



2023 SPORT EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS IN EUROPE

RESEARCH REPORT

PUBLISHED IN DECEMBER 2024



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1

SUMMARY OF
MAIN FINDINGS
FOR THE PERIOD
2011 TO 2023

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS FOR THE PERIOD 2011 TO 2023

The ongoing ambition of EOSE (European Observatoire of Sport and Employment) and its network of members is not just to collate and present the latest employment data for the sport sector in Europe but also to analyse these statistics and highlight realities, characteristics and tendencies by gender, age, level of education, type of working contract (full-time or part-time) and professional status (employed or self-employed).

This summary section of the European Research Report looks at the overall characteristics and tendencies of sport employment for the period from 2011 to 2023. It is important to emphasise that all statistics presented in this report continue to include the United Kingdom (UK), as EOSE has done since 2019. The UK is significant in employing just over one fifth of the whole European sport labour force, its sport institutions are still intimately connected with European structures, and is represented in the EOSE network. Keeping the UK in the datasets also helps us to continue to compare and track trends going back to 2011. Therefore, throughout the report we refer to 'EU+UK' except in a few cases where we note that relevant UK data is not available.

Readers should also note that the statistics throughout the report refer to employed people (full-time, part-time and self-employed) and do not include volunteers.

When interpreting trends, it is important for readers to note that in 2020 there was a change in the definitions used by the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) in France. This may have resulted in a significant number of workers being counted as part of total sport employment who were not previously included in the statistics for the period from 2011 to 2019.

For a full explanation of EOSE's statistical definitions and working methodology, please refer to Section 3 in this Report.

a) Total sport employment in the EU+UK (Section 4)

(Combining all workers with a sport and fitness occupation and being employed in sport and non-sport organisations with workers with a non-sport and fitness occupation employed in sport organisations)

In 2023, the total sport employment (all occupations, working in sport and non-sport organisations) in EU+UK represented 1 958 467 workers. It grew by 32.3% from 2011 to 2023.

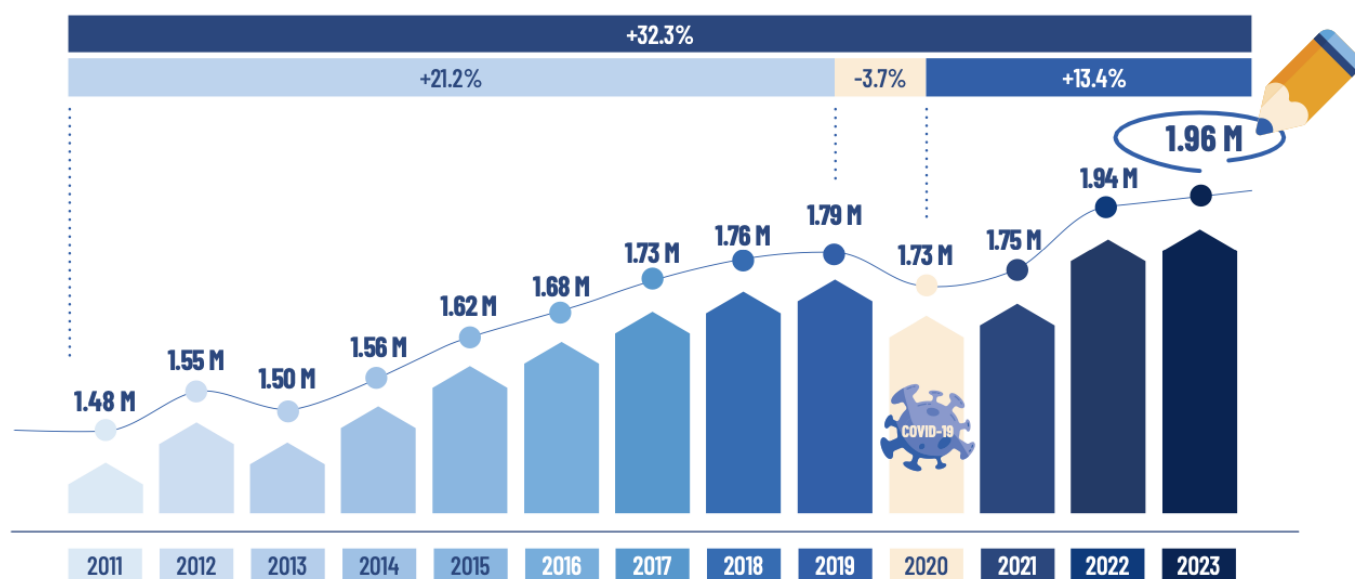


Figure 1: Summary bar chart - total sport employment 2011-2023 for EU+UK

This represented 0.84% of the total EU employment (all economic sectors) and as a percentage share of total employment in all economic sectors, there was a growth of about 0.14 percentage points over 12 years, suggesting that sport employment had become increasingly significant in the overall economy during this period.

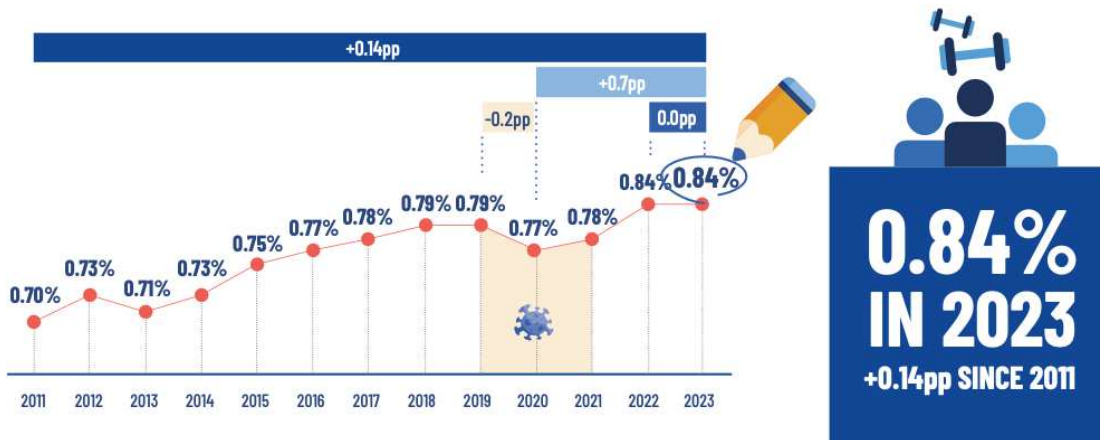


Figure 2: Summary chart - sport employment as share of total employment in EU+UK 2011-2023

The four countries where sport employment had the highest share of their total national labour force (all economic sectors) were Sweden (1.4%), Denmark (1.31%), UK (1.27%) and Finland (1.19%).

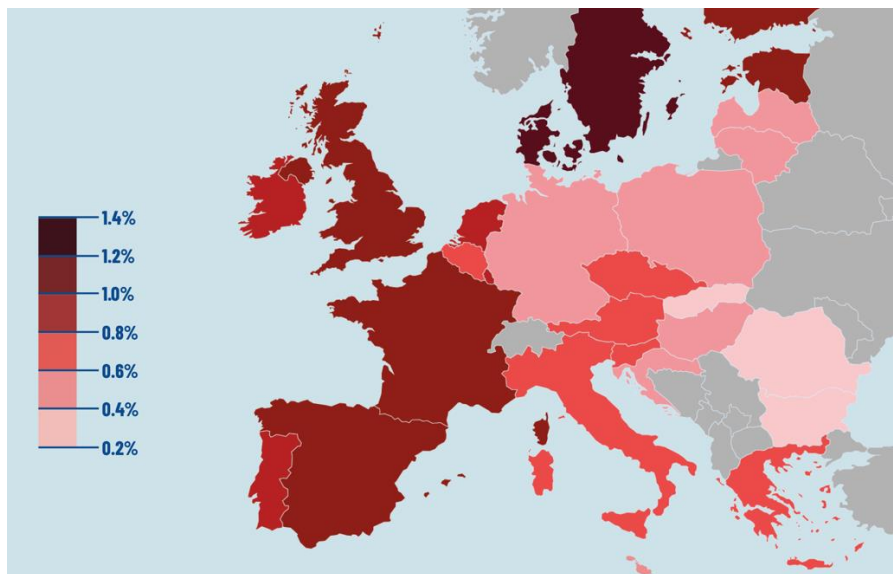


Figure 3: Map - share of sport employment in total employment in Europe



In 2023, sport workforce was predominantly male. There was a tendency for the female share of the workforce to decline over the 13-year period (47.9% of female workers in 2011, and 45% in 2023). Compared to the EU average (all economic sectors), the representation of females employed in the sport sector was lower by 1.7 percentage points (46.7% in all sectors versus 45% in sport employment).



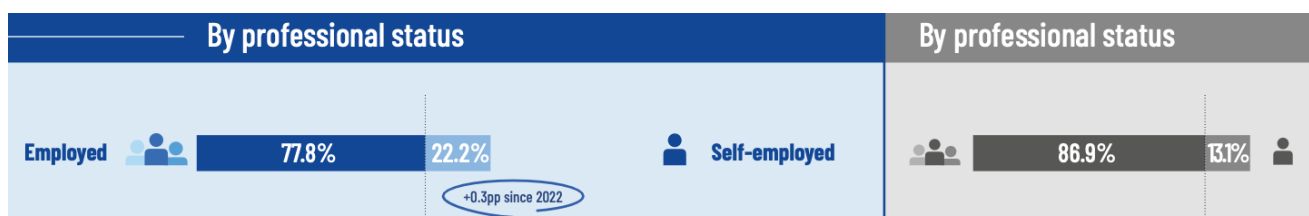
In 2023, there was a notably higher percentage of youth employed in sport than the EU average for all sectors (25.9% in sport versus 8.7% in all sectors). This share rose from 22.9% in 2011.



People employed in sport had become better qualified over the previous 13 years, with the proportion of workers with high level qualifications growing from 28% in 2011 to 39% in 2023. Despite this, in 2023, sport had a slightly lower percentage of workers with higher education qualifications than the EU average (39.8% in all sectors).



In 2023, more people employed in sport were on full-time contracts (56.8%) compared to part-time contracts (43.2%). This is a significantly higher percentage of part-timers compared to the EU average for all sectors (18.9%). For female workers, the share is even higher – 50% of them had a part-time contract.



The proportion of self-employed people in sport was much higher than the EU average for all sectors (22.2% in sport versus 13.1% in all sectors). It has risen by 4.3 percentage points since 2011. Male workers were slightly more likely to be self-employed compared to females. Slightly more than half of all self-employed workers in sport were over the age of 40 years.

b) Workers with a sport and fitness occupation (Section 5)

(Those having the following sport and fitness occupations are included in the findings below: athletes and players, sports coaches, instructors and officials, fitness and recreation instructors and programme leaders)

In 2023, there was a total of 1 110 201 workers with a sport and fitness occupation in EU+UK. This represented 56.7% of total sport employment. Since 2011, the number of workers with a sport and fitness occupation grew by 39% which is 6.8 percentage points greater than the growth of total sport employment.

The majority of workers with a sport and fitness occupation were sport coaches, instructors and officials (51%). 41% were fitness and recreation instructors and programme leaders. 7.9% were athletes and sports players. A narrow majority (53.7%) were employed in organisations whose main business is sport (e.g., sport federations, sport clubs).

This increased since 2011 (45.8%) when the majority of those workers were employed in organisations whose main business was not sport (e.g. rehabilitation centres, hotels etc.).

