



**eurostat**  
Compact guides

# Sport statistics

**2016 edition**

**eurostat** 

## Eurostat's sport statistics: harmonised sport data at EU level

Due to its growing economic and social impact, sport has gained an important place in European strategies and programmes. Harmonised and comparable statistics are therefore needed to strengthen evidence-based policies in this field.

Under the EU Work Plan for Sport 2014–2017 ([Council resolution 2014/C 183/03](#)), Eurostat with the European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC), has initiated the regular dissemination of harmonised statistics on sport.

As no Eurostat data collection is devoted specifically to sport, sport statistics are derived from already existing EU surveys.

Reflecting the multidisciplinary nature of sport, these statistics currently cover:

- employment in sport (data from the [EU Labour Force Survey](#));
- international trade in sporting goods (data from [COMEXT](#));
- attendance at live sports events (data from the [Adult Education Survey](#)); and
- private expenditure on sporting goods and services (data from the [Household Budget Survey](#)).

The employment and international trade data are updated every year. The dissemination of data on participation in live sports events and household expenditure on sporting goods and services coincides with the publication of the results of the respective surveys.

Other indicators, such as levels of physical activity or time spent doing sports, are likely to be added to the database once relevant survey results become available. Data on physical activity will be gathered in 2016 from the new round of the [European Health Interview Survey](#) and the Time Use Survey.

# Sport as a policy area

Eurostat's statistics can contribute to the development and monitoring of EU sport policy, in particular as regards:

- **the economic dimension of sport**

EU sport policy aims to derive the best possible economic benefits from the sport. The European Commission strives to identify the sector's potential, to safeguard and to support it through the sharing of best practices, e.g. on sustainable financing or the sustainability of major sports events. ([http://ec.europa.eu/sport/policy/economic\\_dimension/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/sport/policy/economic_dimension/index_en.htm))

- **the health-enhancing physical activity**

There is scientific evidence of the positive direct and indirect effects of participation in sport and physical activity as much for the individual as for society and the economy. The European Commission is tackling this issue across different policy areas such as sport, health, transport, education and research, including through the implementation of the 2013 Council Recommendation on promoting health-enhancing physical activity across sectors. The implementation of this Recommendation is closely monitored, with the help of a set of indicators and in cooperation with the EU Member States and the World Health Organization. ([http://ec.europa.eu/sport/policy/societal\\_role/health\\_participation\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/sport/policy/societal_role/health_participation_en.htm))

- **European Week of Sport**

The goal of this EU-wide initiative is to raise awareness of the benefits of sport and physical activity. It is aimed at everyone, regardless of age, background and fitness level. With a focus on grassroots initiatives, it encourages people to #BeActive on a regular basis and creates opportunities for them to exercise more in their everyday lives. (<http://ec.europa.eu/sport/week>)

- **Erasmus + Sport**

In the field of sport, the Erasmus+ programme supports the development, transfer and implementation of innovative ideas and practices across Europe. It also helps to develop the European dimension of sport by encouraging cooperation between stakeholders. ([http://ec.europa.eu/sport/opportunities/sport\\_funding/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/sport/opportunities/sport_funding/index_en.htm))

# Employment in sport

The basis for Eurostat's sport employment data are laid down in the 'Vilnius definition of sport' (agreed definition of the sport economy) as elaborated by the Commission-led Working Group 'Sport and Economics'.

The Eurostat definition of employment in sport refers to the core statistical definition (economic sector of sport activities according to the 'NACE' classification) and introduces in addition the dimension of occupation according to the ISCO classification (sport and fitness workers employed also outside sport sector).

Employment in sport therefore covers persons working in:

- sport-related occupations in the sport sector (ISCO 342\*NACE 93.1), e.g. professional athletes, professional coaches in fitness centres, etc.;
- non-sport occupations in the sport sector (NACE 93.1), e.g. receptionists in fitness centres; and
- sport-related occupations (ISCO 342) outside the sport sector, e.g. school sports instructors.

Data on sport employment are extracted from the EU Labour Force Survey, which provides extensive information on workers' labour status and their socio-demographic characteristics such as gender, age and educational attainment (classified by ISCED level).

