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# The 2014 SSF National Sports–Life Survey

## Executive Summary

March 2015, Japan

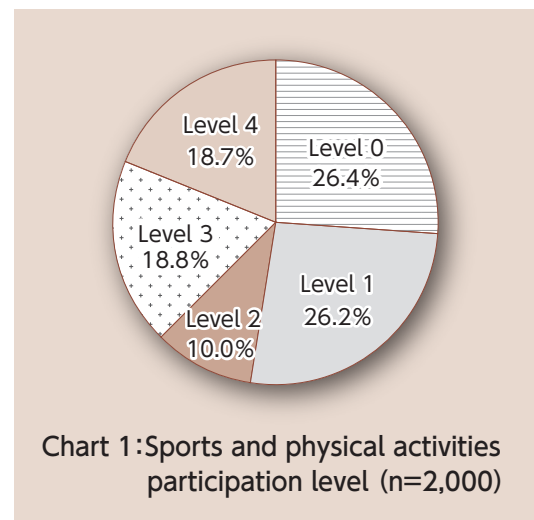


SASAKAWA SPORTS FOUNDATION

**SSF** (Sasakawa Sports Foundation) has conducted the Sports-Life Survey every two years since 1992. It is intended to provide a solid basis for a comprehensive understanding of the current situation of the sports movement in Japan, to help the promotion of “Sport for Everyone.” We surveyed men and women at least 20 years of age living in various locations across the country. We set the sample size at 2,000 by way of quota sampling. Between May 23 and June 15, 2014, surveyors visited the participants and left a questionnaire. The main findings are as follows.

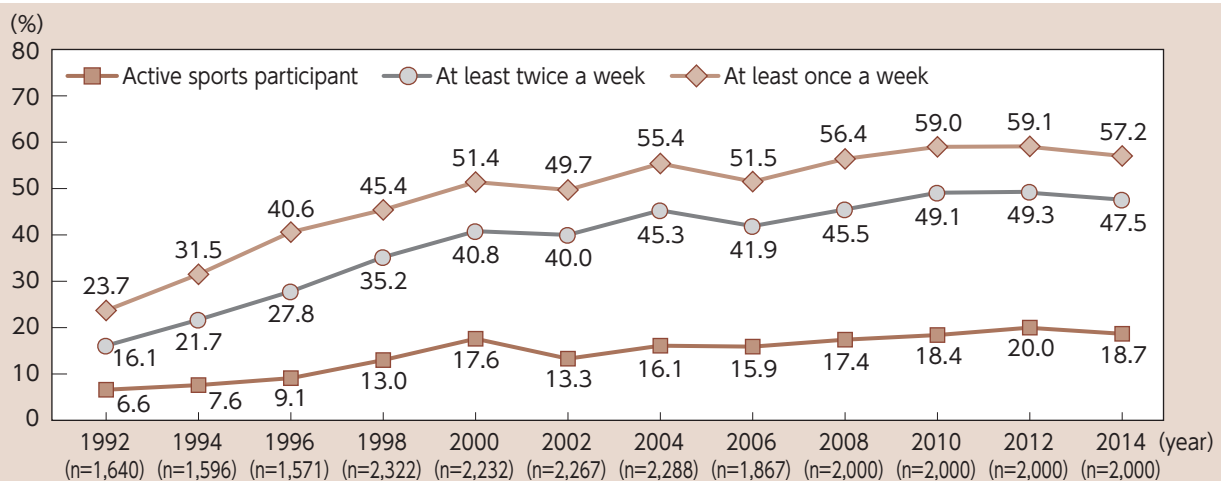
## 1 Levels of Participation in Sports and Physical Activities

The proportion of the “active sports participant” (the population exercising at least twice a week, and at least 30 min in one session, with an intensity of at least “somewhat hard,” that is, the level of exercise considered necessary to maintain and improve physical fitness and health), was 18.7% (20.9% male, 16.5% female). Past trends show a rise from 6.6% in 1992 to 7.6% in 1994, 9.1% in 1996, 13.0% in 1998, and 17.6% in 2000. There was a temporary fall to 13.3% in 2002, but after that, it continued to rise to 16.1% in 2004, 15.9% in 2006, 17.4% in 2008, and 18.4% in 2010, until in 2012, it reached 20%, a level higher than ever before. The 2014 figure of 18.7% was lower than that in 2012, but is still the second highest since this survey was started.