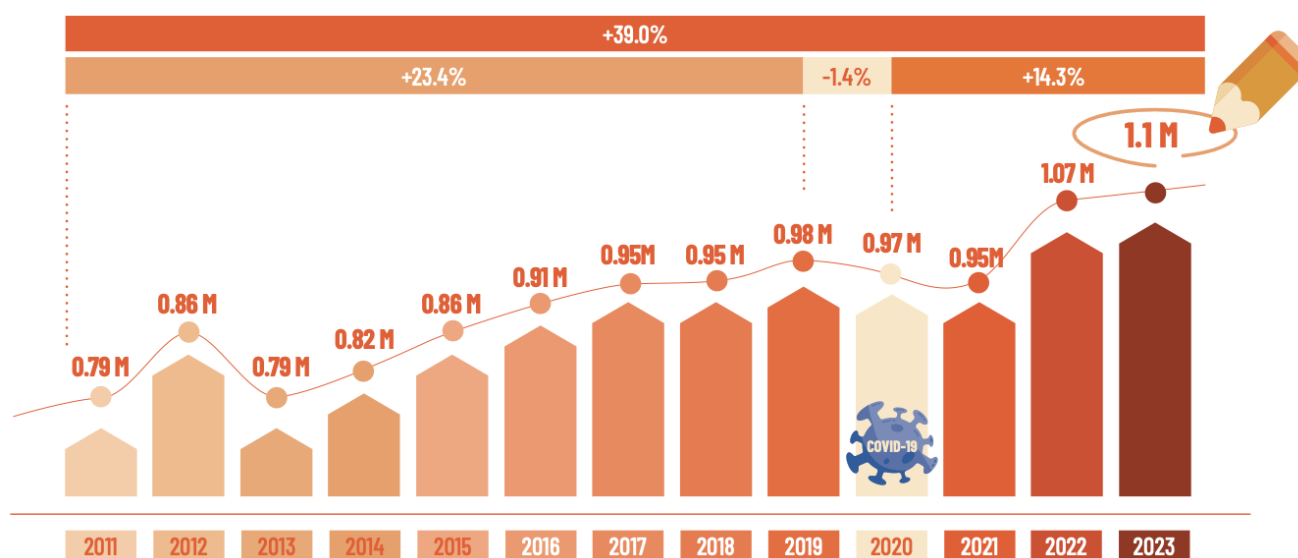
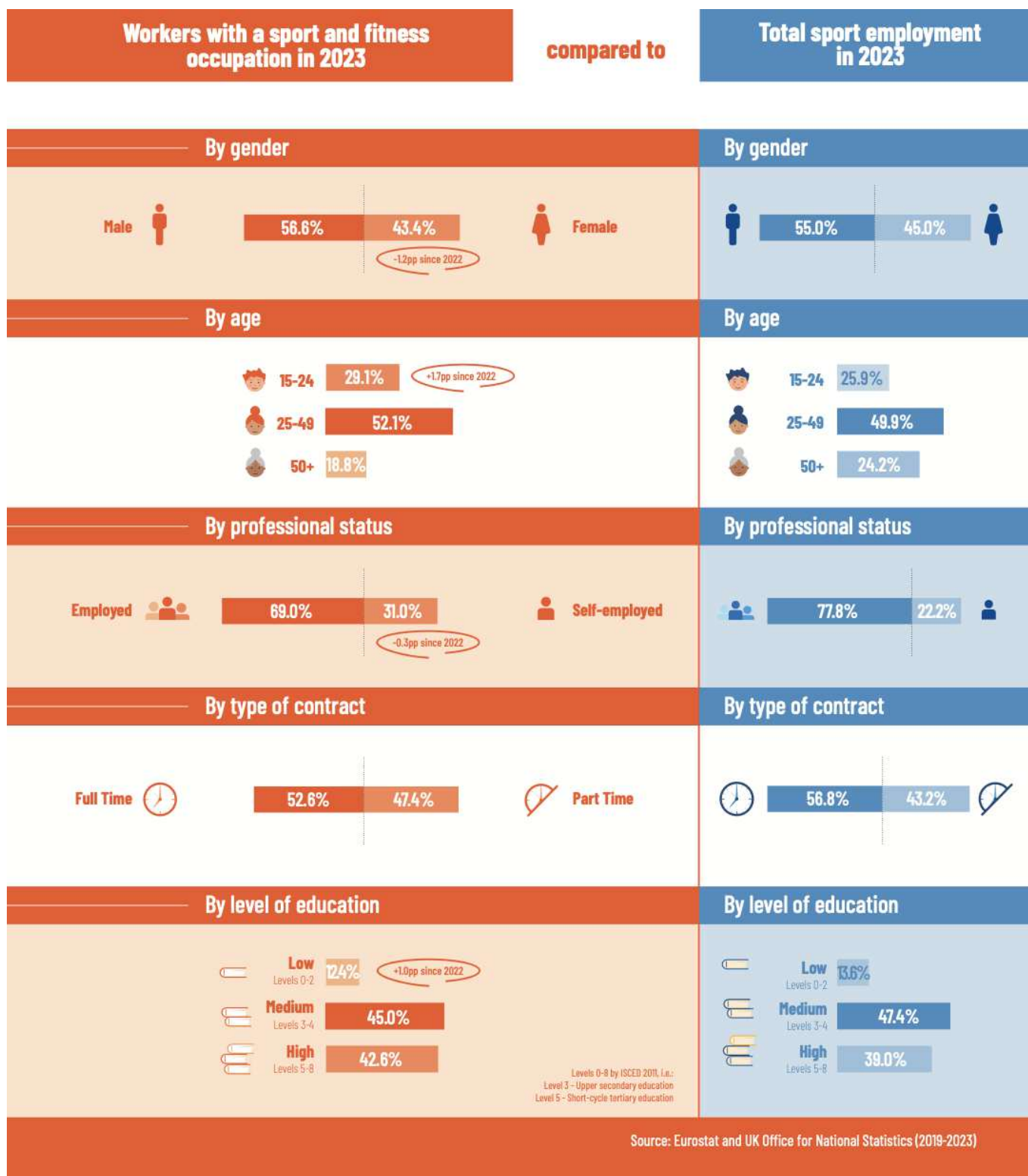


Figure 4: Summary bar chart - total number of workers with a sport and fitness occupation in EU+UK 2011-2023

In 2023, there was a higher proportion of men versus women with a sport and fitness occupation (56.6% men – 43.4% women, the gap widened from 53.9% men and 46.1% women in 2011).

In 2023, only 12.4% held low level qualifications and this decreased from 15.7% in 2011. There was a higher proportion of workers with a sport and fitness occupation on part-time contracts compared to total sport employment (47.4% vs 43.2%). 31% of workers with a sport and fitness occupation were self-employed, significantly higher than the total sport employment (22.2%).



c) People employed in sport organisations (Section 6)

(Organisations whose main business is sport include for example sport clubs, sport federations, National Olympic Committees, Sport NGOs, fitness centres etc.)

In 2023, 1 441 637 people were employed in sport organisations in the EU+UK (73.6% of the total sport employment).

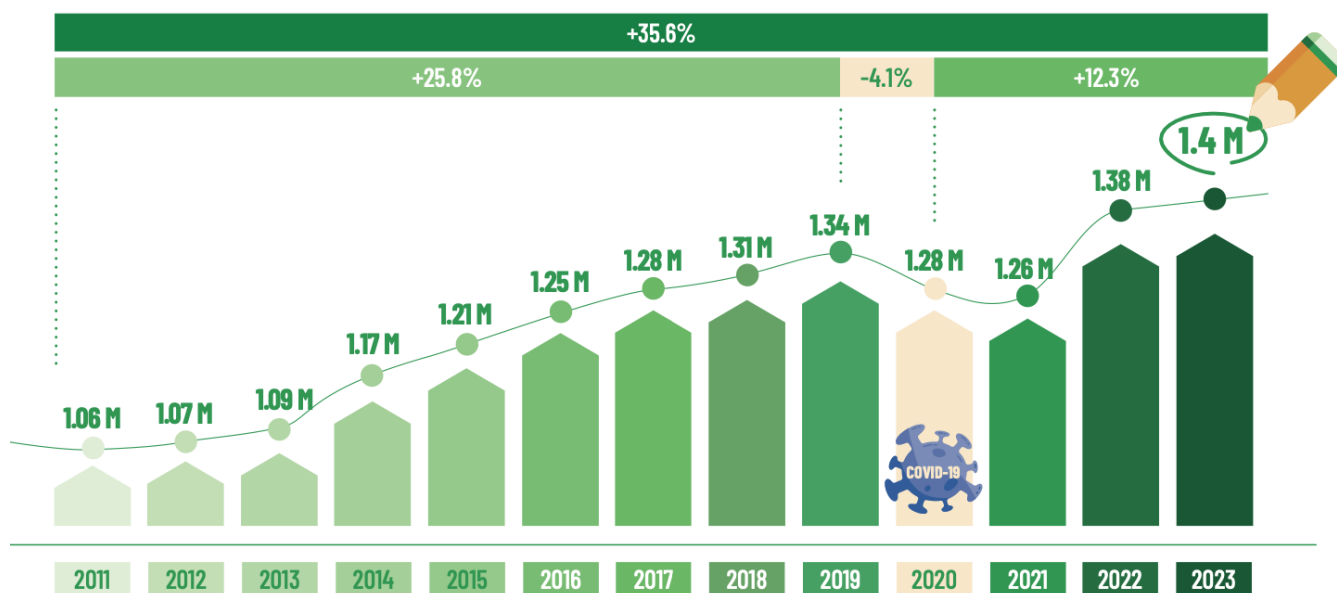


Figure 5: Summary bar chart - total number of people employed in sport organisations in EU+UK 2011-2023

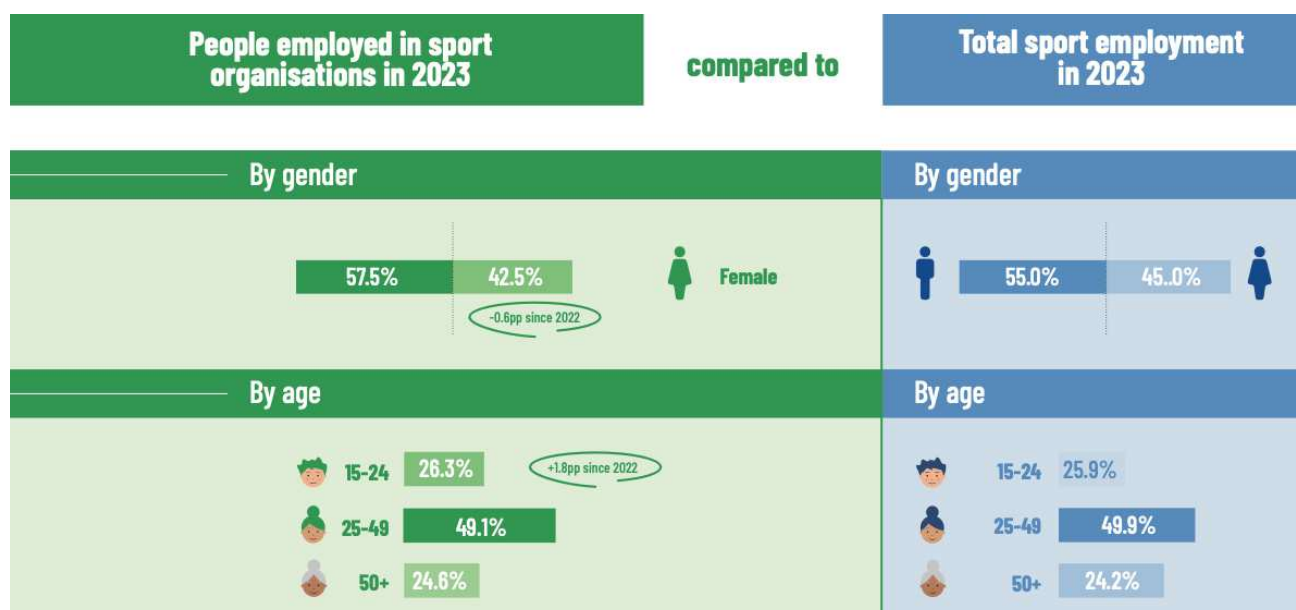
57.5% of those working in sport organisations were male versus 42.5% who were female. The trend was in favour of male employment (55.6% male in 2011, 44.4% female in 2011) over the 13-year period.

