Ipsos MORI
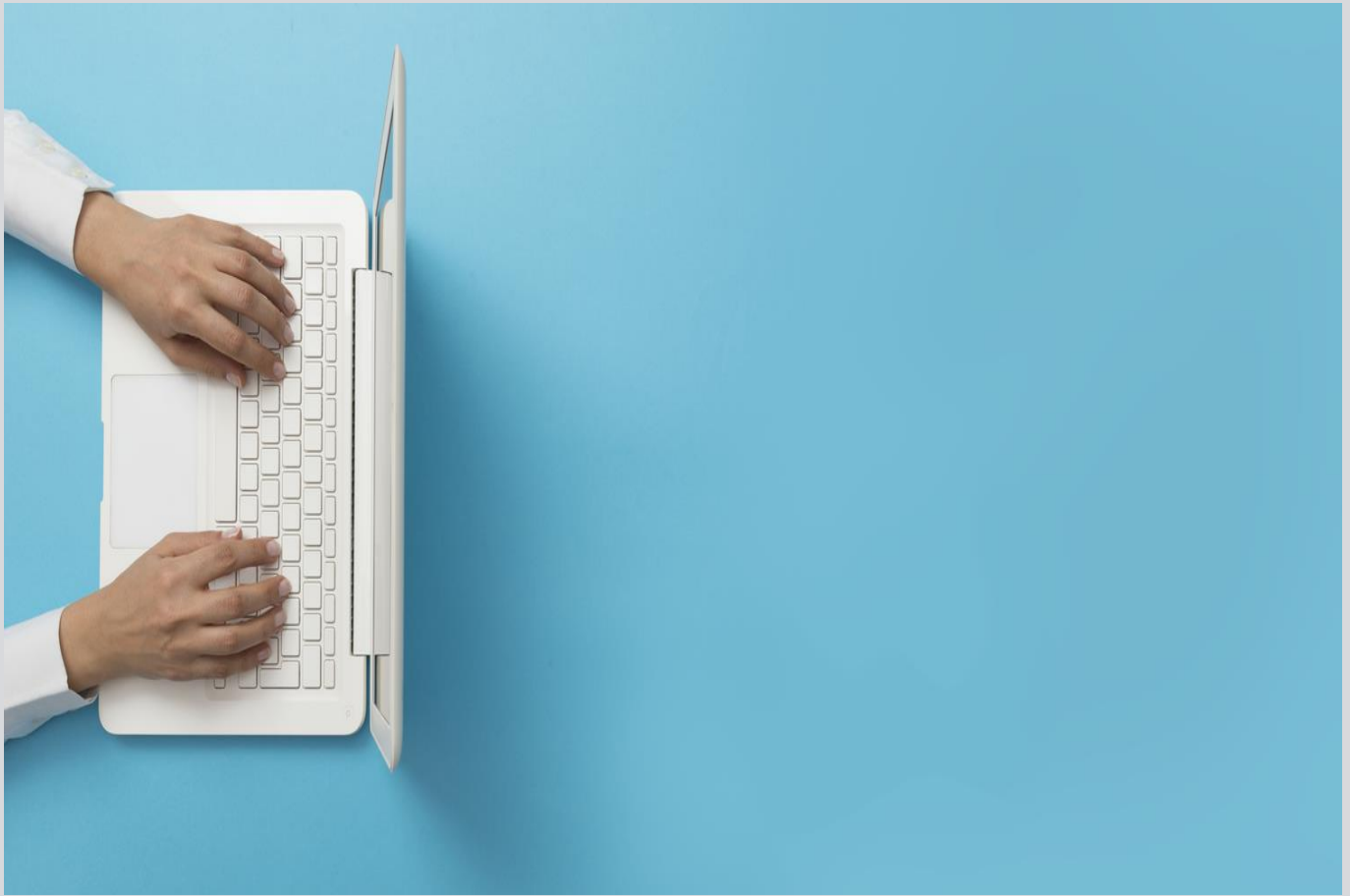Social Research Institute

Active Lives Survey 2019/2020 Mid-Year 5 Technical Note

May 19 – May 20

Ipsos MORI

The Active Lives Survey was conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of Sport England which commissioned the survey with additional funding from Public Health England and the Department for Transport.

1 Fieldwork and Survey Design

The data presented here were collected between May 2019 and May 2020 in England. The data were collected using an CAWI online questionnaire (64.5%) and a paper self-completion questionnaire (35.5%). The questionnaire can be completed by members of the public aged 16 or over and is available through both online and paper versions. Valid responses which could be used for analysis were received from 190,401 people in total.