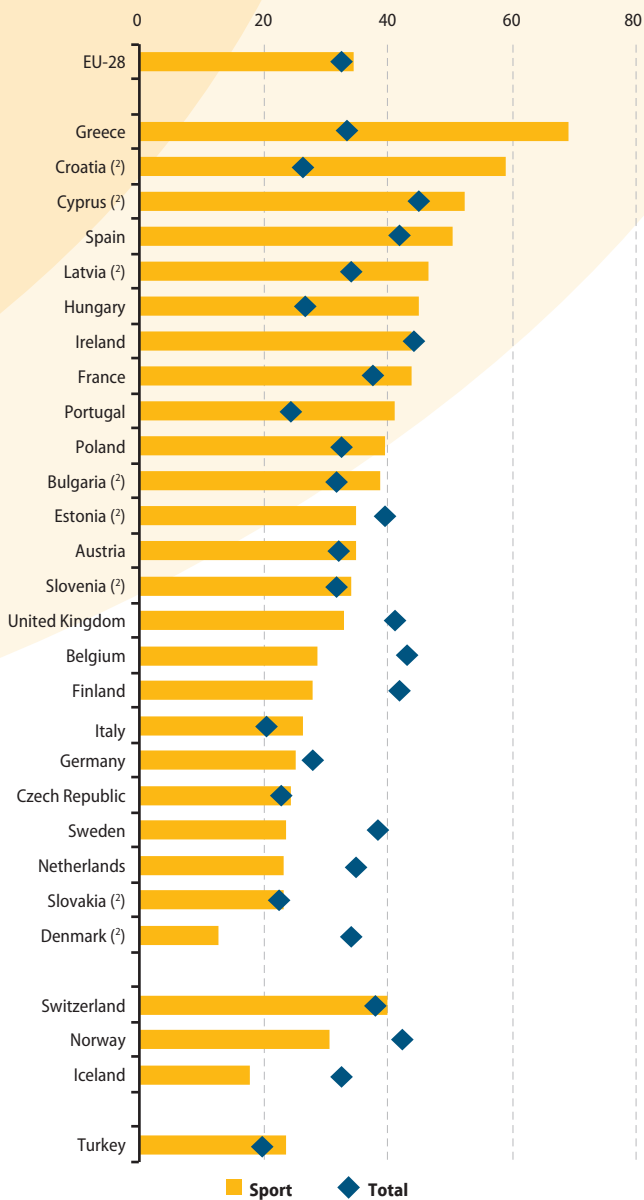
Employment figures presented here are person counts, not full-time equivalents, i.e. they include all paid workers in sport-related jobs, regardless of their work pattern (full-time or part-time).

**Table 1:** Employment in sport, EU-28, 2014

Socio-demographic characteristics		Number of persons employed in sport (thousands)	Distribution of persons employed...	
			...in the field of sport	...in overall employment
			(%)	
Gender	Women	704.5	45.1	45.9
	Men	858.3	54.9	54.1
Age group	15-29	562.5	36.0	18.5
	35-64	956.8	61.2	79.2
	65+	43.5	2.8	2.2
Educational attainment level	ISCED 0-2	245.9	15.8	18.6
	ISCED 3-4	770.9	49.6	48.7
	ISCED 5-8	538.0	34.6	32.7

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [sprt\\_emp\\_sex](#), [sprt\\_emp\\_age](#), [sprt\\_emp\\_edu](#), [lfsa\\_egan](#) and [lfsa\\_egaed](#))

**Figure 1: Persons with tertiary education attainment in sport and in total employment, 2014 <sup>(1)</sup>**  
(%)



<sup>(1)</sup> Data not available (not reliable) for Luxembourg, Lithuania, Malta and Romania.

<sup>(2)</sup> Data for sport employment are of low reliability due to small sample size.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [sprt\\_emp\\_edu](#) and [lfsa\\_egaed](#))



## International trade in sporting goods

Statistics on international trade in sporting goods enable the measurement of the value (in euros) of sporting goods traded between EU Member States (intra-EU trade) and between EU and non-EU countries (extra-EU trade).