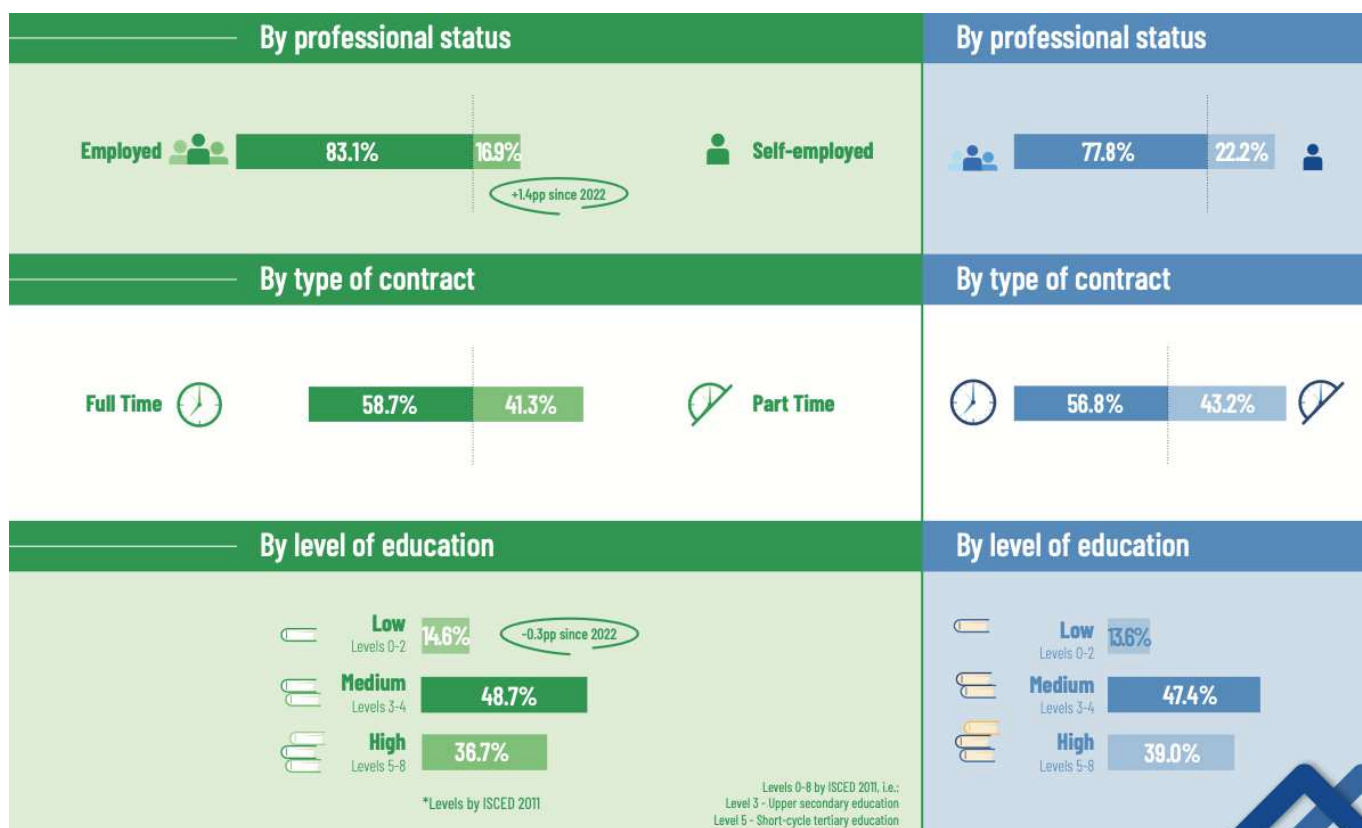
26.3% were in the 15-24 age group which went up from 24% in 2011. The trend over the last 13 years was for the older and younger age groups to increase at the expense of the middle age group.

Of those working in sport organisations, 36.7% had high level qualifications, an increase from 26.3% in 2011. In 2023, only 14.6% of those working in sport organisations had low-level qualifications, a decline from 20% in 2011.

The tendency over 13 years was for those with high level qualifications to increase and those with middle or low-level qualifications to decline.

16.9% were self-employed. It is notable that self-employment in sport organisations was lower than that for the sport workforce as a whole (22.2%).





>>> SUMMARY EU AND NATIONAL FACT SHEETS WITH LATEST SPORT EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS <<<

We encourage you to read and download the relevant summary fact sheets which have been produced to summarise with more infographics the main findings presented in this report.

One specific fact sheet has been developed for the EU+UK sport employment and we are delighted to inform you that national fact sheets have been designed and published for each of the EU-27 countries + the UK. They gather the latest information available about sport employment but should not necessary be seen as the exact reality of the sector.

The ambition is to publish a maximum of available official statistics at the European and national level to underline main findings and tendencies and to help create policy discussions, concrete impact and potential collaborations through the sector.

You can access and download these summary fact sheets on:

<http://www.eose.org/labour-market-statistics>



2

**POST-COVID
RECOVERY**

2. POST-COVID RECOVERY

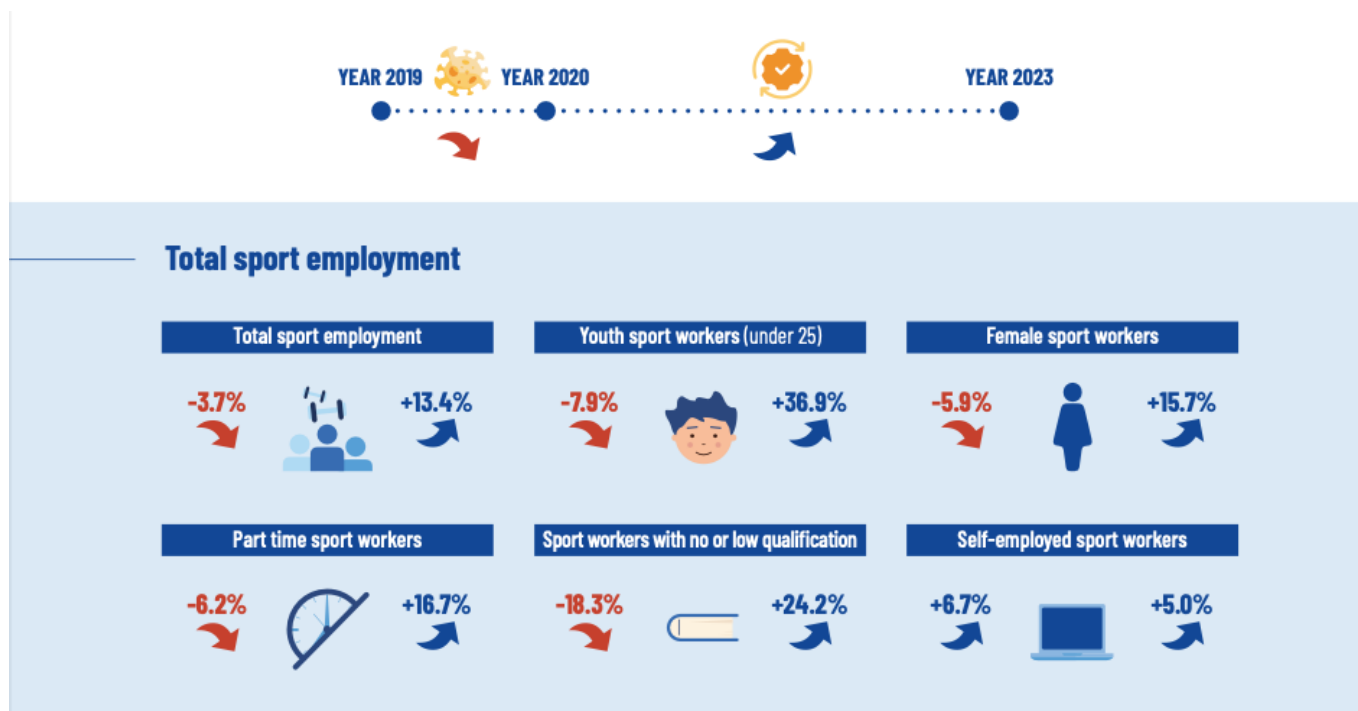
In this section of the report, we look in more detail at the potential impact of the pandemic on sport employment in 2019-2020 and the subsequent period 2020-2023 to identify signs of recovery.

- **Key points for the period 2019-2020 impacted by the pandemic include:**
 - A reduction of 3.7% in the total sport employment in EU+UK which was more severe than the 1.4% decrease in total EU employment (all economic sectors). This was the first reduction of the total number of people employed in sport since the start of the analysis of sport employment in 2011. Workers with a sport and fitness occupation were more impacted with a reduction of -4.1%.
 - There was a disproportionate impact on certain groups. Females, youth (15-24 age group), workers with high level qualifications, those with low level qualifications and those on part-time contracts were by far the most impacted by the pandemic.
 - There was a rise in the percentage of self-employed workers in sport during that period.
- **The period from 2020 to the end of 2023 showed significant signs of recovery. Key points include:**
 - A growth of 231 676 (+13.4%) persons employed in sport which is greater than the recovery in total EU employment (all economic sectors) which was 3.3%. This rise is most evident for those workers with a sport and fitness occupation (+17.5%). Whereas sport may have been more severely affected by the pandemic than other economic sectors, it is showing a strong 'bounce-back'.
 - However, recovery was not uniform across all the countries. By 2023, 18 of the 28 nations analysed had total sport employment which exceeded 2019 levels, but 10 of the nations had still not returned to, or exceeded, 2019 levels. Positive growth was most evident in Luxembourg (+64.7%), France (+62.1%), Romania (+41%) and Slovenia (+40.6%). Negative growth was most evident in Latvia (-52.4%), Croatia (-24%), Bulgaria (-23.6%), and Czech Republic (-16.9%). However, it should be noted that some of these countries have very small numbers of people employed in sport and small changes in real numbers may result in large percentage changes.
 - By 2023, two of the countries with the highest number of people employed in sport – UK (-2%) and Germany (-8.8%) – had still not returned to 2019 numbers.
 - Whereas the gender balance was still in favour of male employees (a trend since 2011), female employment gained 119 711 positions (+15.7% or 0.9 percentage points). This gain was most evident in female workers with a sport and fitness occupation (+16.8%).
 - Young workers (15-24) gained 136 977 positions (+36.9%). This was the highest number of young workers joining the sport sector in the whole period 2011-2023. Once again, this gain was most evident in those having a sport and fitness occupation (+45.2%).
 - Those with high level qualifications gained 135 558 positions (+21.6%) and those with low level qualifications gained 51 653 (+24.2%).
 - There was an increase of 121 021 part-time contracts (+16.7%) compared to 132 795 full-time contracts (+13.6%) which suggests the balance of part-time to full-time positions in sport employment may have been returning to the pre-2019 situation. The rise in the percentage share of part-time contracts was similar for workers with a sport and fitness occupation.
 - After the gain in the percentage of those with self-employed status in sport in the period 2019-2020 (+2.1 percentage points), by 2023 this percentage fell back to 2019 levels.