**Table 1: Levels of sports and physical activities participation**

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



**Chart 2: Change in the rate of regular sports and physical activities participation over the years**

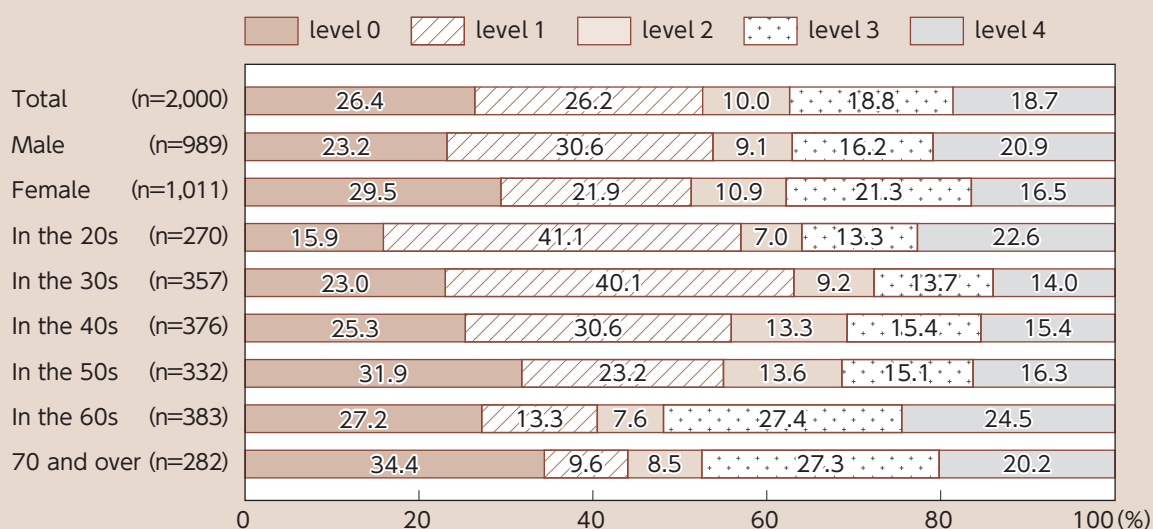


Chart 3 : Sports and physical activities participation levels (arranged by total, gender, and age)

## 2 Types of Sports and Physical Activities Participation Rates and Estimated Population

Among those who took part in sports or physical activities at least once in the last year, strolling had the highest participation rate at 33.0%; walking was second at 25.7%; calisthenics and light exercises came third at 18.5%; weight training came fourth at 13.0%; and bowling came fifth at 10.0%. Compared with the 2012 survey, weight training and bowling exchanged positions. In terms of gender, golf on a course at 13.9%, jogging and running at 12.9%, and fishing at 11.1% are popular with men, and yoga at 7.0%, badminton at 6.6%, and jumping rope at 6.2% are popular with women.

Table 2 : Sports and physical activities participation rate and estimated numbers of participants by type (arranged by total and gender)

Total (n=2,000)				Male (n=989)			Female (n=1,011)		
Rank	Types of activity	Participation rate (%)	Estimated participants (in 10,000s)	Rank	Types of activity	Participation rate (%)	Rank	Types of activity	Participation rate (%)
1	Strolling	33.0	3,426	1	Strolling	28.6	1	Strolling	37.2
2	Walking	25.7	2,668	2	Walking	23.5	2	Walking	27.9
3	Calisthenics and light exercises	18.5	1,921	3	Weight training	17.1	3	Calisthenics and light exercises	23.3
4	Weight training	13.0	1,350	4	Golf on a course	13.9	4	Weight training	9.0
5	Bowling	10.0	1,038	5	Calisthenics and light exercises	13.5	5	Bowling	8.0
6	Jogging and Running	9.5	986	6	Jogging and Running	12.9	6	Swimming	7.1
7	Golf on a course	7.5	779	7	Golf practice on a driving range	12.8	7	Yoga	7.0
8	Cycling	7.2	747	8	Bowling	12.0	8	Badminton	6.6
	Golf practice on a driving range	7.2	747	9	Fishing	11.1	9	Jumping rope	6.2
	Swimming	7.2	747	10	Playing catch	10.6	10	Jogging and Running	6.1
11	Playing catch	6.9	716	11	Cycling	9.4	11	Sea bathing	5.7
12	Fishing	6.8	706	12	Baseball	8.9	12	Cycling	5.0
13	Sea bathing	6.6	685	13	Sea bathing	7.4	13	Hiking	4.5
14	Jumping rope	5.5	571	14	Swimming	7.3	14	Climbing	4.3
15	Climbing	5.4	561	15	Climbing	6.6	15	Table tennis	4.0
16	Badminton	5.3	550		Soccer	6.6		Camping	3.7
17	Hiking	4.7	488	17	Snowboard	5.7	16	Skiing	3.7
18	Baseball	4.6	478	18	Softball	5.2	18	Playing catch	3.3
19	Table tennis	4.4	457	19	Skiing	5.0	19	Volleyball	2.7
20	Skiing	4.3	446	20	Hiking	4.9	20	Aerobics	2.6
					Table tennis	4.9		Tennis	2.6

