



# The Change in Sports Activity Caused by the Spring Lockdown 2020

**DECEMBER 2020**

# ABOUT THIS REPORT

## Goal

- The Covid-19 pandemic is an unprecedented public health crises that required decisive measures from governments and civil society to stop the spread of the contagious and potentially lethal disease.
- Social distancing, lockdowns, increased work from home and closure of social places like bars and restaurants but also sports clubs and fitness centers added up to a remarkable change of the lifestyle and daily routines of millions of people not only in the member states of the Council of Europe but around the globe.
- Sports activities are widely accepted to contribute to individuals' personal health and happiness and social sports events are an important part of civil society and people's life in many states. It is a significant sector of economic activity as well.
- This study was set out to understand the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on people's sports behavior in terms of how much they exercised but also how and where they did so.
- The study was conducted in 29 member states of the Council of Europe.





# Analysis

# ABOUT THIS REPORT

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## Methodology

- This report presents an overview of a study conducted by Dalia Research for the Council of Europe between 26/11/2020 and 21/12/2020.
- 14645 people completed the survey. These answers have been collected among individuals living the countries highlighted on the map to the right.
- Per country, a representative sample was collected on available census data for age & gender. Sample size per country varied between 300 and 800.
- The questionnaire was designed to collect the following information from every respondent:
  - a) a variety of demographics, e.g. income, household size, education, employment status, job impact of pandemic (i.e. working more from home), monthly income change due to pandemic and whether the live in a city or rural area.
  - b) the amount of time spent on sports and sports activities on three points in time:
    - before the pandemic in 2019),
    - during the first lockdown (March-April 2020)
    - after the lockdown (August-September 2020)



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## ANALYSIS - CHANGE IN SPORTS SETTING

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During the lockdown the time spend on home workouts almost doubled ~ 43%



Decrease in some MS of Outdoor sports activities even though outdoor sports activities were less restricted by the lockdown than indoor sports activities.



Due to the restrictions during the lockdown there is a significant decrease in indoor sports.

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## ANALYSIS – EFFECT OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS



The following nine demographic factors were collected from participants:



Age



Gender



City vs. Rural



Education Level



Household Size



Employment Status



Income Level



Income Change due to Corona



Share of Home Office

- None of the factors stand out in particular in their influence on participants' sports behavior.
- The difference between the cohorts does not or hardly change due to the lockdown and the subsequent relaxations.
- The detailed diagrams for the demographic factors can be seen on the following pages

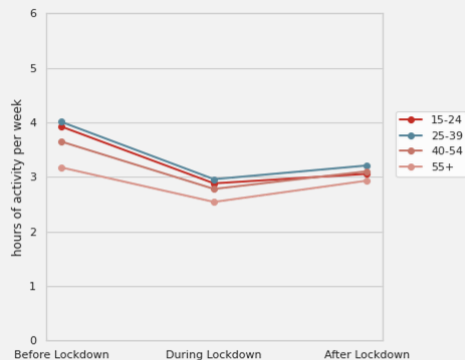


# ANALYSIS – EFFECT OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS



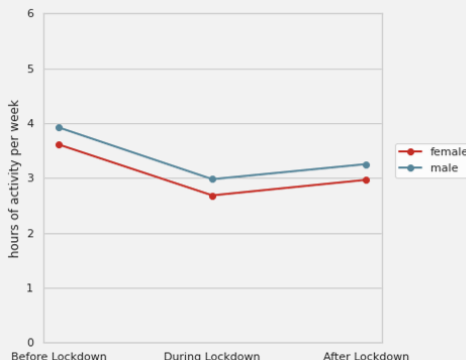
## AGE

Regardless of age, sports activities on average decreased in the lockdown and increased slightly as the lockdown has ended.



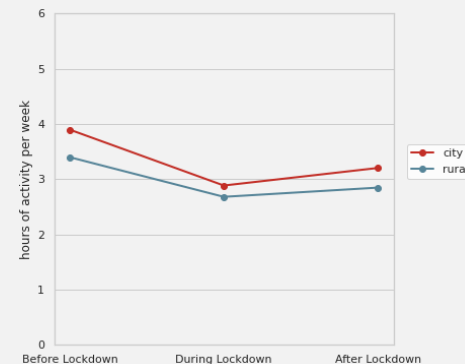
## GENDER

While men tend to perform slightly more physical activity than women, the effect of the pandemic is similar for both genders.