There is, therefore, evidence that the employment in sport in the EU+UK was quite significantly impacted by the Covid pandemic with a disproportionate impact on certain groups and countries. However, by 2023, there were

also strong signs that the sector was recovering in a way which reflects the pre-pandemic tendencies, but this was not uniform across all of the countries.

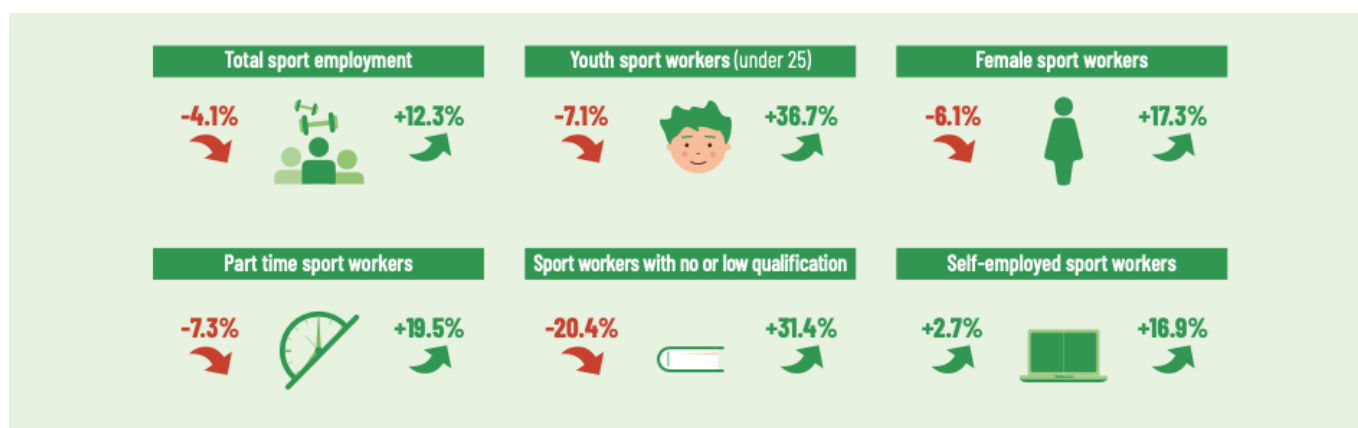
a) Impact on total sport employment



b) Impact on workers with a sport and fitness occupation (ISCO 342)



c) Impact on people working in sport organisations (NACE 93.1)





3

**STATISTICAL
DEFINITION
AND WORKING
METHODOLOGY**

3. STATISTICAL DEFINITION AND WORKING METHODOLOGY

a) Objective

The overall objective of EOSE and its network of national members is to collate latest available data and statistics on sport employment in all EU Member States (EU-27) and UK. Indeed, in order to make an impact on the sector and allow it to unlock its potential to improve people's lives and have an impact on health, employment and the economy, it is necessary to have a proper understanding of the size and characteristics of the labour market, and information about its changes and tendencies.

Contacts were already initiated with sport analysts from Eurostat through ESSA-Sport and SKILLS projects, so EOSE maintained this relationship and collated latest available sport employment statistics on an annual basis.

Eurostat collate annual employment data from National Statistics Offices (NSO) from all over Europe coming from the national Labour Force Survey (LFS). These data are raw and, in some cases, incomplete, so a deeper analysis was carried out by EOSE to elaborate and publish relevant findings, graphs and clear infographics on employment for our sector.

The ambition of EOSE and its network has always been to not just to analyse the most recent available statistics to identify the annual total employment in sport but also to try to break it down by gender, age, level of education, type of employment (employed or self-employed) and type of working contract (full-time or part-time). The analysis also gives a similar breakdown for those workers having sport-specific occupations (such as coaches, officials, athletes etc.) and provides data for those working in sport organisations and non-sport organisations.

The detailed analysis presented in this Research Report gives particular emphasis to the differences between the end of 2019 and the end of 2023 which may give the sector some clues as to the potential impact of the Covid pandemic on sport employment and the different demographic groups (gender, age, educational attainment, type of contract and professional status) and some indications as to potential recovery.

b) Working methodology

The overall scope of the research activity of EOSE followed the Council of Europe (2001) definition of sport as *"all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels"*. In the report, we will use the word "sport sector" having the meaning of the broad sector of "Sport and Physical Activity".

EOSE has maintained dialogue with senior researchers from Eurostat to present the work carried out and particularly the ongoing analysis of employment in sport, and to officially ask them to collect all available statistics which exist for the sport sector at the European level. For countries with less statistics, EOSE has worked in parallel to supplement this data with additional statistics obtained through direct contacts with some National Statistics Offices (NSO).

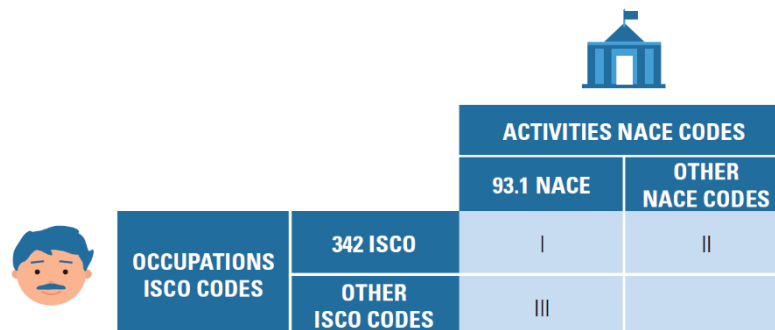
c) Targeted statistics (Statistical definition)

To summarise the overall process, the work carried out by EOSE in 2024 and in collaboration with Eurostat and some National Statistics Offices (NSO) was to collate available statistics for 2023 on the number of:

- > **Persons with a sport and fitness occupation (ISCO 342) in an organisation whose main business is the provision of sport (NACE 93.1), e.g., professional athletes, coaches, instructors**

- > **Persons with a non-sport and fitness occupation (Other ISCO codes) in organisations whose main business is the provision of sport (NACE 93.1), e.g., managers, receptionists**
- > **Persons with a sport and fitness occupation (ISCO 342) in organisations whose main business is not the provision of sport (Other NACE codes), e.g., a fitness instructor working in a hotel**

The statistical definition used by EOSE for the collection of available statistics for the sport sector:



- > Box I = Total number of persons with a sport and fitness occupation (ISCO 342) within sport organisations (NACE 93.1)
- > Box II = Total number of persons with a sport and fitness occupation (ISCO 342) within an organisation whose main business is not the provision of sport (Other NACE codes)
- > Box III = Total number of persons with a non-sport and fitness occupation (Other ISCO 342) within a sport organisation (NACE 93.1)

The addition of the 3 boxes I + II + III provides the total employment for the sport sector based on our statistical definition (= total sport employment).

d) NACE and ISCO classifications

All registered organisations across Europe are classified under a NACE code. The goal of the desk research was to interrogate these codes to identify organisations whose main business is the provision of sport (NACE 93.1).

NACE is the “*statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community*” and is the subject of legislation at the European Union level, which imposes the use of the classification uniformly within all the Member States.

NACE is a four-digit classification¹ providing the framework for collecting and presenting a large range of reliable and comparable statistical data according to economic activity in the fields of economic statistics (e.g. *production, employment and national accounts*) and in other statistical domains developed within the European Statistical System (ESS).

In terms of NACE codes for which data were targeted through the desk research, the goal was to ask for all available data with a 4-digit breakdown as follows:

- 93: Sports activities and amusement and recreation activities
 - 93.1 Sports activities (3 digits)
 - 93.11 Operation of sports facilities (4 digits)
 - 93.12 Activities of sport clubs

¹ Source : http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Statistical_classification_of_economic_activities_in_the_European_Community_%28NACE%29

- 93.13 Fitness facilities
- 93.19 Other sports activities











The codes under 93.1 define the organisations whose main business is the provision of sport (NACE 93.1).

Once statistics had been collated on the number of persons working in sport organisations (NACE 93.1), there was a need to source data on the occupations that exist both under the NACE 93.1 codes but also within other organisations classified under other NACE codes from outside the sport sector.

In doing so, EOSE and its network of members wanted to collect data and statistics on workers with a sport and fitness occupation but employed in organisations with a broader role than just sport and whose main business is not the provision of sport e.g., local authorities, hotels, residential activity centres, universities and schools.

This was achieved through the cross-matching of ISCO-083 (occupational codes) with additional NACE codes (not just NACE code 93.1).

The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) was adopted through a resolution of a Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Labour Statistics held in December 2007. This resolution was subsequently endorsed by the Governing Body of the ILO (International Labour Organization) in March 2008.

The ISCO-08 divides jobs into 10 major groups:		
	ISCO 1	Managers
	ISCO 2	Professionals
	ISCO 3	Technicians and associate professionals 34 - Legal, Social, Cultural and Related Associate professionals (main heading) 342 - Sport and Fitness Workers 3421 - Athletes and Sports Players 3422 - Sports Coaches, Instructors and Officials 3423 - Fitness and Recreation Instructors and Programme Leaders
	ISCO 4	Clerical support workers
	ISCO 5	Service and sales workers
	ISCO 6	Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers
	ISCO 7	Craft and related trades workers
	ISCO 8	Plant and machine operators and assemblers
	ISCO 9	Elementary occupations
	ISCO 0	Armed forces occupations

Each major group is further organised into sub-major, minor and unit groups.

The research activities involved the collation and summary analysis of existing statistics from Eurostat and National Statistic Offices (NSO) and this report provides a summary of the main findings and statistics for the sector.

e) Note on the statistics

This report presents the analysis of the main statistics collated at both national and European level and this data should be used to communicate the realities and challenges of sport employment, to implement consultation activities and discuss with main stakeholders, to prepare some research articles and other activities valuable to the sector.

The collection of statistics has been a challenge in most of the EU Member States but through this report we can provide main figures and percentages as well as graphs from the official statistics collated from Eurostat and/or the National Statistics Office. The report contains data for both NACE and ISCO at 3-digit level (NACE 93.1 and ISCO 342) because of the inconsistency of statistics and lack of data at 4-digit level for many countries.

It is important to highlight that what follows in the report is **the best information from available sources about sport employment** and should not necessarily be seen as the exact reality of the sector. The ambition of such work is to collate a maximum of available statistics to underline main findings and tendencies and to help create discussions and debates with stakeholders.

EOSE have made use of various sources such as Eurostat and National Statistics Offices (NSO) which means methodologies of collection might differ slightly in some cases and statistics should be considered carefully.

In looking at trends from 2011-2023, it is important to note that the NSO in France (INSEE) changed its definitions in 2020. This may have resulted in a significant number of sport workers being included who were not previously counted as part of the sector.

f) Structure of the presented data on sport employment

The next section of the report includes three sub-parts of content from the analysis of the available statistics on sport employment.

> **The first part** highlights the best possible estimation of sport employment based on our statistical definition (I + II + III) and presents the composition and characteristics of total employment in sport.

In order to reach the estimation of total employment in sport, it has been possible to identify the number of people with a sport and fitness occupation (ISCO 342) within a sport organisation (NACE 93.1), and those with a sport and fitness occupation within an organisation whose main business is NOT the provision of sport (Other NACE codes).

This was the basis for producing a total figure for sport employment, for the purposes of this study being the addition of I + II + III.

We also include a graph underlining the proportion of the total employment in the sport sector compared to the overall total EU employment in all economic sectors.

> **The second part** focuses on workers with a sport and fitness occupation as defined by ISCO 342.

Through this section, information is presented about the number of people with a sport and fitness occupation (ISCO 342).

The ISCO category 342 includes all sport and fitness workers which means professional athletes and sport players, sport coaches, sport instructors, sport officials, fitness instructors, etc.

