

Thursday, 15 February 2018

Six million Australians make Swimming ‘Number 1 Sport’

Swimming is Australia’s leading sport with over six million Australians participating in swimming either regularly or occasionally in the last three months. Swimming is one of the rare Australian sporting pursuits where more women (3.45 million) participate than men (2.58 million).

Australia’s top participation sport will be sharp in focus when the Australian Dolphins will be competing at the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in April.

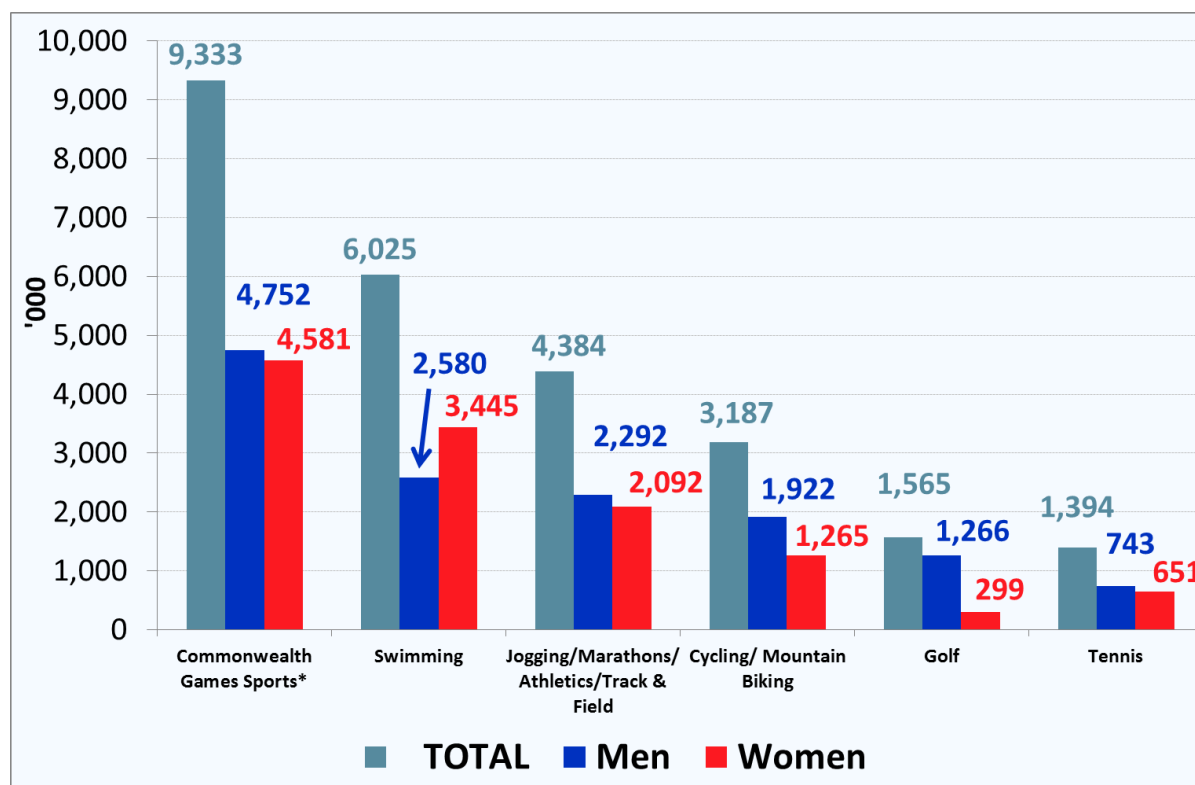
There are several other popular Australian sports with high participation levels. Jogging, marathons, athletics and track & field participation numbers are well over 4.3 million and cycling and mountain biking has nearly 3.1 million Australian participants.

Analysis of the broad range of sports being contested at this year’s Commonwealth Games shows more than 9.3 million Australians (46.4%) played Commonwealth Games* sports regularly or occasionally last year (see table below).

Other popular Commonwealth Games’ sports in Australia comprise basketball and table tennis. More than one million participants play basketball and 979,000 play table tennis.

The two most widely played sports excluded at the Commonwealth Games are two of Australia’s traditional summer sports where Australia’s pedigree shines. Golf has more than 1.5 million Australians participating while tennis has almost 1.4 million participants.

Most Popular Sports & Activities participated in regularly or occasionally



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), January – December 2017 (n=15,169). *Commonwealth Games Sports include: Swimming, Marathons, Running, Athletics, Track & Field, Cycling, Mountain Biking, Basketball, Table Tennis, Lawn Bowls, Netball, Boxing, Badminton, Squash, Gymnastics, Clay/ Target Shooting, Field Hockey & Triathlons. The Commonwealth Games sports of Judo, Rugby Sevens, Weightlifting and Wrestling were not measured.