## CITY VS. RURAL

The decrease of sports activities was higher for people living in an urban environment. This is mainly driven by a higher share of sports performed in sports facilities or sports clubs



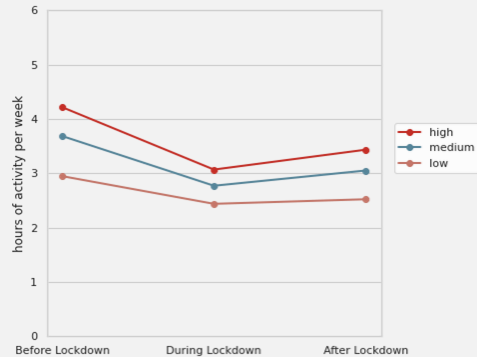
[<background information in the Appendix>](#)

# ANALYSIS – EFFECT OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS



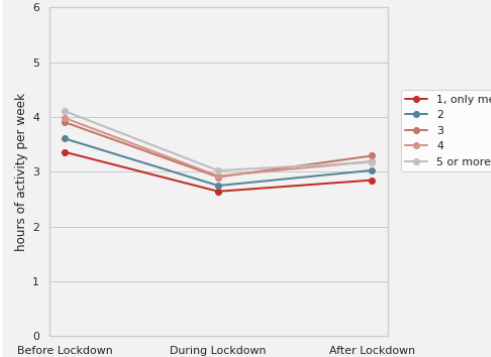
## EDUCATION LEVEL

Although the trends in changes were similar, there were significant differences in the level of sports activities across the education groups.



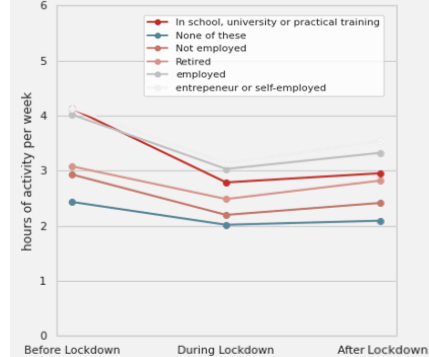
## HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Across all household sizes these changes resembled the overall trend, and there were relatively minor differences across the sizes.



## EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Pupils and students see the highest drop in physical activity. This is mainly driven by school shutdowns and the disruption of sports clubs.



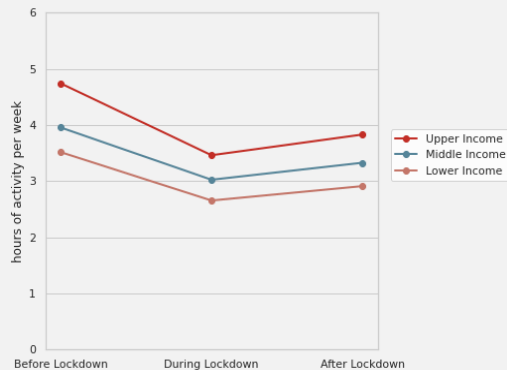
[<background information in the Appendix>](#)

# ANALYSIS – EFFECT OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS



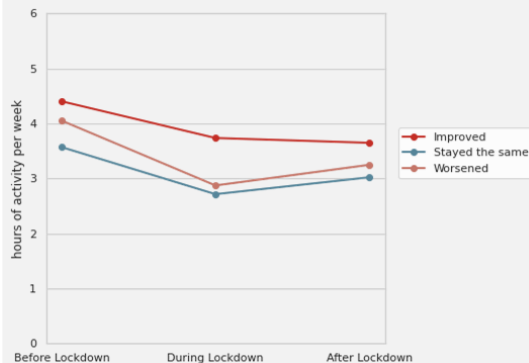
## INCOME LEVEL

Although all income groups changed their sports activities in a similar way, higher income individuals generally engaged in more sports than lower income persons.



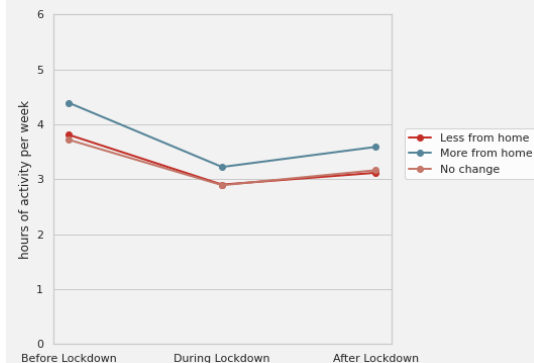
## INCOME CHANGE

Individuals whose income improved during the pandemic did not change their sports activities according to the general trend.



## JOB IMPACT

No matter how the job was impacted by the pandemic, individuals changed their sports activities in a way resembling the overall trend.



[<background information in the Appendix>](#)

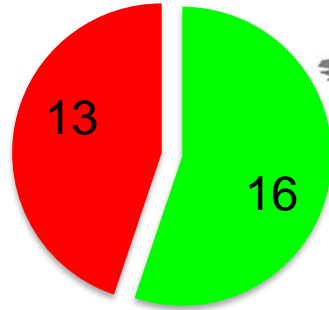
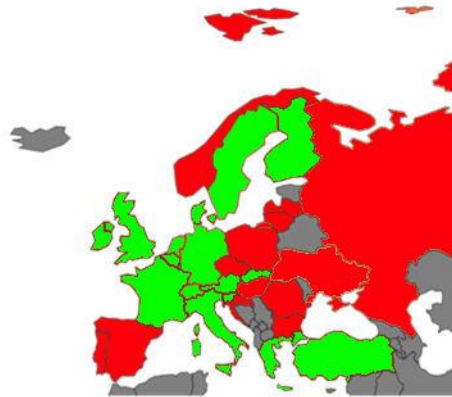
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# ANALYSIS - INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON

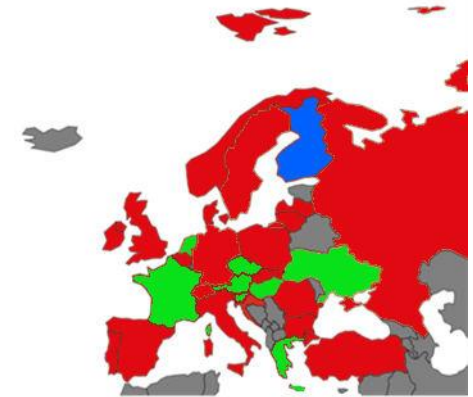
Before vs. During Lockdown:



1<sup>st</sup> vs. After Lockdown:



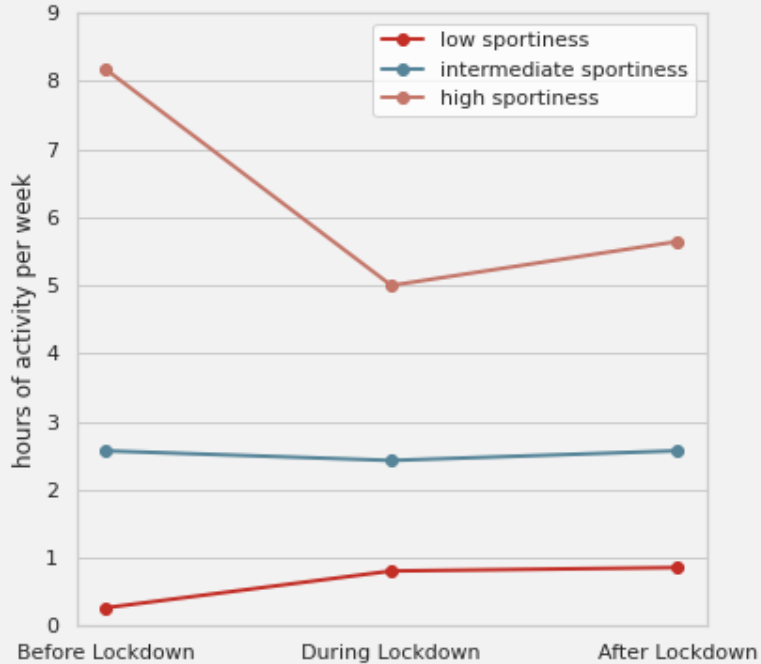
Inactive People Change



There was an approximate split of countries which saw a decrease in physical activity during the 1<sup>st</sup> lockdown and those which stayed the same or increased  
All countries noted an increase in physical activity after 1<sup>st</sup> Lockdown  
Many countries also saw a rise in number of completely inactive people

## ANALYSIS – OVERALL TRENDS

### Change in Sports Activity



### Comment

- On average **sporty individuals** significantly decreased their sports activities from 8.2 hours to 5 hours per week during the lockdown (-39%)
- A **intermediate sporty** person did on average not change their sports activities significantly (-5.5%)
- In the group of lowest activity levels, the average time spent on sports has increased. However, this may have been caused by people from the other segments dropping below the threshold of 1 hour per week.

\* Low Sportiness: <1 hour sport per week; Intermediate Sportiness: 1-4 hours sport per week; High Sportiness: >4 hours sport per week

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### **Discussions**

- The health crisis had an impact on the population's level of physical activity
- Reduction of opportunities were not compensated by “new opportunities”
- Drop of activity by young people in particular
- Development of innovative practices, but need for a more sport friendly environment
- Inequalities of access to sport require widening grassroots sport offer
- Impact on the budgets of sports organisations -> concrete measures are needed to mitigate the impact on local sports clubs jobs and activities

### **Conclusions**

- Sport should not sacrifice its values : all stakeholders should work in solidarity to guarantee safe, ethical and inclusive sport environment
- Sharing information on the impact of COVID-19 on sport is important

### **Follow-up by EPAS**

- Use the lessons learnt from COVID-19 crisis while updating the European Sports Charter and in the framework of MSL16
- EPAS will try to keep collecting data



## EPAS IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE DROP IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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- Facilitate resumption of physical activity
- Advocate sport and movement as basic necessity
- Demonstrate how sport makes societies and people more resilient
- Don't focus on commercial activities but promote integrity, solidarity and volunteering

# CHALLENGES

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- Lack of appropriate facilities for sport for all
- Drop in physical education and school sport
- Competitive sport is suffering due to cancellation of events and loss of incomes exacerbates rivalries and lobbying
- Organisations in the field of sport, which have a commercial activity or are hiring professionals, should be supported to maintain their capacity

## OPPORTUNITIES

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- Develop on-line training as a way to activate sedentary people, as well as remote competitions, remote training for coaches, officials, leaders, and new ways to communicate with affiliated organisations
- Develop volunteering
- Use economic stimuli programmes for investment in sport for all facilities
- Development of walking, cycling, at home fitness (facilities, sports goods, offers)

Thank you

Questions?