On the summary chart, that corresponds to the boxes I and II.

> **The third part** is about the persons working in organisations whose main business is the provision of sport defined as NACE 93.1.

Through this section, information is presented about the size, evolution and characteristics of people working in those sport organisations as defined in our statistical approach.

That includes workers with any type of occupation within a sport organisation (NACE 93.1) so working in a sport facility, a sport club, a fitness centre etc.

These people can have a sport and fitness occupation (e.g., a coach) but also a non-sport and fitness occupation (e.g., administrator, receptionist).

On the summary chart, that corresponds to the boxes I and III.

SUMMARY CHART OF THE TARGET STATISTICS

		ACTIVITIES NACE CODES	
		93.1 NACE	OTHER NACE CODES
OCCUPATIONS ISCO CODES	342 ISCO	I	II
	OTHER ISCO CODES	III	



A woman with dark hair in two braids is seen from the side, wearing boxing gloves and looking towards a man in a white shirt who is also wearing boxing gloves. They are in a gym setting with blurred lights in the background.

4

SIZE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF SPORT EMPLOYMENT IN THE EU+UK

4. SIZE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF SPORT EMPLOYMENT IN THE EU+UK

The following sub-sections of the report summarise and highlight some of the main findings from the analysis of the Eurostat data for the period from 2011 to 2023 (latest available official statistics). Data for the United Kingdom (UK) are included in all figures and graphs presented, unless otherwise noted.

a) Total sport employment in the EU+UK

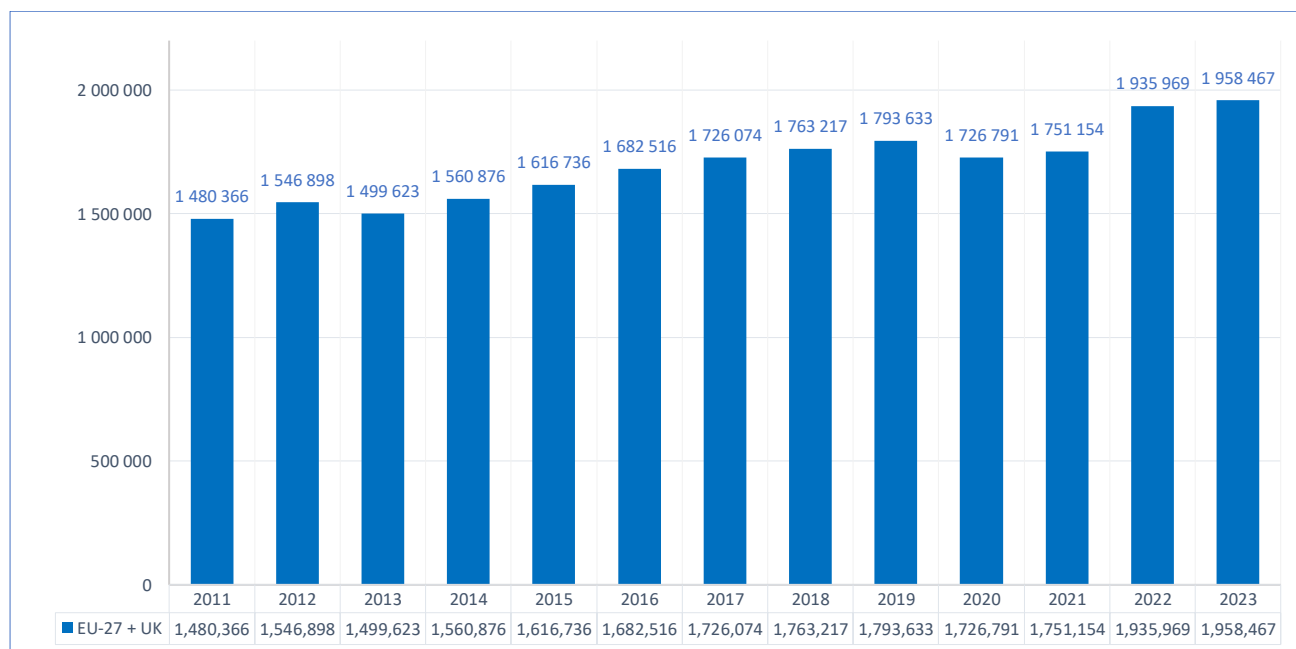


Figure 6: Bar chart - total sport employment 2011-2023 for EU+UK

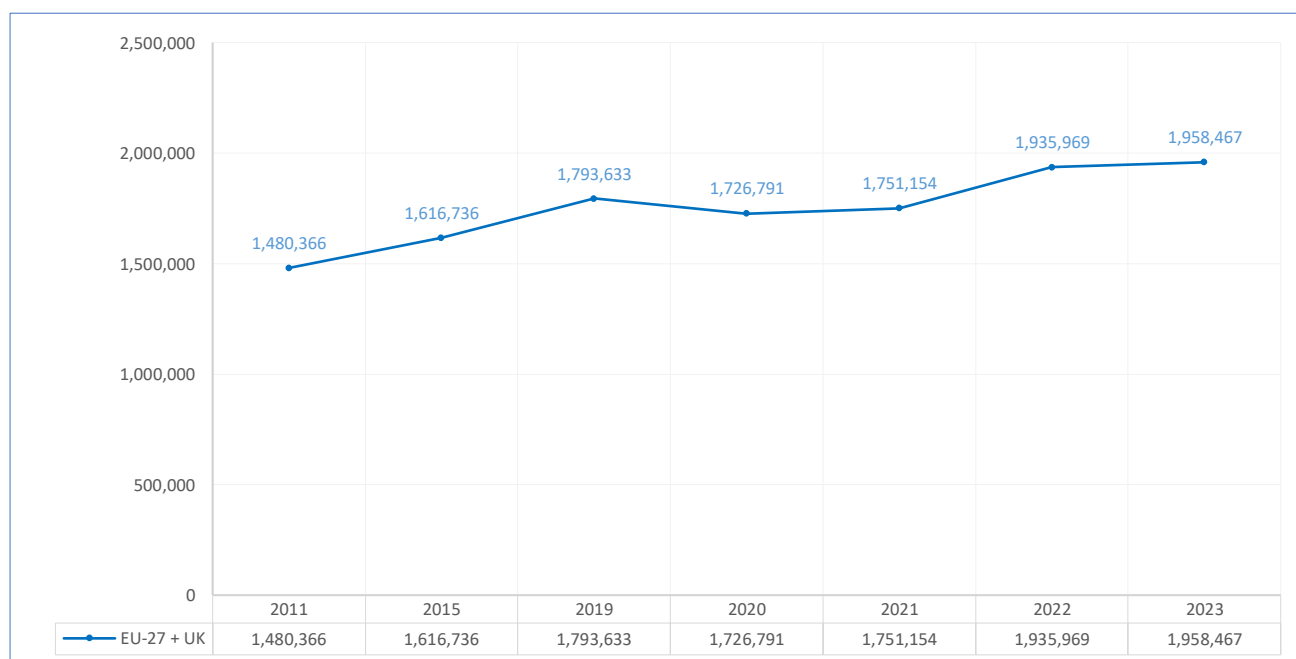


Figure 7: Line graph - total sport employment 2011-2023 for EU+UK

Figure 6 and Figure 7 reveal that the total number of people working in paid employment in the sport sector in the EU+UK at the end of 2023 was 1 958 467. This was a rise from 1 480 366 workers in 2011 and represented a growth of 32.3% over the 13-year period. These totals do not include volunteers. The period 2019 – 2020

(the Covid period), however, showed a decline, with the sector losing 66 842 positions during that period which represented a drop of -3.7%. However, the period 2020 – 2023 then showed a significant growth of 231 676 positions (+13.4%) in sport employment. This was considerably higher than the growth in the overall EU employment (all economic sectors) in the same period (+3.7%).

Figure 8 shows the total sport employment as a percentage of the total employment for all EU+UK economic sectors in the period from 2011 to 2023.

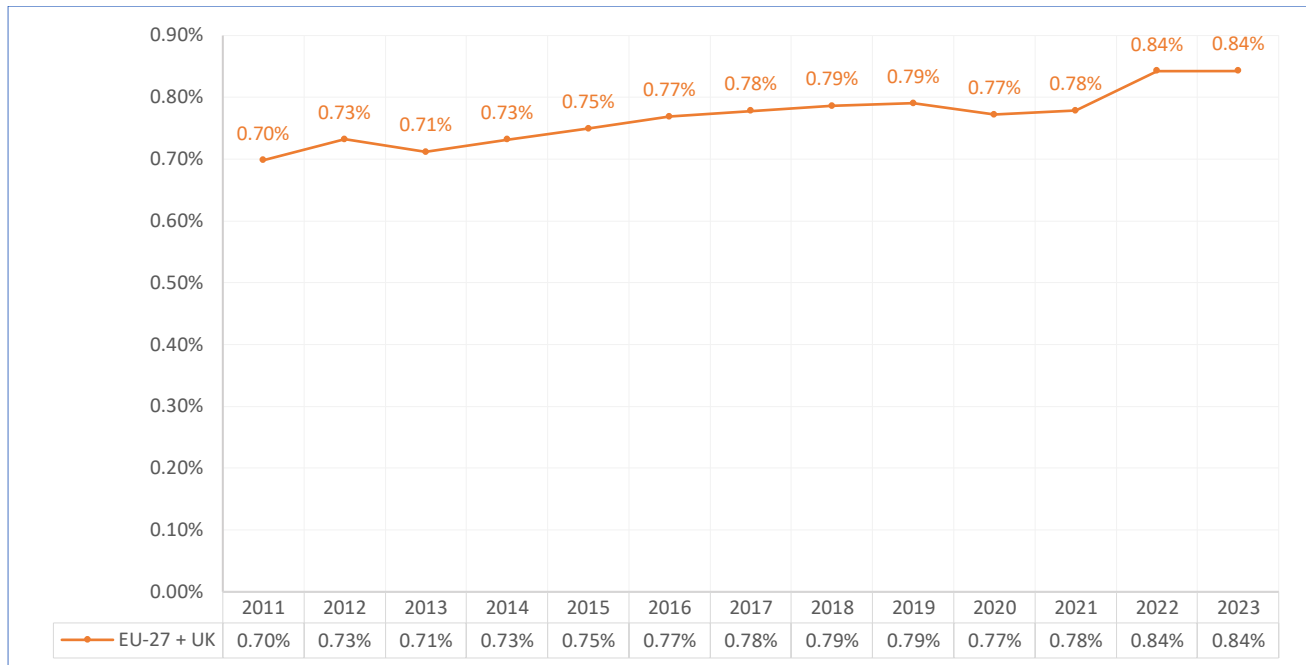


Figure 8: Total sport employment as a percentage of total employment (all economic sectors) for the EU+UK

Employment in sport increased to reach 0.84% of the total EU+UK in all economic sectors (the same as 2022 but 0.6 percentage points above 2021). This represented a growth in its share of overall employment in the EU+UK of 0.14 percentage points over the 13-year period. However, sport’s share of overall EU+UK employment in all economic sectors declined by 0.02 percentage points in 2020 which suggests that sport employment was more severely affected by the Covid pandemic than in the economy in general.



b) Size of total sport employment in EU+UK in 2023

Figure 9 below shows the size of each country’s total sport employment in terms of total number of persons employed in sport.

This includes:

- > the total number of people with a sport and fitness occupation in a sport organisation (e.g., a coach in a sport club)
- > those with a non-sport and fitness occupation in a sport organisation (e.g., an administrator or a receptionist in a facility)
- > and all those with a sport and fitness occupation in an organisation whose main business is not sport (e.g., a fitness instructor in a hotel).