Metrotechs, Leading Lifestyles & Aussie Achievers more likely to be swimmers

Analysing Australia's 6,025,000 swimmers in more detail reveals an over-representation by three of [Roy Morgan's Helix Personas](#) communities.

More than a third of 'Metrotechs' (34.6%), 'Aussie Achievers' (33.5%) and 'Leading Lifestyles' (33.4%) participate in swimming. Combined together more than half of all Australian swimmers come from one of these three communities.

Helix Personas is a unique and powerful consumer segmentation and data integration tool that combines sophisticated psychographic and behavioural data to classify the Australian population into 56 Personas and seven Communities. Helix Personas uses a combination of Roy Morgan Single Source data and third party data sources.

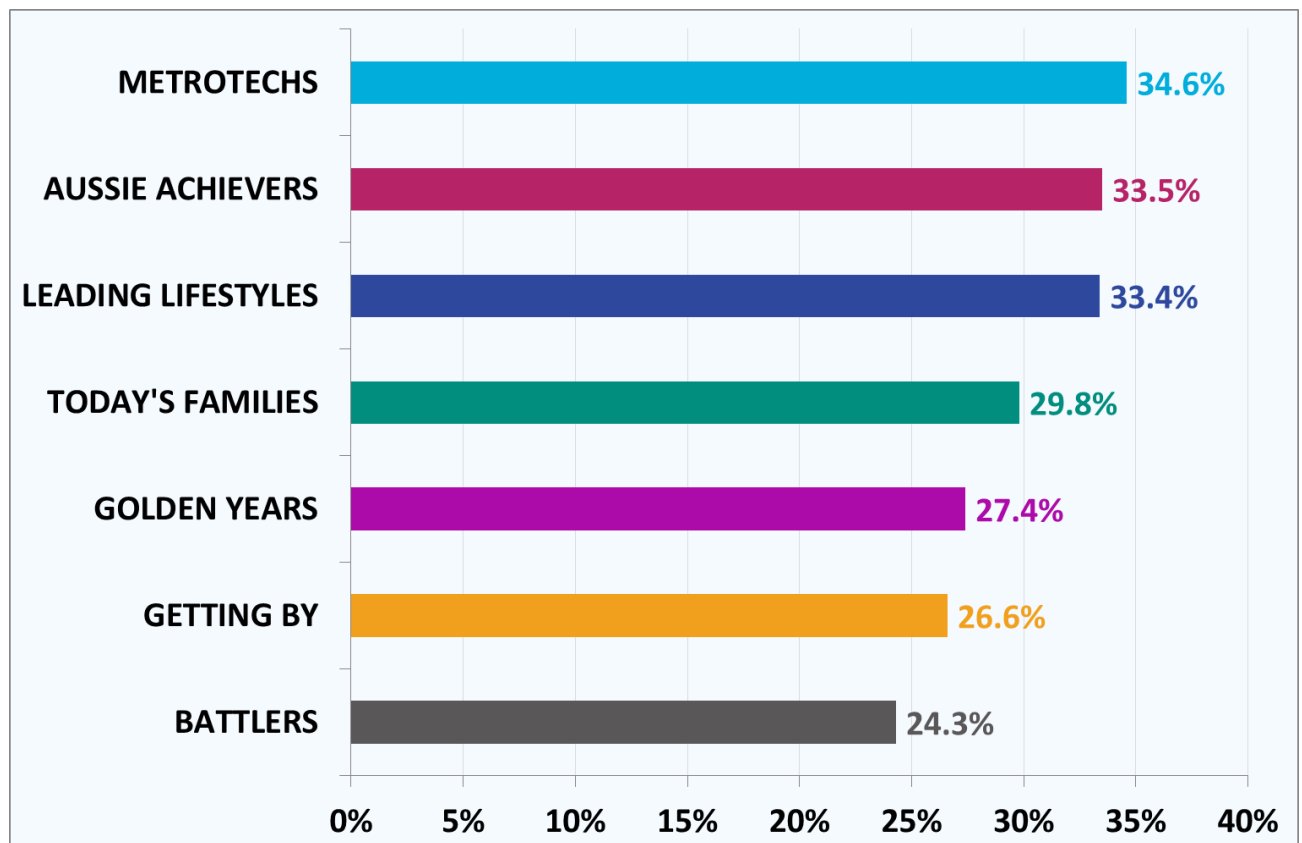
This information is used to understand future buying intentions and media consumption patterns. These are easily integrated with third party datasets.