### 3 Sports Volunteering

The percentage of the population which supported sport as volunteers over the past year is 7.7%, the same as in 2012. The male level of 9.6% exceeds the female level of 5.8%; sports volunteering is male dominated. Looking at the types of activity, the highest are administration of and assisting with local sports events at 53.2%; running or helping sports clubs of day-to-day activities at 34.4%; coaching at 31.2%; and refereeing at 27.9%.

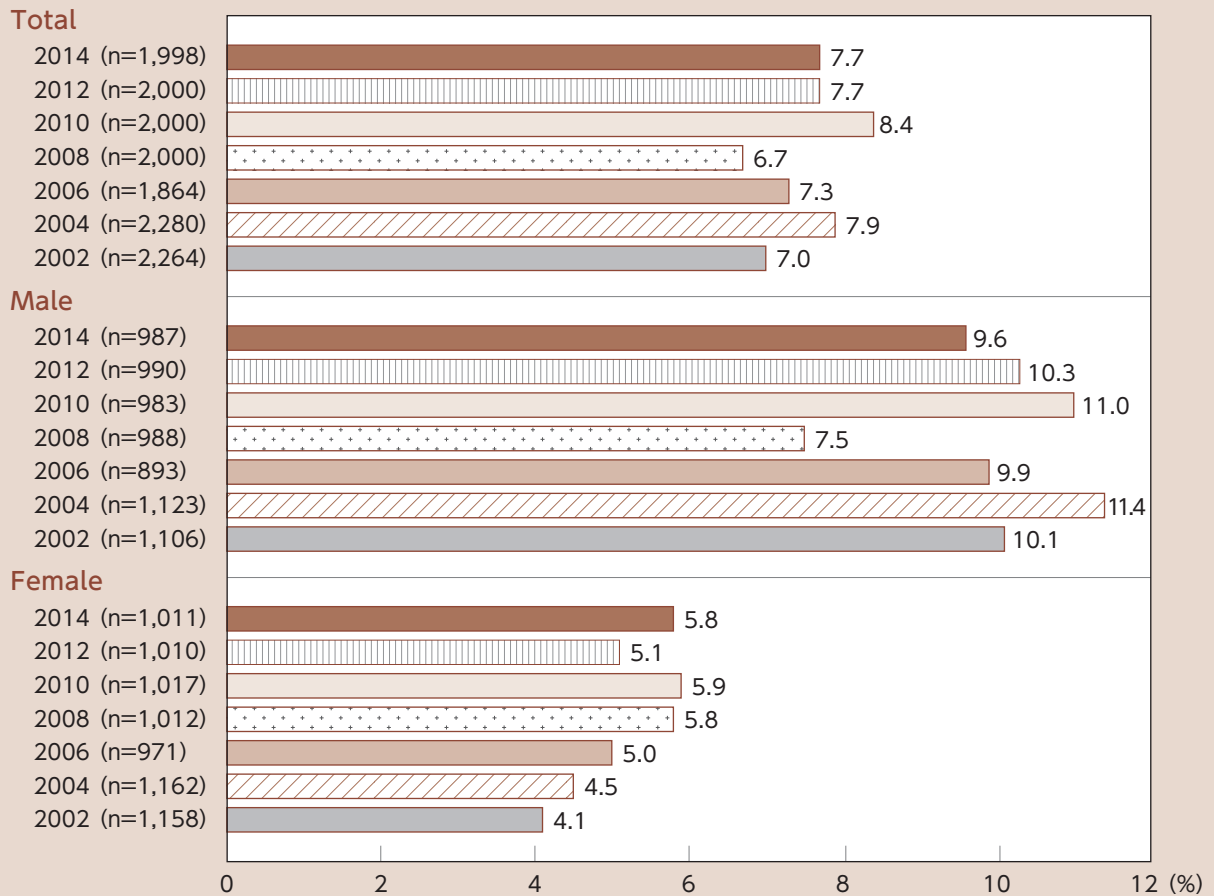


Chart 4: Change in the rate of sports volunteer participation rate (arranged by total and gender)

Table 3: Sports volunteer activity participation types (multiple responses allowed : n=154)