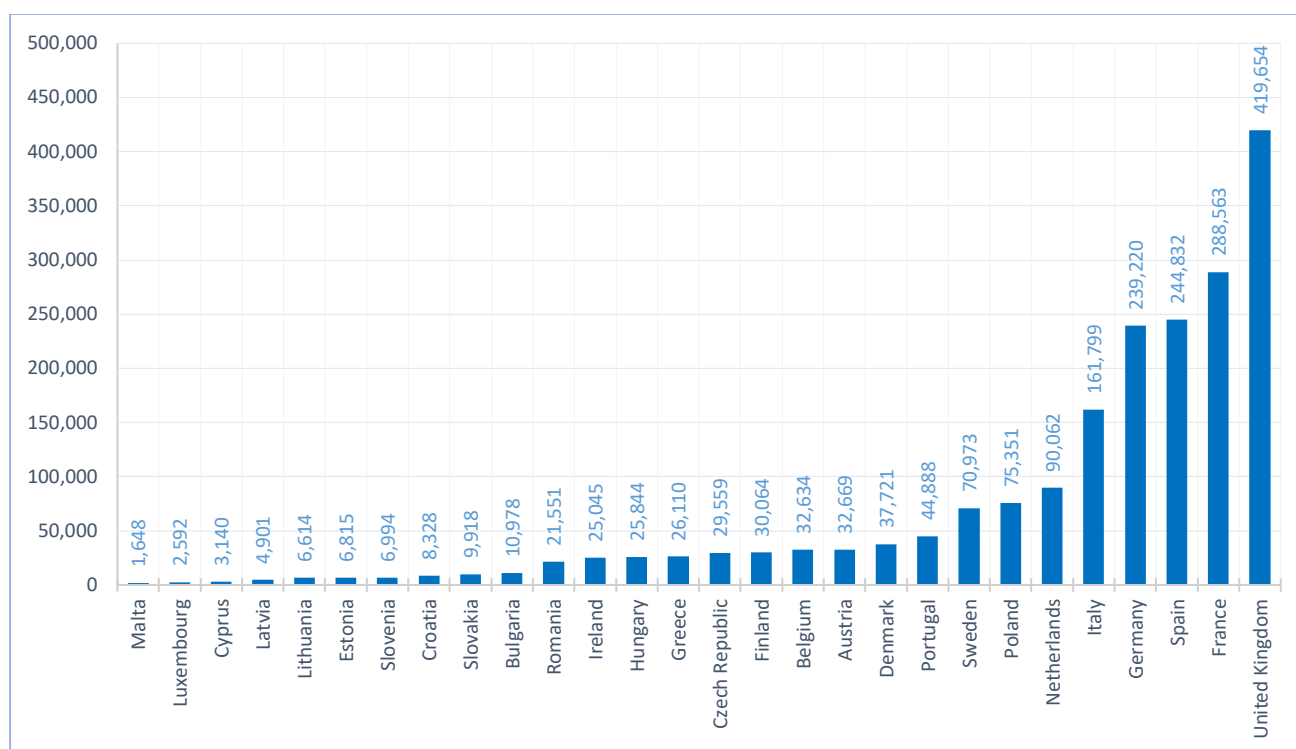


Figure 9: Size of total sport employment in each EU+UK country in 2023

As it might be expected, the highest total sport employment was in the most populous nations. Indeed, the top four countries in terms of total sport employment represented 60.9% of the total sport employment in 2023.

The UK represented 21.4%, France 14.7%, Spain 12.5% and Germany 12.2%.

However, as the next sub-section shows, there were national variations in terms of total sport employment as a percentage of each country’s total employment (all sectors).

Figure 10 below compares national sport employment in the years 2019 (i.e., before the pandemic), 2022 and 2023.

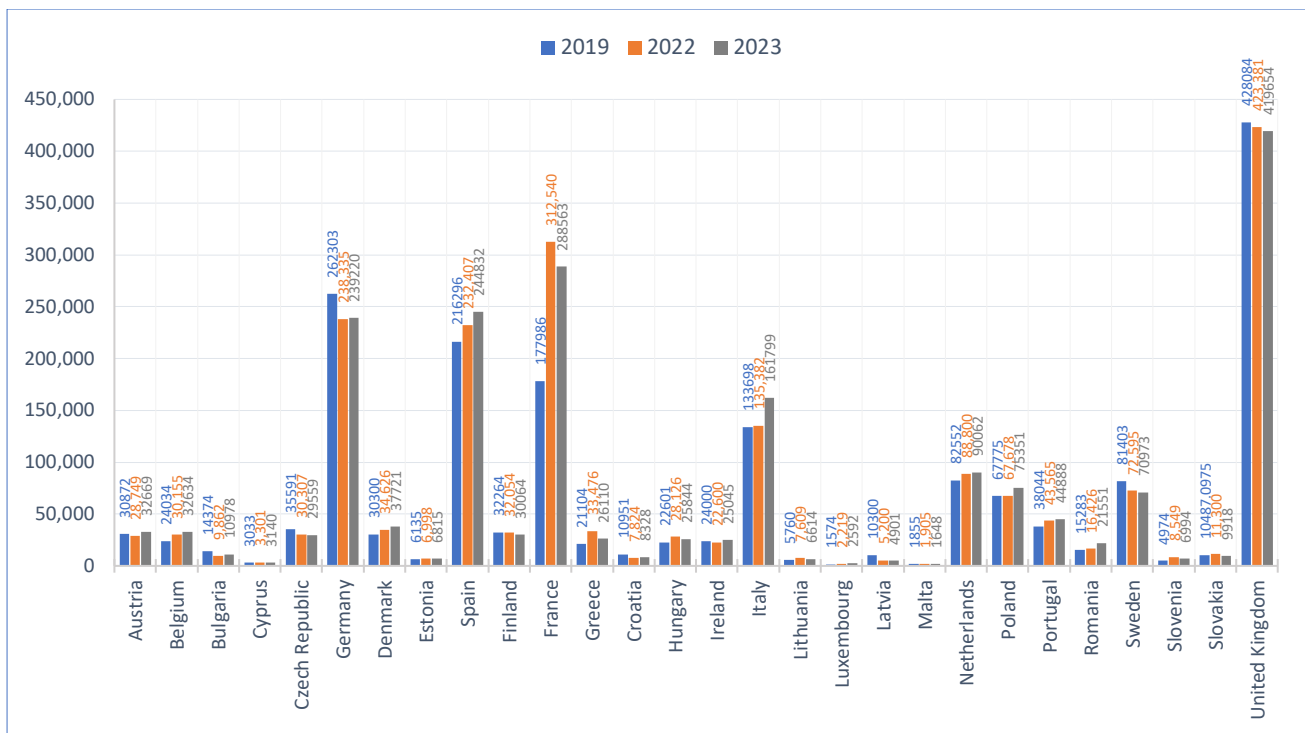


Figure 10: Comparison size of the total sport employment in each country in 2019, 2022 and 2023

Of the top four countries (by size of their total sport employment), we can see that two of the four (UK and Germany) had not yet recovered to 2019 numbers. Spain showed an increase of 28 536 workers (+13.2%) and France a very significant increase of 110 577 workers (+62.1%) by comparison with pre-pandemic totals. The significant increase in France may be partially explained by a change in definitions by National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies. It is noticeable that France, along with Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Sweden, Slovenia, Slovakia and the UK saw slight declines in the period 2022-2023.

Figure 11 shows positive and negative growth of total sport employment for each country in 2019 compared to 2023.

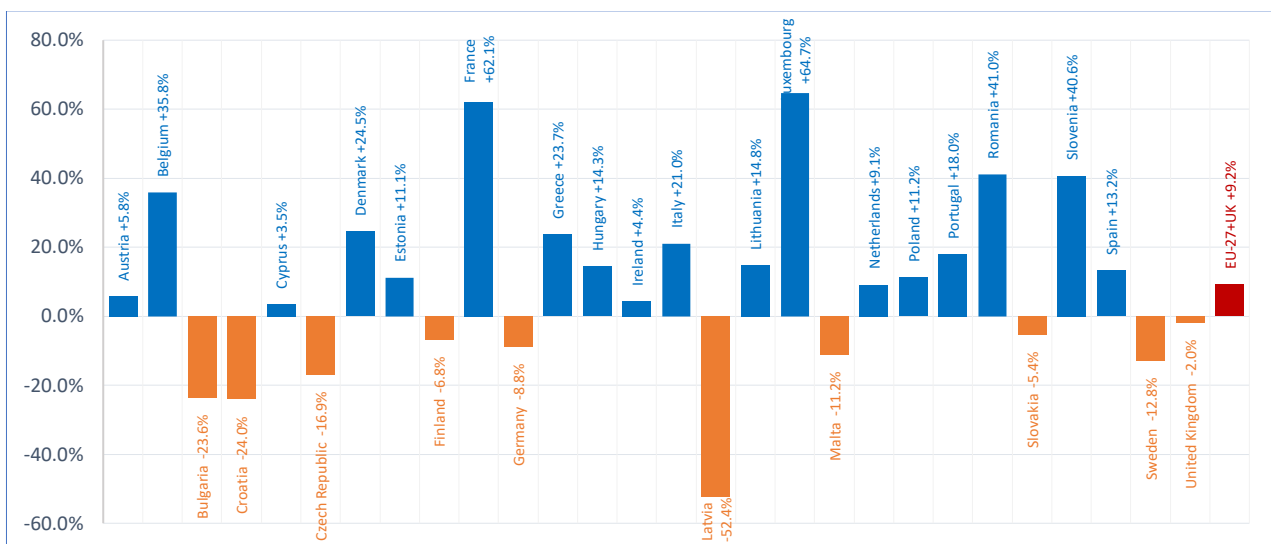


Figure 11: Positive and negative growth in total sport employment for each EU+UK country 2019 and 2023

There was positive growth in 18 of the 28 nations (EU+UK) with very significant increases (i.e., over 40%) in four countries: Luxembourg, France, Romania and Slovenia. The remaining 10 countries showed negative growth. The average growth for the EU+UK was +9.2% in that period.

c) Total sport employment as a share of total employment (all economic sectors) in each country in 2023

Figure 12 shows the share of each country’s total sport employment as a percentage of their total employment (all economic sectors) and the average for the EU+UK as a whole for 2023.