The data are extracted from Eurostat's [COMEXT](#) database which contains trade statistics for the Member States and also for the EFTA and candidate countries.

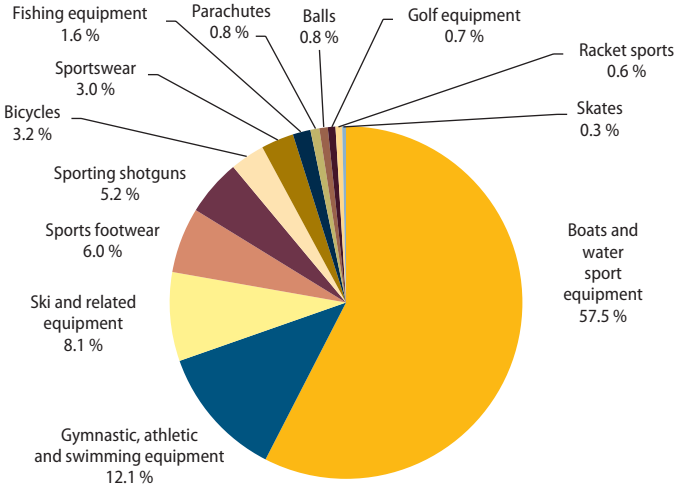
Internationally traded sport-related items are identified according to the [Harmonised System \(HS\)](#) classification and then grouped according to sporting disciplines or specific sport equipment and accessories.

The groups of products (covered by HS six-digit codes) are as follows: skis and related equipment; skates; boats and water sport equipment; golf equipment; racket sports (tennis and badminton) equipment; balls; gymnastic, athletic and swimming equipment; fishing equipment; bicycles; parachutes; sportswear; footwear; sporting shotguns.

The following indicators are available for imports from and exports to selected partner countries or geo-economic regions:

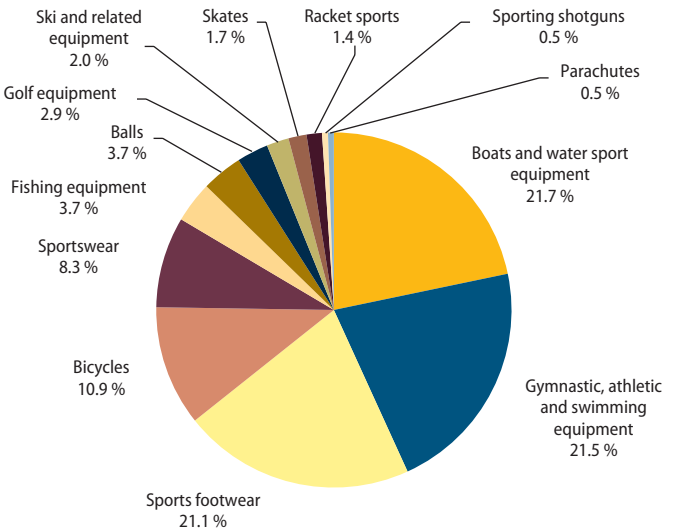
- value of trade in thousands of euros;
- percentage of trade in sporting goods in the total trade of the country;
- contribution of different countries to the total EU trade in sporting goods;
- percentage of different sporting goods in the total sport trade — at the country and EU level.

**Figure 2:** Extra-EU exports of sporting goods, by product, EU-28, 2014 (value in euros)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: [sprt\\_trd\\_prd](#))

**Figure 3:** Extra-EU imports of sporting goods, by product, EU-28, 2014 (value in euros)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: [sprt\\_trd\\_prd](#))

# Participation in sport

Eurostat collects data on two types of participation in sport:

- attendance at live sports events (e.g. going to matches as a spectator); and
- active participation (i.e. doing sport).

The data on attendance at live sports events currently available in the Eurostat database (with breakdowns by age, gender and educational attainment) come from the 2007 and 2011 specific modules on social and cultural participation of the [Adult Education Surveys](#). In 2016 the results from the 2015 EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions ad hoc module on social and cultural participation will be available.