The Active Lives Survey is a 'push-to-web' survey involving four postal mail-outs designed to encourage participants to complete the survey online. The survey is 'device-agnostic' and can be completed on mobile or desktop devices. The first two mail-outs are letters with information about how to access the survey online and a passcode for accessing the survey. At the third mailing a paper self-completion questionnaire is sent out to maximise response. A final letter reminder is sent as the fourth mailing which includes a reminder of how to access the online questionnaire (it does not include a paper questionnaire).

The sample is selected from the Postcode Address File using random probability sampling and one letter is sent to each address inviting up to two adults from the household to take part.

The sampling was designed to achieve pre-determined numbers of returns from adults within each local authority across the year of the survey. For the majority of the local authorities (293 from 317) the target number of completed questionnaires was 500 returns.

Target	Local Authority
200	Isles of Scilly
250	City of London
500	*All other local authorities*
750	Cambridge, Norwich, Oxford
1000	Bolton, Bradford, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan
2000	Birmingham, City of Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Nottingham, Sheffield
3500	Doncaster

2 Coronavirus implications

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic developed rapidly during 2020. In response to this, the government implemented a national lockdown in England from the 23rd March 2020. This meant until 13th May 2020, when further outdoor activities become available (e.g. water sports, golf etc.), you were only allowed outdoors for one form of exercise per day (e.g. a walk, run, cycle) either alone or with members of your household. In addition, the social distancing policies introduced also restricted people's ability to be outdoors and in social gatherings. This situation may have created challenges to members of the public who engage in physical activity outdoors, in leisure centres, gyms, sports clubs and other sporting venues, which in turn has had implications for physical participation reporting across England.

Fieldwork for the Active Lives survey continued throughout the pandemic. This data, therefore, reflects the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on activity levels and the government's policies to contain its spread. The survey instrument was largely unchanged. Caveats were added to various sections to acknowledge that not all types of activity listed may be possible at the time at which respondents completed the survey. An accompanying leaflet regarding coronavirus was introduced into all Active Lives mailings from April 2020 in order to inform potential participants about the importance of completing the Active Lives Survey during these exceptional times, so that a picture could be built up of the impact coronavirus is having on people's lives, their ability to stay active and overall wellbeing. Included in the leaflet was an invitation to check out Sport England's "Join the Movement" campaign, which offers advice and inspiration to help people stay active at this time using this link: www.sportengland.org/stayinworkout. There was also a link to information regarding the NHS guidelines about exercising: www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise.

3 Weighting

Weighting is required to reduce the bias in survey estimates. Weights are produced to make the weighted achieved sample match the population as closely as possible.

For the Active Lives Survey the weights correct for the disproportionate selection of addresses across local authorities and for the selection of adults and youths within households. They also adjust the achieved sample by month to control for seasonality.

In addition, by weighting to population estimates and national estimates from the Annual Population Survey 2018-2019), the weights should also reduce bias in the survey estimates. The control totals are produced from a mix of: 2019 mid-year population estimates (region with Local Authority), 2018-19 Labour Force Survey (number of people in household) and 2018-19 Labour Force Survey (everything else).

There were five stages to the weighting strategy:
1. calculation of an individual (within household) selection weight;
2. initial calibration to local authority and age/sex population estimates and month counts assuming a proportionate sample;
3. a second stage of calibration to the same measures as well as national estimates from the Annual Population Survey;
4. trimming of the second stage of calibration; and
5. a final adjustment to regional counts.

Multiple weights have been produced to allow correct weighting of the variables for different types of analysis. Most analysis has used the weight which covers the whole sample or the weight for online cases only. These two weights will be provided on the main dataset.

4 Confidence Intervals

Confidence intervals for the measures presented in the report can be found in the linked report tables. Confidence intervals indicate that if repeated samples were taken and confidence intervals computed for each sample, 95% of the intervals would contain the true value. Confidence intervals vary for each measure and each demographic breakdown.

Confidence intervals have been calculated using the complex survey package in SPSS, which takes account of design effects. They are presented for rates (%) in the report tables. Confidence intervals would also apply to the population estimates presented in the report and report tables.

5 Significance Testing

The report and accompanying tables shows data for the current survey year, the previous 12 months and the baseline year (May 2015-16, May 2018-19 and May 2019-20). This has allowed for analysis of the change in participation and activity levels over time. To compare data across survey years, significance testing has been applied to the report tables. This indicates whether changes observed across survey years are likely to be 'true' changes in the population, rather than just observed by chance.

Standard errors were generated using the complex samples module in SPSS: these were then applied to t-tests to assess statistical significance.

