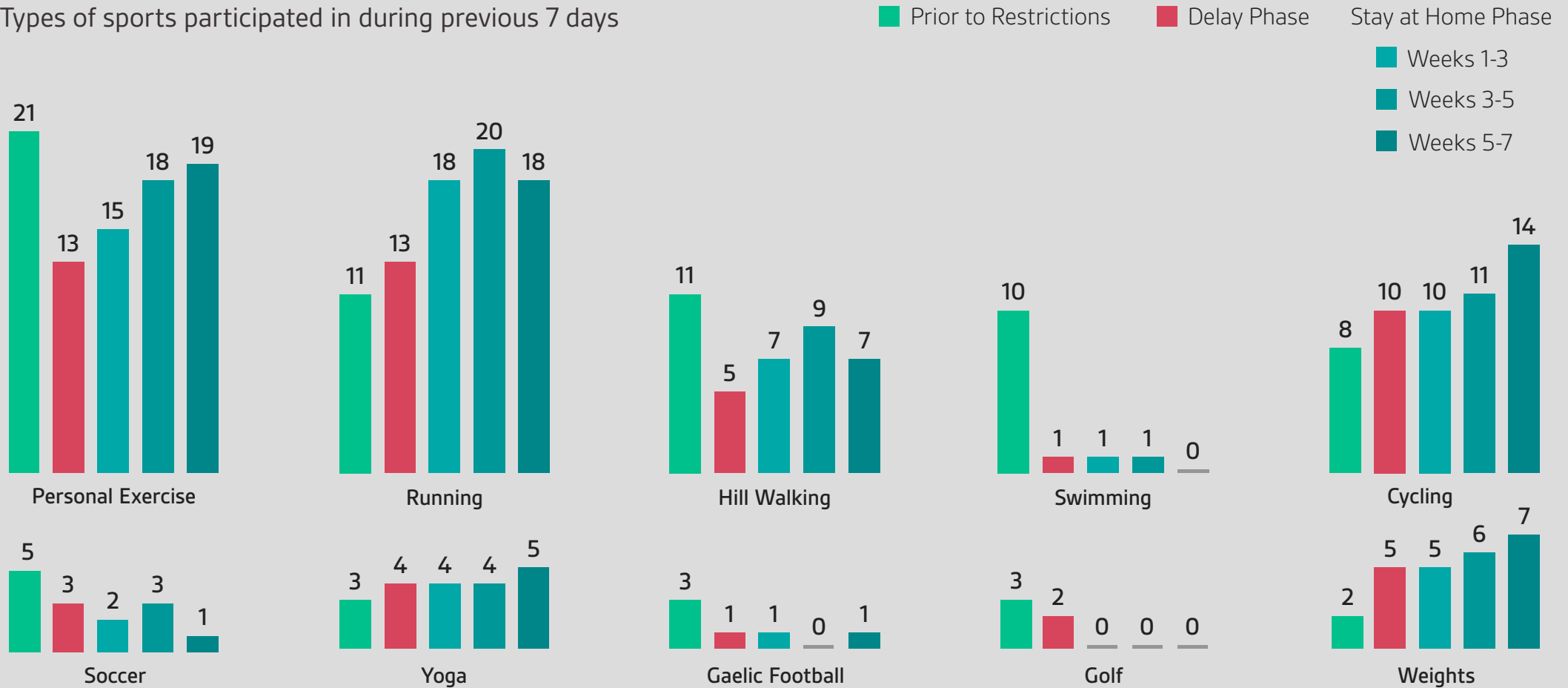
Participation in sport during previous 7 days

		Prior to Restrictions	Delay Phase	Stay at Home Phase		
				Weeks 1-3	Weeks 3-5	Weeks 5-7
Gender	Men	49	43	44	49	51
	Women	55	38	46	48	51
Age Group	15-24	71	60	73	71	82
	25-34	57	44	51	65	58
	35-44	57	50	55	54	55
	45-54	50	38	40	39	44
	55+	39	25	26	33	38
Location	Dublin	56	47	51	50	59
	Rest of Leinster	51	41	48	45	48
	Munster	46	34	38	52	48
	Connacht/Ulster	57	40	43	47	48
Social Class	ABC1	62	52	57	60	60
	C2DE	47	34	36	39	44

- Similar levels of sports participation among both men and women during the “Stay at Home” phase.
- Participation among those aged under 45 has been more robust than among older groups.
- Large increase in sports participation during “Stay at Home” phase among those in C2DE social class.

Team-based activities have declined during the period of restrictions, while participation in running and cycling have increased

Types of sports participated in during previous 7 days



Increases in recreational walking across all demographic groups, with particularly strong increases during the “Stay at Home” phase in Munster, Connacht and Ulster

Participation in recreational walking during previous 7 days

		Prior to Restrictions	Delay Phase	Stay at Home Phase		
				Weeks 1-3	Weeks 3-5	Weeks 5-7
Gender	Men	61	71	75	75	80
	Women	70	81	81	82	86
Age Group	15-24	51	75	82	86	89
	25-34	64	76	82	75	85
	35-44	65	81	85	81	86
	45-54	75	80	78	83	83
	55+	67	70	69	73	76
Location	Dublin	60	75	80	79	81
	Rest of Leinster	68	78	82	79	82
	Munster	66	75	76	78	85
	Connacht/Ulster	68	76	71	77	83
Social Class	ABC1	67	82	87	85	87
	C2DE	64	74	71	75	79

- Increases in recreational walking among both genders and across all age groups, particularly among those aged under 35.
- The recent increases in recreational walking are stronger in areas outside Leinster.
- Recent increases in recreational walking are also seen more strongly among those in C2DE social class.
- Previous waves of the Irish Sports Monitor found that recreational walking is most likely to take place on local roads and in local parks.

Half of all adults achieve at least the minimum amount of activity recommended under the National Physical Activity Guidelines

In the past week on how many days have you done a total of 30 minutes or more of physical activity which was enough to raise your breathing rate? (This question was asked between 30 April and 15 May 2020)

% Answering 5 days or more.



Gender	Men	49
	Women	55
Age Group	15-24	51
	25-34	51
	35-44	52
	45-54	54
	55+	53
Location	Dublin	53
	Rest of Leinster	47
	Munster	54
	Connacht/Ulster	57
Social Class	ABC1	56
	C2DE	49

An equivalent survey conducted by Sport England identified that 32% of adults living in England achieved a similar level of activity

Sport England: Survey into adult physical activity attitudes and behaviour

(Fieldwork dates: 8th May - 1th May 2020)

Appendix - Technical details

- Ipsos MRBI conducts an ongoing omnibus survey involving 1,000 respondents every two weeks. Respondents are aged 15+ and are contacted using Random Digit Dialling through mobile and landline phone numbers. At analysis stage, the data is weighted in line with the known profile of the population according to the latest CSO estimates.
- In late February, Sport Ireland agreed with Ipsos to include a number of questions on the survey to assess participation in recreational walking and sport.
- Three core questions were included on each wave: one on recreational walking (did you take part in a recreational walk in the past 7 days); and two on sports participation (did you play sport in the past 7 days and, if so, please list up to 3 sports participated in). The questions used are identical to those used in the Irish Sports Monitor.
- Additional questions on wellbeing and number of active days were included on waves in April and May.
- Fieldwork dates and sample sizes for this research are as follows:
 - 28 February to 9 March (1,009 respondents)
 - 16 to 31 March (1,003 respondents)
 - 1 to 13 April (1,009 respondents)
 - 15 to 28 April (1,006 respondents)
 - 30 April to 15 May (1,014 respondents)





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