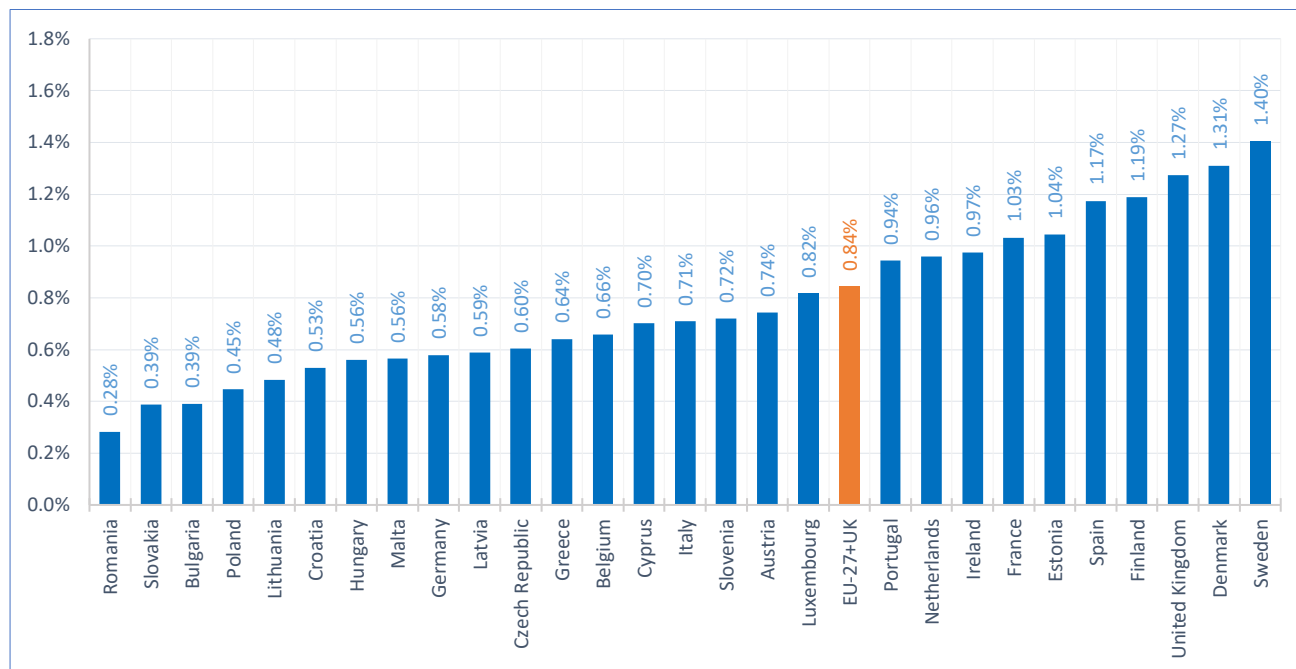


Figure 12: Total sport employment in each EU+UK country as a percentage of its total employment in all economic sectors

Thus, Sweden had the largest percentage of persons employed in sport as a percentage of its total employment in all economic sectors (1.4%), followed by Denmark (1.3%), UK (1.27%) and Finland (1.19%). Those with the smallest share of total employment were Romania (0.28%), Slovakia (0.39%), Bulgaria (0.39%) and Poland (0.45%). The average of total sport employment as a share of total employment (all economic sectors) in the whole EU+UK was 0.84% in 2023.

d) Total sport employment by gender

Figure 13 shows the percentage share of females and males employed in sport from 2011 to 2023.

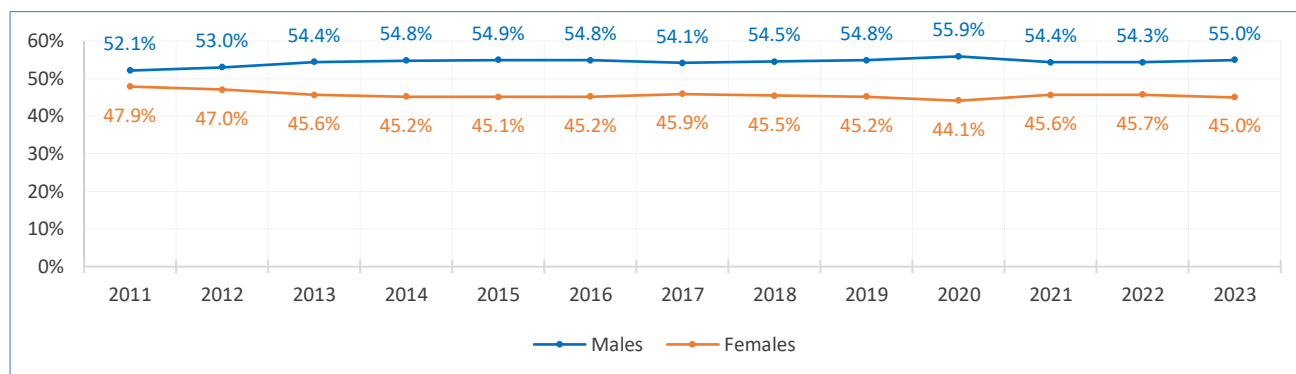


Figure 13: Total sport employment: percentage shares by gender 2011-2023 for the EU+UK

In 2011, 47.9% those working in sport were female. By 2023, the percentage of females had declined to 45% (-2.9 percentage points). It is notable that there was a sharp decline in the percentage of females from 2019

to 2020 (-1.1 percentage points, whereas the percentage increased by 0.1 in all sectors) which suggests female employed in sport were disproportionately affected by the Covid pandemic.

However, comparing 2020 and 2023, we can see an increase of +0.9 percentage points in the proportion of females employed in sport, but the representation of females in sport employment was still slightly below 2019 and actually declined by 0.7 percentage points in 2022-2023.

By comparison with the EU+UK total employment (all economic sectors), females employed in sport were slightly less well represented by 1.7 percentage points (46.7% as an average in all sectors versus 45% in sport).

Figure 14 shows the actual numbers of females and males employed in sport over the 13-year period.

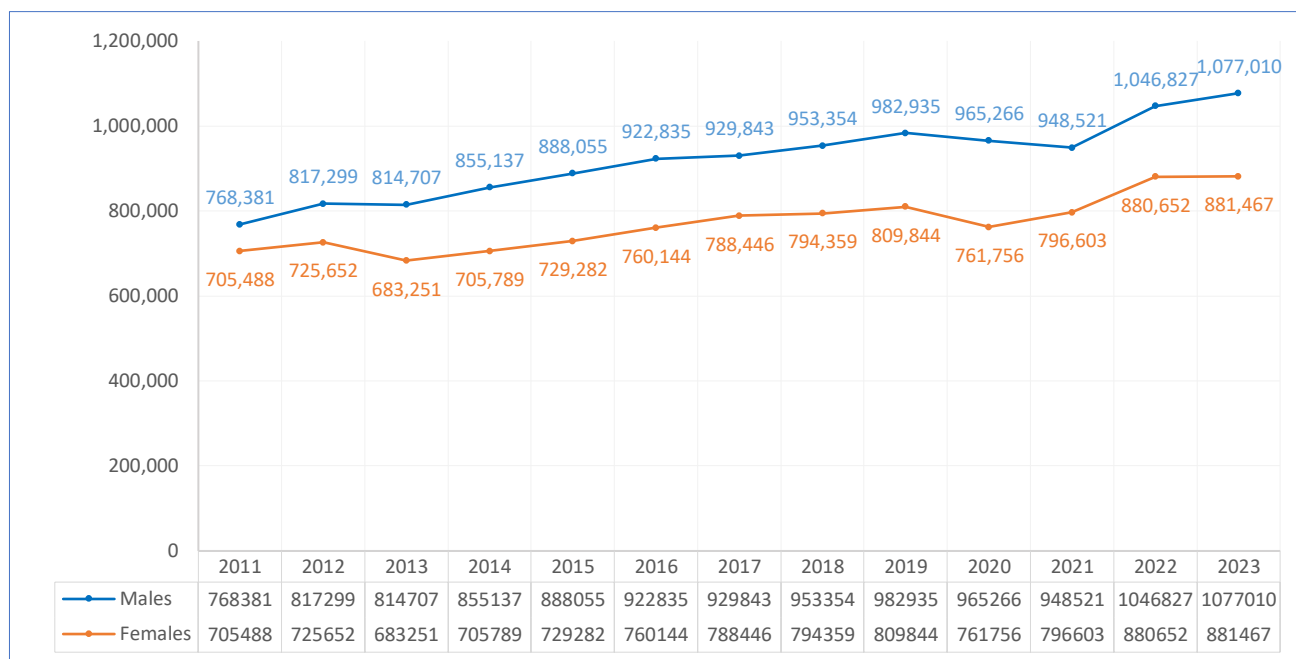


Figure 14: Total sport employment: actual numbers by gender 2011-2023 for the EU+UK

Whereas 175 979 more women were in sport employment from 2011 to 2023 (+24.9%), the gap between females and males widened in favour of male employment (which grew by +40.2% in the same period). The period 2019-2020 (Covid period) showed a steep decline in the number of females employed in sport by 48 088 (-5.9%). The period from 2020 to 2023 showed an increase of 119 711 females (+15.7%) in total sport employment. The number of males working in sport in the same period grew by 111 744 (+11.6%).



e) Total sport employment by age band

Figure 15 below shows the percentage breakdown of people employed in sport by age using three age bands. These are the age bands provided by Eurostat.

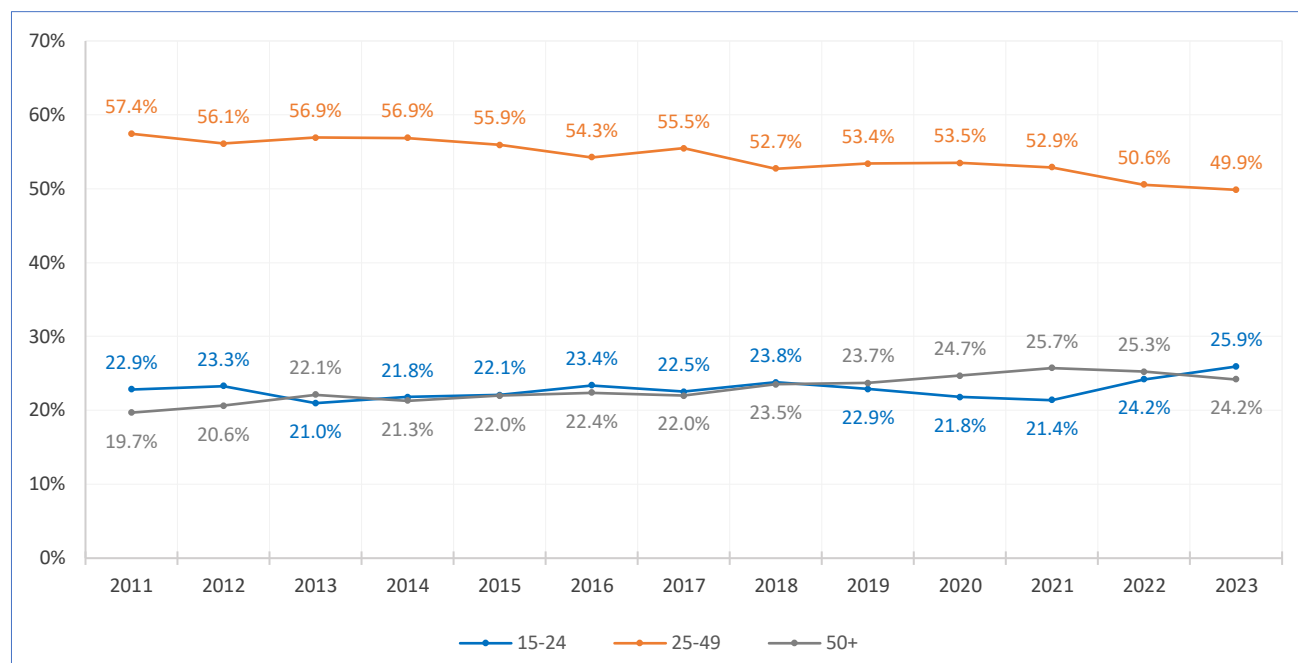


Figure 15: Total sport employment: percentage shares by age bands 2011-2023 for the EU+UK

In 2023, almost half of those in sport employment were in the 25-49 age bracket (49.9%), but it is interesting to highlight that whereas the percentage of young sport workers (15-24 years old) remained approximately the same in the period 2011-2019 (+0.01 percentage points variation), it dipped considerably in 2019-2020 (-1.1 percentage points) at the height of the pandemic and this decline continued into 2021.

The percentage of workers in sport employment over 50 increased through the period from 2011 to 2023 (+4.5 percentage points). Interestingly their share of the total sport employment increased during 2019-2020 (+1.0 percentage point) which is almost the same as the decreased percentage share of younger workers. This suggests older workers were being retained in the sport sector during the pandemic period, but younger workers were not being so frequently recruited or retained.