Only differences which are statistically significant are reported on as differences in the commentary. Where results are reported as being the same for two groups, this means there is no statistically significant difference.

The accompany tables also include data for the full time series. These tables are intended as summary statistics only, and so significance testing has not been applied to them.

6 Population estimates

These are estimates of the number of people in a particular group (for example, the number of people in the inactive group, or the number of males who have volunteered at least twice in the last year).

These estimates have been calculated using the rate (%) and the 2019 population estimates from the ONS, and therefore the true value would lie within a range around the estimates. The confidence intervals for the population estimates can be calculated by dividing the population estimate by the rate (%) and multiplying by the lower and upper confidence interval rates in the report tables.

7 Definitions used in the report

Activity data in the report

The data were collected by asking which activities from a list people had done in the last 12 months, on how many days they had done each activity in the last 28 days, how long they usually spent doing the activity per day and whether it raised their breathing rate or made them out of breath or sweaty.

Moderate activity: This is defined as activity where you raise your heart rate and feel a little out of breath.

Vigorous activity: This is where you are breathing hard and fast and your heart rate has increased significantly (you will not be able to say more than a few words without pausing for breath)

People could also mention activities which were not listed on the questionnaire and these were coded to the relevant activity. These data then fed into the measures presented in the analysis (Levels of activity and taking part). The data have been cleaned such that duplicated fitness activities within a single questionnaire have been removed, missing durations have been imputed using the median duration for that activity and extreme durations have been capped at the 95th percentile for that activity. The

questionnaire was set up such that people selected the activities they did. Any activity which was not selected was assumed not to have been done.

1. Activity

KPI1: Increase in the percentage of people physically active.
KPI2: Decrease in the percentage of people physically inactive.

The Chief Medical Officer defines an active person as someone who, over the course of a week, does 150 or more moderate intensity equivalent (MIE) minutes of physical activity. Breaking that down further:

- Moderate intensity equivalent (MIE) minutes means each 'moderate' minute counts as one minute. Any vigorous activity counts for double, so each vigorous minute counts as two moderate minutes.

- The 150 MIE minutes can be achieved in one go or in chunks of at least 10 minutes across different days through a combination of physical activities.

Associated measures are 'fairly active' which refers to 30-149 minutes by the same definition and 'inactive' which refers to less than 30 minutes. KPI's 1 and 2 in sporting future guidelines refer to all sports, fitness, cycling, walking, dance and gardening activity. Gardening does not however fall under Sport England's remit and so, unless referenced otherwise, this is excluded from the data presented.

2. Taking part in Sport and Physical Activity

KPI3: Increase in percentage of the population taking part in sport and physical activity at least twice in the last month.

This is measured as the equivalent of 30 minutes or more activity at least twice in the last 28 days. Each session must last at least 10 minutes and be of at least moderate intensity.

An individual can reach the minimum threshold by a combination of two 30-minutes sessions across the last 28 days or by six 10-minute sessions, for example. This is measured for all activities including sports, fitness, dance, cycling and walking (including for travel).

In the analysis, specific activities have been grouped together into composites to look at groups of sports or disciplines. When creating composites across activities anyone who did not tick any of the relevant activities which feed into the composite were treated as not having done that composite activity. Therefore, there are no missing values for these composites. In some cases, intensity was assumed and

not asked (assumed always to be light, moderate or vigorous). Activities done by those aged 65 and over were assumed to be at least moderate in all cases and therefore counted in the taking part measure. Results are also presented for smaller groups of specific activities.

The table below shows the specific activities which are included under each of the composite activity groupings used in the report. Where relevant, the wording or description given in the questionnaire is also included for reference.