"From my perspective sport is of national importance," John Bertrand AO, President of Swimming Australia said. "And swimming is the biggest participation sport in the country."

Swimming Australia is the peak body for swimming with nearly 1,000 clubs and 90,000 registered members nationally. Swimming Australia's vision is to create a nation of swimmers admired by the world.

There are more swimmers, 1,639,000, within the 'Leading Lifestyles' community than any other and members of this community are 11% more likely to be a swimmer than the average Australian. The least likely community to be participating in swimming are the 'Battlers', which only 24.3% participate in swimming.

Australian Swimmers ranked by Helix Personas Communities



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), January – December 2017 (n=15,169).

All Sports & Activities participate in regularly or occasionally

A full ranking of Australian participation in sports and activities (i.e. participated in “regularly or occasionally” reveals men are more likely to participate in most sports.

However, there are some notable exceptions. In addition to the aforementioned swimming more women than men participate in netball (as expected), boxing, horse riding, gymnastics, ice/figure skating, rowing and softball/baseball.

Sports & Activities participate in regularly or occasionally	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN
	('000)	('000)	('000)
Total Commonwealth Games Sports*	9,333	4,752	4,581
Swimming	6,025	2,580	3,445
Jogging, marathons, running, athletics and track & field	4,384	2,292	2,092
Cycling and mountain biking	3,187	1,922	1,265
Golf	1,565	1,266	299
Tennis	1,394	743	651
Soccer	1,360	958	402
Basketball	1,036	707	329
Table tennis	979	618	361
Cricket	849	661	189
Surfing	777	517	261
Netball	661	128	534
Australian Football	604	449	155
Lawn bowls	545	334	211
Snow skiing	539	291	248
Badminton	538	319	219
Boxing	509	234	276
Horse riding	476	129	347
Volleyball	447	226	221
Snowboarding	366	249	117
Archery	342	243	100
Rugby League	327	237	91
Gymnastics	296	124	172
Ice/figure skating	283	75	208
Squash	273	189	84
Field hockey	271	137	134
Rowing	271	128	143
Sailing	266	173	93
Clay/target shooting	256	195	61
Softball/baseball	228	106	122
Water skiing	220	147	73
Rugby Union	178	154	24
Triathlons	166	85	81
Motor racing	135	115	21
TOTAL	11,802	6,255	5,547
Walking	14,327	6,392	7,935
TOTAL (including walking)	16,898	8,252	8,646

Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), January – December 2017 (n=15,169). *Commonwealth Games Sports include: Swimming, Marathons, Running, Athletics, Track & Field, Cycling, Mountain Biking, Basketball, Table Tennis, Lawn Bowls, Netball, Boxing, Badminton, Squash, Gymnastics, Clay/ Target Shooting, Field Hockey & Triathlons. The Commonwealth Games sports of Judo, Rugby Sevens, Weightlifting and Wrestling were not measured.

Michele Levine, CEO, Roy Morgan, says Australians love of sport is well known with over 9.3 million Australians participating in sports at this year’s Commonwealth Games program and even one million plus Australians participating in Winter Olympic sports:

“Australians are enjoying a feast of sport at the moment as Australia’s finest Winter sports athletes pit themselves against the world’s best in Pyeongchang, South Korea. Over one million Australians participate in popular winter sports including snow skiing, snowboarding and ice/figure skating, however that impressive participation pales in significance when compared to more traditional summer sports.

“Over 9.3 million Australians take part in sporting activities being contested at this year’s Gold Coast Commonwealth Games including more than six million swimmers – Australia’s leading sport by participation. The national swimming trials to select the final team for the Gold Coast Games are due to kick off in a fortnight at the Gold Coast Aquatic Centre.

“Australia has high hopes of returning to the top of the medal tally after surrendering leadership in the Commonwealth in 2014 for the first time since the 1980s. The strong participation rates for sports and activities including cycling and mountain biking, jogging, marathons, athletics, track and field, basketball and table tennis – all sports being contested on the Gold Coast – augur well for a high degree of interest in the Games.

“The [Helix Personas](#) data is a unique and powerful consumer segmentation and data integration tool that combines sophisticated psychographic and behavioural data to classify the Australian population into 56 Personas and seven communities.

“The Roy Morgan product aids the future buying intentions and media consumption patterns of swimmers. This data can be easily integrated with third party data sets. The rich profiling would be invaluable for Australian consumer brands, advertisers, governing sporting bodies and major sponsors like Optus who have a long term sponsorship arrangement with Swimming Australia.”

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About Roy Morgan

Roy Morgan is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan has over 75 years’ experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2