Types of sports voluntary activity		Rate of participation (%)	Frequency (times per year)
Day-to-day activities	Coaching	31.2	36.7
	Refereeing	27.9	10.7
	Running or helping sports clubs	34.4	35.0
	Helping to manage sports facilities	9.1	19.2
Local sports events	Refereeing	22.1	5.6
	Running or helping sports events	53.2	4.5
National and international events	Refereeing	2.6	2.8
	Running or helping sports events	7.8	1.8

## 4 Spectator Sports

The percentage of the population which attended sports events in the last year was 31.6%, 0.1 percentage points lower than the 31.7% in 2012, and 1.9 points lower than the 33.5% in 2010. The most popular sport was professional baseball (NPB) at 15.8%; the second-most popular sport was J League (J1, J2, and J3) soccer at 5.5%; high-school baseball came third at 5.3%; followed by marathon and Ekiden (relay marathons) at 4.8%; and coming in fifth was amateur baseball (university, company teams, etc.) at 2.6%.

The proportion who watched sport on television was 90.9%. By event, professional baseball (NPB) was no.1 with 59.4%; in second place was figure skating with 57.4%, followed by the Japanese national soccer games (including the Olympics squad) with 51.5%, high-school baseball at 47.9%, and marathon and Ekiden at 45.7%.

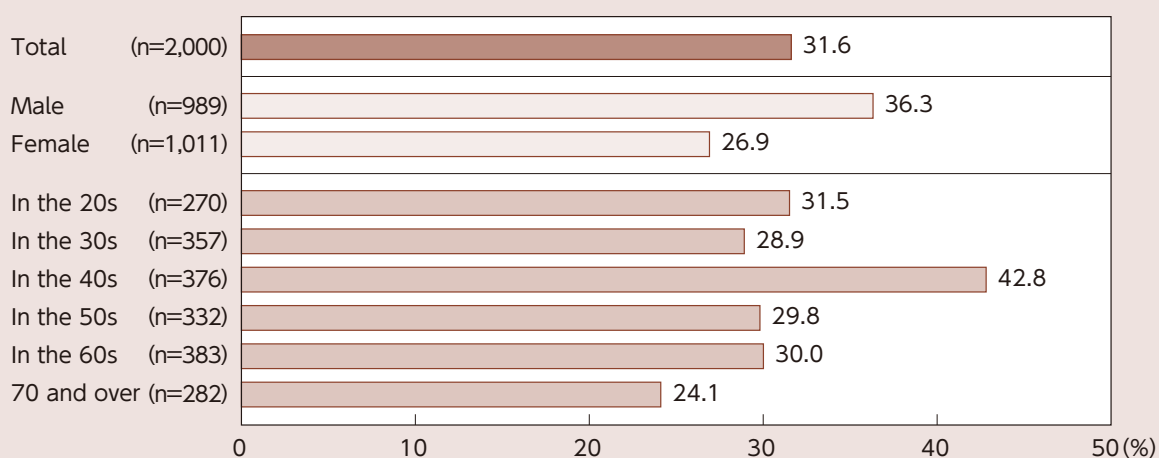


Chart 5 : Rate of those attending live sports events (arranged by total, gender, and age)

Table 4 : Rate of watching live sports by type (multiple responses allowed) (n=2,000)

Rank	Types of sports	Attending sports events				Watching sports on TV
		Attendance rate (%)	① Estimated spectators (in 10,000s)	② Frequency (times/year)	③ Estimated annual total (①×②) (in 10,000s)	Rate of watching (%)
1	Professional baseball (NPB)	15.8	1,640	2.29	3,756	59.4
2	J League Soccer (J1, J2, J3)	5.5	571	3.18	1,816	26.3
3	High-school baseball	5.3	550	3.25	1,788	47.9
4	Marathon and Ekiden	4.8	498	1.28	637	45.7
5	Amateur baseball (University, company teams, etc.)	2.6	270	7.26	1,960	4.1
6	Soccer (High-School, University, JFL, etc.)	2.3	239	5.48	1,310	12.3
7	Basketball (High-School, University, JBL, etc.)	1.5	156	8.10	1,264	2.1
	Professional golf	1.5	156	1.45	226	26.3
9	Martial arts (boxing, mixed martial arts, etc.)	1.3	135	1.84	248	27.3
10	Professional basketball (bj League)	1.0	104	2.11	219	3.1
11	Rugby	0.9	93	3.12	290	8.0
12	Sumo wrestling	0.8	83	1.07	89	38.7
13	Japanese national soccer games including the Olympics	0.7	73	1.36	99	51.5
	Volleyball (High-School, University, V League, etc.)	0.7	73	2.00	146	7.5
15	Figure skating	0.4	42	1.00	42	57.4
	Japanese women's national soccer games	0.4	42	1.29	54	44.1
	Volleyball (Japanese national games)	0.4	42	1.14	48	30.3