Composite	Activities included
Walking for leisure	Walking for leisure (including dog walking, rambling, and Nordic walking). At the start of year 5 (from Mid-November 2019), the questionnaire was amended to remove a requirement that only walks of at least 10 minutes continuous activity should be counted. This data, therefore, combines the two versions of the question. Walking around shops is excluded.
Walking for travel	At the start of year 5 (from Mid-November 2019), the questionnaire was amended to remove a requirement that only walks of at least 10 minutes continuous activity should be counted. This data, therefore, combines the two versions of the question. Walking around shops is excluded.
Cycling for leisure and sport	Cycling for leisure, Mountain biking, BMX, Road cycling or racing, Track cycling, Cyclo-cross, Cycling for Leisure and all other cycling, Exercise bike, Cycle class (e.g. spinning, RPM).
Cycling for travel	Cycling for travel (including commuting).
Creative or Artistic Dance	Creative or Artistic Dance. For example, ballet, ballroom, belly dancing, contemporary, contact improvisation, Flamenco, folk, hip-hop, historical/period, Irish, jazz, jive, Latin American, line or square dancing, salsa, street dance, South Asian, tango or tap.
Fitness activities	**Combining several activities in a gym**. **Fitness machines** such as Cross training machine (e.g. Cross trainer, SkiErg), Exercise bike, Rowing machine, Step machine, Treadmill, Other exercise machine. **Fitness class** such as Pilates, Yoga, Boxing class (e.g. Boxercise, body combat), Cardio class (e.g. aerobics, step aerobics, body attack), Core strength class (e.g. legs bums and tums, body balance), Cycle class (e.g. spinning, RPM), Dance-based class (e.g. Zumba, fitsteps, ravercise or body jam), Water-based class (e.g. aquaerobics, aquafit), Weights-based class (e.g. body pump, kettlebell), Other fitness or exercise class. **Weights session** such as Resistance weights machines, Free weights (includes kettlebells and dumb-bells), Weightlifting or powerlifting (using a barbell). **Interval sessions**, such as Circuit training, Cross training, Bootcamp (e.g. drill sergeant, military fitness), Cross fit, High intensity (e.g. HIT, insanity). **Generic fitness session**, covering things such as Body weight exercises (e.g. pull ups, press ups, sit ups), Skipping, Aerial fitness, Hula hooping.

Composite	Activities included
Sporting Activities	**Team Sports:** Football, Cricket, Rugby union, Rugby league, Touch rugby, Wheelchair rugby, Netball, Basketball, Wheelchair basketball, Field hockey, Volleyball, Rounders, Dodgeball, Baseball or softball, Lacrosse, Goalball, Handball, Gaelic sports, Other team sport. **Racket Sports:** Tennis, Badminton, Squash or Racketball, Table Tennis. **Adventure sports:** Hill or mountain walking or hiking, Rock climbing or bouldering, Climbing or bouldering wall, Caving or pot holing, Abseiling, Orienteering, Parkour or free running, High ropes. **Water sports:** Rowing, Sailing, Windsurfing, Gliding, paragliding or hang gliding, Canoeing or kayaking, Rafting, Water skiing or wakeboarding, Surfing, board surfing, body boarding, kite surfing, paddle boarding, Scuba diving or snorkelling, Life-saving, Other water sports such as dragon boat racing. **Leisure games and activities:** Angling or fishing, Archery, Fencing, Ice skating, Frisbee or ultimate Frisbee, Rounders, Garden trampolining, Ten-pin bowling, Croquet, Cue based sports (e.g. billiards, snooker and pool), Darts, Skittles, Other leisure activity or game. **Combat sports, Martial Arts or Target Sports:** Archery, Boxing, Fencing, Judo, Taekwondo, Martial arts, Shooting, Wrestling, Tai Chi **Winter sports**: Skiing, Snowboarding, Sledding, luge, tobogganing, Ice hockey, Curling, Ice skating, Other winter sports. **Swimming, diving or water polo:** Swimming indoors and outdoors, Diving, Water polo. **Running, athletics or multi-sports:** Track and field athletics, Running or jogging, Fell or trail running, Triathlon (includes aquathlon and duathlon), Modern Pentathlon, Obstacle course (e.g. Tough mudder, Spartan, Rat Race). **Golf**. **Horse riding.** **Bowls or Boules.** **Gymnastics, trampolining or cheerleading.** **Roller or skating sports:** Roller-skating, inline skating, rollerblading, Roller hockey, Skateboarding, Ice skating. **Motorsports:** Karting or go-karting, Motorcycle racing, Motorcar racing.

The report presents certain activities from within the sporting activities group. This table shows what they include.

Sporting Activity: Composite	Activities
Badminton	Badminton
Basketball	Basketball (does not include Wheelchair basketball)
Bowls	Bowls including carpet bowls, crown green bowls, flat green bowls, short mat bowls
Boxing	Boxing and boxing fitness
Climbing or mountaineering	Includes hillwalking, hiking, rock climbing and bouldering (including on climbing walls)
Cricket	Long and short form cricket and nets and practice and other cricket
Equestrian	Hacking or pony trekking, Schooling, Show jumping, Dressage, Eventing, Other horse riding
Football	11 a-side, small sided, futsal, walking football and other football
Golf	Full course golf, Short course golf, par 3, pitch and putt, putting, Driving range, Adventure or crazy golf
Gymnastics	Gymnastics and trampolining (excluding garden trampolining)
Netball	Netball
Rowing	Water based rowing and rowing machine
Rugby union	15 a-side, Rugby Sevens, touch and tag rugby
Running	Running or jogging and treadmill
Snowsport	Skiing and snowboarding
Squash	Squash and racketball
Swimming	Swimming (indoors, outdoor pool and open water)
Table tennis	Table Tennis
Tennis	Tennis
Track and field athletics	Track and field athletics

3. Volunteering

KPI 7: Increase in the number of people volunteering in sport at least twice in the last year.

