



Sport Participation in Canada

Chapter 12

12.0 More Canadians Watching Amateur Sporting Events

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More Canadians watched amateur sporting events in 1998 than in 1992. The number of spectators increased from 5 million or 24% of adult Canadians in 1992 to 7.6 million or 32% in 1998 – an increase of 8 percentage points. The number of men and women watching amateur sport were about equal.

In 1992, there was little variation in the age breakdown of people watching amateur sport. By 1998, spectators tended to be young adults under 25 years of age. Over one-half of 15-18 year olds reported watching amateur sport, followed by 36% of 19-24 year olds. Older Canadians, those aged 55 and over, reported the lowest rate of spectating (20%).

Spectators were more likely to be well educated, having some college or trade education or higher. Canadians with less education (some secondary school or less) were less likely to report watching amateur sport (28%).

As for household income, the data indicate that spectatorship increases as income levels increased. That is, while one-quarter (24%) of respondents with family incomes less than \$20,000 watched amateur sport, this proportion gradually increased to nearly one-half (46%) of respondents from households earning \$80,000 or more.

Residents of the Atlantic Provinces ranked as the most avid spectators of amateur sport in 1998 (Prince Edward Island 51%, New Brunswick 49%, Nova Scotia 46% and Nfld 42%) followed by the Prairies. Residents of Quebec reported the lowest rate of spectatorship (25%).

The impact of mother tongue on spectatorship is similar to the trends seen so far. Anglophones show the highest rate of spectatorship at 40%, followed by persons indicating a multi-linguistic profile (36%). Francophones reported watching amateur sport at a rate 16 percentage points lower (25%) than that of Anglophones (40%), and persons speaking a language other than English or French showed the lowest rate (21%).

Spectating at amateur sporting events seems to reflect the age of children in the household. Watching amateur sporting events begins when children are very young - under 5 years of age. Almost one-quarter (23%) of Canadians reported watching amateur sport when all children in the household were under 5 years of age. This rate peaks at 46% when children are between 5-12 years of age, and decreases slightly to 40% when children are 13 years of age and older. Once there are no children in the household under 19 years of age, spectating decreases to 28%.

Table 14.

Profile of Canadians (aged 15 years and older) who Participated
as a Spectator of Amateur Sport, 1998

	Population	Total		Male		Female	
		000s	%	000s	%	000s	%
Total	24,260	7,651	31.5	4,040	33.8	3,611	29.3
Age group							
15-18	1,644	905	55.1	517	60.1	388	49.5
19-24	2,415	869	36.0	453	37.5	416	34.4
25-34	4,615	1,449	31.4	731	31.5	718	31.3
35-54	9,353	3,200	34.2	1,657	35.4	1,543	33.1
55 and over	6,233	1,229	19.7	682	23.8	547	16.2
Level of education							
Some secondary or less	6,286	1,749	27.8	976	31.5	774	24.3
Some college/trade/high school Diploma	6,057	2,167	35.8	1,142	40.1	1,025	32.0
Diploma/some University	6,201	2,258	36.4	1,057	35.7	1,201	37.0
University degree	4,094	1,436	35.1	845	37.0	591	32.6
Family income							
Less than \$20,000	2,305	547	23.7	250	27.0	296	21.5
\$20,000 to \$29,999	1,828	489	26.7	245	29.4	244	24.5
\$30,000 to \$49,999	4,262	1,489	34.9	738	36.5	751	33.6
\$50,000 to \$79,999	4,418	1,804	40.8	1,020	42.3	784	39.1
\$80,000 or more	3,168	1,455	45.9	913	46.0	542	45.7
Province of residence							
Newfoundland	447	188	42.0	99	44.8	89	39.2
Prince Edward Island	107	55	51.3	29	55.7	26	47.1
Nova Scotia	761	353	46.3	202	54.6	150	38.5
New Brunswick	613	297	48.5	153	50.9	144	46.3
Quebec	6,006	1,498	24.9	839	28.5	660	21.5
Ontario	9,184	2,760	30.1	1,454	32.3	1,306	27.9
Manitoba	893	313	35.1	163	37.0	150	33.2
Saskatchewan	787	315	40.0	167	43.0	147	36.9
Alberta	2,261	836	37.0	404	35.7	432	38.3
British Columbia	3,201	1,037	32.4	530	33.5	508	31.4
Labour force participation							
Full time	11,388	4,085	35.9	2,534	36.7	1,551	34.6
Part time	1,615	593	36.7	144	39.5	449	35.9
Student with/without employment	2,368	1,113	47.0	589	49.0	525	45.0
Not in labour force	6,742	1,705	25.3	710	29.0	995	23.2
Mother tongue							
English only	11,360	4,591	40.4	2,351	41.4	2,240	39.4
French only	4,321	1,073	24.8	557	27.6	515	22.4
Other only	2,358	493	20.9	291	24.1	203	17.6
Multiple languages	4,161	1,486	35.7	832	40.3	653	31.1

Participation rate was calculated by using the total Canadian population 15 years and older for each designated category.

Estimates are rounded to the nearest thousand.

Totals may not add due to rounding.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1998