## 5 Sports clubs

Sports club membership was 20.0%, and 56.5% have never joined a sports club. Looking at past trends, membership was 19.0% in 2002, 19.2% in 2004, 18.4% in 2006, 20.6% in 2008, 18.8% in 2010, and 19.7% in 2012, maintaining the level of around 20% for the past decade. Of those who are currently members, 37.0% belong to community clubs, 25.8% belong to clubs run by friends and acquaintances, 23.0% belong to private clubs, 8.0% belong to workplace clubs, 3.3% belong to alumni clubs, and 3.3% belong to others. Of those who are not currently sports club members, 19.6% replied that they would like to take out membership in the future.

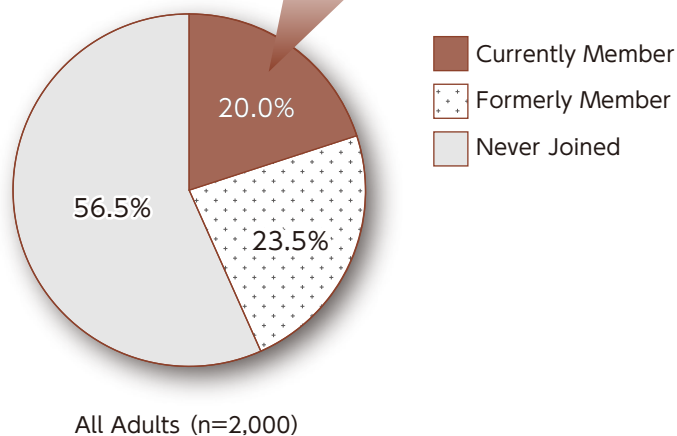
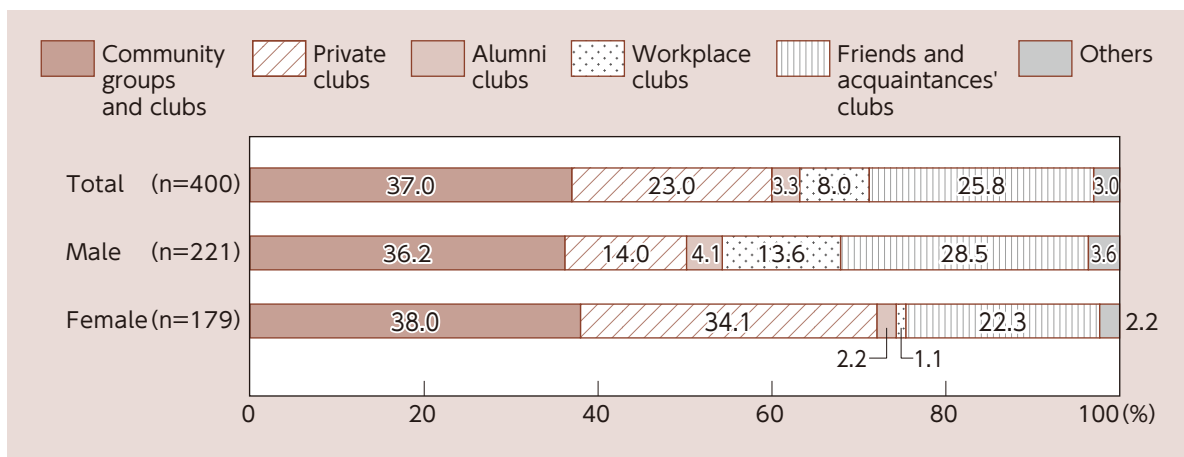


Chart 6 : Sports club and local groups participation pattern (arranged by total and gender)

## Sasakawa Sports Foundation (SSF)

SPORT FOR  
**every  
one**



SASAKAWA SPORTS FOUNDATION

Address: 11<sup>th</sup> Floor Ark Mori Building, 1-12-32,  
Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-6011

Telephone: 03-5545-3303 FAX: 03-5545-3305

URL: <http://www.ssf.or.jp/> E-mail: [data@ssf.or.jp](mailto:data@ssf.or.jp)

Established: March 1991

Purpose: to promote "Sport for Everyone"

Business overview

1. Research and Surveys
2. Research grants and human resource development
3. Collaboration with local governments
4. Public relations