KPI 8: The demographics of volunteers in sport to become more representative of society as a whole

This is measured as having volunteered in sport at least twice in the last year, excluding people who have only volunteered by fundraising.

Respondents were asked a series of questions about different types of volunteering in sport and physical activity:

• During the last 12 months, have you given any of your time to do any of the following activities?
• Think about all those sport and fitness activities you have given your time to support. Generally, how often have you done so over the last 12 months?

The volunteering questions were revised at the start of year 5 (from Mid-November 2019) to provide more detailed data on the frequency, duration and longevity of volunteering activity. As such, we are unable to report a combined 12-month figure at this release. The data tables linked to the May 19 – May 20 report represent data collected using the previous version of the volunteering questions (i.e. data captured during May-Nov 19).

4. Sports spectating

KPI9: Number of people who have attended a live sporting event more than once in the past year.

This is measured as having watched two or more live sports events, whether professional or amateur, over the previous 12 months.

The question was asked as part of a list of different activities. They were asked:

• Have you done this activity (attended a live sports event) in the past 12 months?
• If you have done this activity in the past 12 months how many times have you done it? Additional information provided was: Include all matches and competitions, including professional sport as well as watching family and friends compete.
• Answers of 'twice' or 'three or more' were included in this measure. There were some missing data from the postal questionnaire, if people did not answer this question. These people are excluded from the base. Therefore, the base for the analysis is 190,006.

Key demographic variables

1. Age and gender

The report contains breakdowns by ***age and gender***. The gender question used in the Active Lives survey asks people to describe how they think of themselves, and allows them to provide the answer 'in another way'.

2. Number of long-term limiting impairments

The questionnaire asked whether people had any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses that have lasted or are expected to last 12 months or more. Those who said yes were asked whether these physical or mental health conditions or illnesses have a substantial effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. All those who reported any conditions or impairments were asked whether the disability or illness affected them in any of 13 ways (including other). These were long term pain, chronic health condition, mobility, dexterity, mental health, visual, breathing, memory, hearing, learning, speech, behavioural, other (more detailed descriptions were provided on the questionnaire). Those who answered yes to the impairment having a substantial effect were considered to have a limiting impairment. The number of limiting impairments was derived from the question which asked about types of impairment. It should be noted that this is the number of impairments from a set list reported by people who said that any of their conditions or illnesses have a substantial effect.

Those in the no limiting impairments category are those who reported no conditions or illnesses and those who reported that any conditions they have do not have a substantial effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

3. Social Status

The measure used is a National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) measure derived using the self-coded method[1]. This assigns people aged 16-74 to a classification using information collected about employment status (self-employed or employed), the size of organisation and supervisory roles. People are then asked to place themselves in one of eight occupational groups. From this, a five class NS-SEC measure can be derived. Testing of this method by ONS showed a 75% agreement with the

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[1] Section 14 in the ONS Socio-economic classification guidance.

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160105160709/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/classifications/current-standard-classifications/soc2010/soc2010-volume-3-ns-sec--rebased-on-soc2010--user-manual/index.html

interviewer coded method. More details about this method can be obtained from ONS, since the standard self-coded method was used.

4. Current education stage

Those who reported that they were in full or part time education when asked about their working status were asked about where they are studying. In addition, those who did not report being in full or part time education were asked whether they were studying for a recognised qualification. Those who were studying for a recognised qualification were asked where they were studying.

8 Note on Terminology

In the report tables, the term "respondents" is used as the heading for the unweighted base for each column. The term respondents have been used because the term participant which is usually used to refer to people who take part in a survey is confusing in the context of a survey about sports participation where participation has a different meaning.

The term rate (%) means the weighted percentage of respondents who gave that answer.

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About Ipsos MORI's Social Research Institute
The Social Research Institute works closely with national governments, local public services and the not-for-profit sector.
Its c.200 research staff focus on public service and policy issues. Each has expertise in a particular part of the public sector,
ensuring we have a detailed understanding of specific sectors and policy challenges. This, combined with our methods
and communications expertise, helps ensure that our research makes a difference for decision makers and communities.