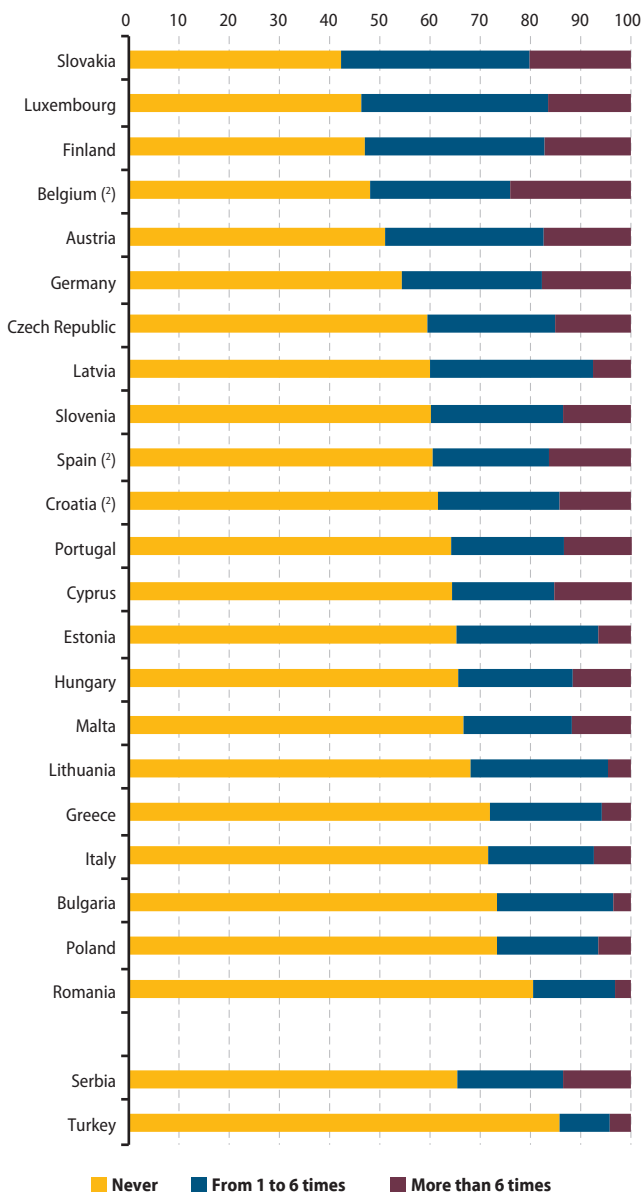
Information on ‘physical activity’ and ‘practice of sport’ from the European Health Interview Survey and the Time Use Surveys will also be available in 2016.





**Figure 4:** Persons aged 25 to 64 attending live sport events (last 12 months), by frequency, 2011 <sup>(1)</sup>

(%)



<sup>(1)</sup> No data available for Denmark, Ireland, France, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

<sup>(2)</sup> 2011 data not available; 2007 data used instead.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: [sprt\\_pcs\\_sea](#))



## Private expenditure on sporting goods and services

Statistics on household expenditure on sporting goods and services provide an overview of consumption patterns at EU and national level. They also give an indication of the share of total household expenditure spent on sporting goods and services.

The last available data on the consumption of sporting goods were extracted from the 2010 [Household Budget Surveys](#) (HBS).

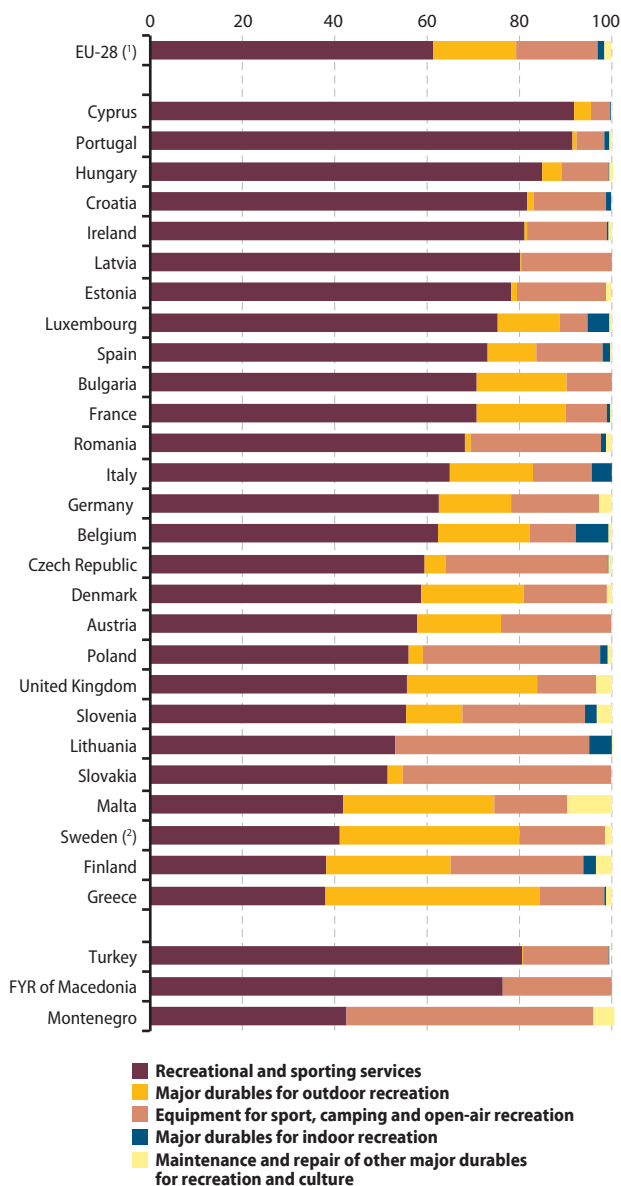
The HBS is a sample survey of private households carried out regularly under the responsibility of the national statistical offices in each of the 28 EU Member States, providing information on:

- household consumption expenditure on goods and services (with detailed categories and breakdowns); and
- income and possession of consumer durables and cars.

The sporting goods and services are defined according to [COICOP](#) which is the Classification of individual consumption by purpose.

The following sport-related categories have been selected: major durables for outdoor recreation, major durables for indoor recreation, maintenance and repair of other major durables for recreation and culture, equipment for sport, camping and open-air recreation and recreational and sporting services.

**Figure 5: Private household expenditure on sporting goods and services, by group of products, 2010**  
(%)



(¹) EU estimate calculated for the purpose of the publication, does not include the Netherlands (data not available).

(²) Estimated value for Maintenance and repair of other major durables for recreation and culture.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: [sprt\\_pcs\\_hbs](#))

# Data dissemination

Eurostat's mission is to be the leading provider of high-quality statistics on Europe. Eurostat publishes **official, harmonised statistics** on the European Union and the euro area which offer an objective portrayal of social and economic trends. These statistics are available for EU Member States, and are sometimes broken down by region. Furthermore, some of the indicators are published for candidate countries, EFTA countries and other non-member countries.

Eurostat collects data from national statistical institutes; the statistics are harmonised according to Europe-wide methodologies. Data are, therefore, genuinely **comparable** across the whole of the EU.

## Website

Eurostat's [website](#) provides free access to EU statistics and is available in English, French and German.

A [section dedicated to sport statistics](#) is available on the Eurostat website. It serves as a gateway to Eurostat's data on sport, listed by topic, and provides an overview of the sources from which the data have been gathered, links to the EU policy tools on sport and access to the methodological notes for each dataset.

The [Statistics Illustrated](#) page is the clearest and easiest way to understand Eurostat data by means of dynamic data visualisations. The selection of charts shows the development of indicators over time and differences between Member States, thus helping to identify patterns and trends.

[Statistics Explained](#) is a wiki-based system that presents statistical topics in a format that is easily understood. Together, the articles, including those on [sport statistics](#), make up an encyclopaedia of European statistics

## Contact details

Eurostat  
5, rue Alphonse Weicker  
2721 Luxembourg  
LUXEMBOURG

E-mail: [estat-user-support@ec.europa.eu](mailto:estat-user-support@ec.europa.eu)

More information: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