However, the percentage of younger workers in sport recovered significantly in the period 2020-2023 (+4.1 percentage points) suggesting the overall growth of sport employment post-pandemic was at least partly boosted by the recruitment of young workers. In 2023, the proportion of youth aged 15-24 in the total sport employment was the highest it had ever been (25.9%) which is 3 percentage points above 2011.

By comparison, whereas the percentage of those aged 25-49 remained relative stable between 2019 and 2020 (-0.6 percentage points), there was a sharp decline in the period 2020-2023 (-3.6 percentage points).

Total sport employment tends to be considerably younger than the average in total employment in the EU+UK (all economic sectors). In all economic sectors in 2023 only 8.7% fall into the younger age band (25.9% do in sport).

There is also a lower proportion of older workers (50+) in sport employment compared to all economic sectors (24.2% in sport employment versus 32.8% in all economic sectors).

Figure 16 shows the actual numbers of people employed in sport in each age band.

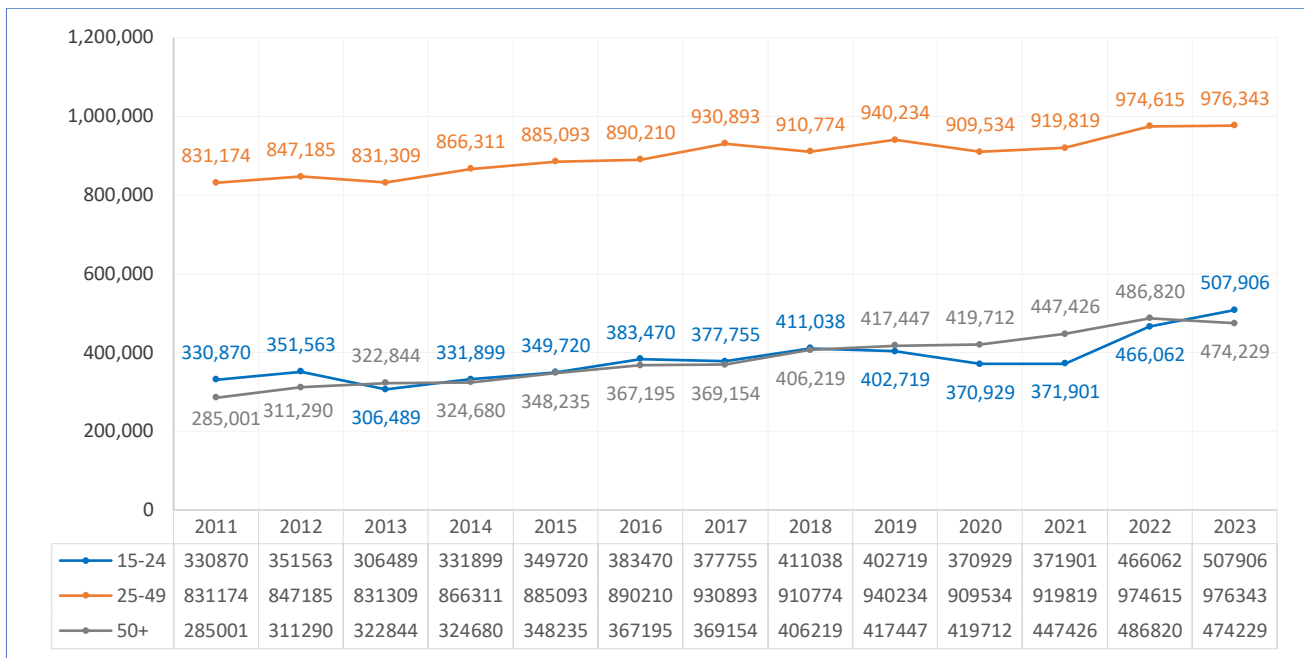


Figure 16: Total sport employment: actual numbers by age bands 2011-2023 for the UK-27+UK

Whereas numbers in all age groups grew, the trend over the last 13 years was for the younger and older age groups to increase significantly while the number of those in the middle age group grew, but not to the same extent.

The sharpest growth in the period 2011-2023 was in the 50+ age group (+66.4%) and the 15-24 age group (+53.5%). Those in the 25-49 age group only increased by 17.5%. Thus, sport employment was showing a stronger growth in the oldest and youngest age groups.

In the period 2019-2020 the number of 15-24s in sport employment went down by 31 790 (-7.9%) whilst those aged 50+ increased by 2 265 (+0.5%). There was a decline in the middle age group (25-49) of -3.3%. The period 2020-2023 (post pandemic) shows a growth of 136 977 younger workers (+36.9%), 54 517 older workers (+13%) and 66 809 in the middle age group (+7.3%) in the total sport employment. There appears, therefore, to be a significant influx of young workers into the sport sector during these four years.



Figure 17 below shows the distribution of males and females in the total sport employment in each of the age groups for the EU only (similar figures for the UK are not available).

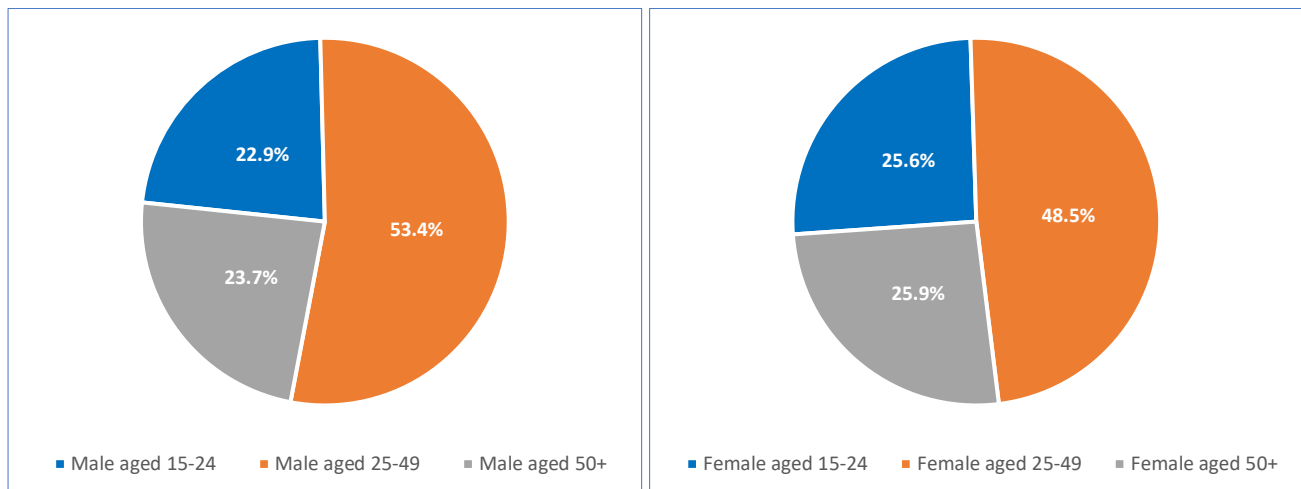


Figure 17: Percentages of males and females in the age groups in total sport employment for the EU only

Females were more strongly represented in the 15-24 (+2.6 percentage points) age group and slightly more in the 50+ age group (+2.2 percentage points) but males were in the majority in the 25-49 age group where they have a +4.9-percentage point lead over females.

f) Total sport employment by level of education

Figure 18 shows the total sport employment broken down by levels of education.

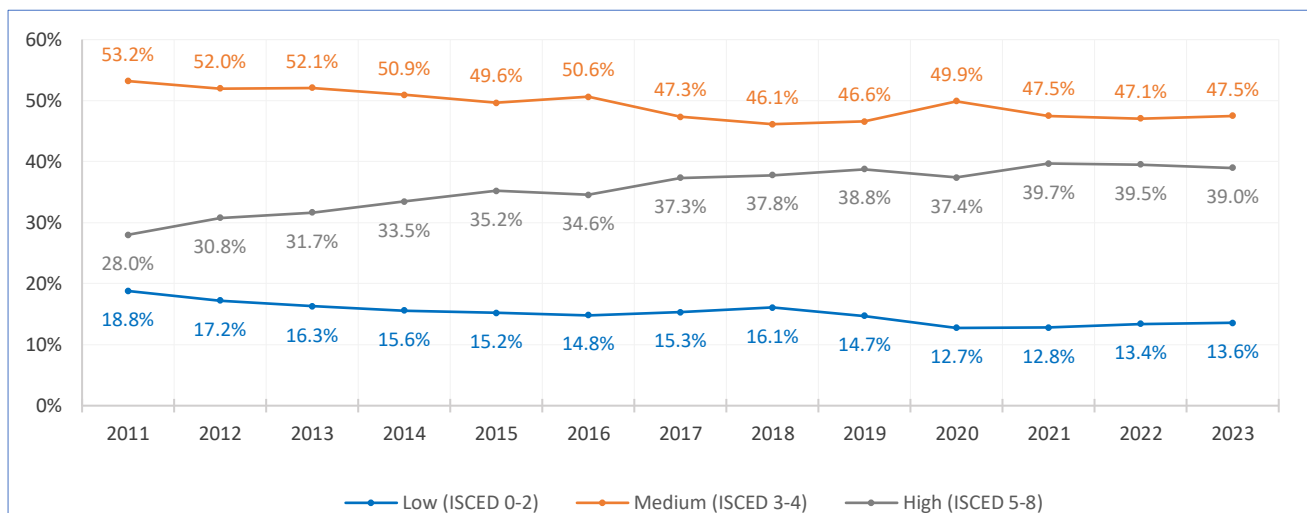


Figure 18: Total sport employment: percentage shares by level of education 2011-2023 for the EU+UK

The levels here are those taken from UNESCO’s International Classification of Education (ISCED) which align fairly closely with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

	ISCED 2011 (data from 2014 onwards)	ISCED 1997 (data up to 2013)
Low education	Levels 0-2	Levels 0-2
Medium education	Levels 3-4	Levels 3-4
High education	Levels 5-8	Levels 5-6

ISCED 0 = Early childhood education
 ISCED 1 = Primary education
 ISCED 2 = Lower secondary education
 ISCED 3 = Upper secondary education
 ISCED 4 = Post-secondary non-tertiary education
 ISCED 5 = Short-cycle tertiary education
 ISCED 6 = Bachelor’s degree or equivalent tertiary education level
 ISCED 7 = Master’s degree or equivalent tertiary education level
 ISCED 8 = Doctoral degree or equivalent tertiary education level

In 2023 the majority of those employed in sport had middle level qualifications (47.5%). 39% had high level qualifications and 13.6% low level qualifications. From 2011 to 2023, the percentage share of those employed in sport with low education decreased by 5.2 percentage points whereas those having high education levels significantly increased by 11 percentage points. Those with middle level qualifications declined by 5.7 percentage points. Over the 13-year period there was a tendency for those employed in sport to become ‘better educated’.

In 2019-2020, there was a decline in those employed in sport with low level qualifications (-2 percentage points) whereas the share of those with high level qualifications also declined (-1.4 percentage points) and the share of those with middle level qualifications increased (+3.3 percentage points).

In the period 2020-2023, the percentage share of those with low level qualifications increased (+0.9 percentage points). This is the first time since 2018 that we have seen an increase in those with low level qualifications (although it is now well below 2018).

Total sport employment has slightly less workers with higher education qualifications than the EU+UK average for all economic sectors (39% versus 39.8%) and slightly fewer with low level qualifications than the EU+UK average (13.6% versus 16%). It will be interesting and important to see if these tendencies are confirmed when the statistics for the year 2024 are available.

Figure 19 shows the actual numbers of people employed in sport through the period from 2011 to 2023 by education level.

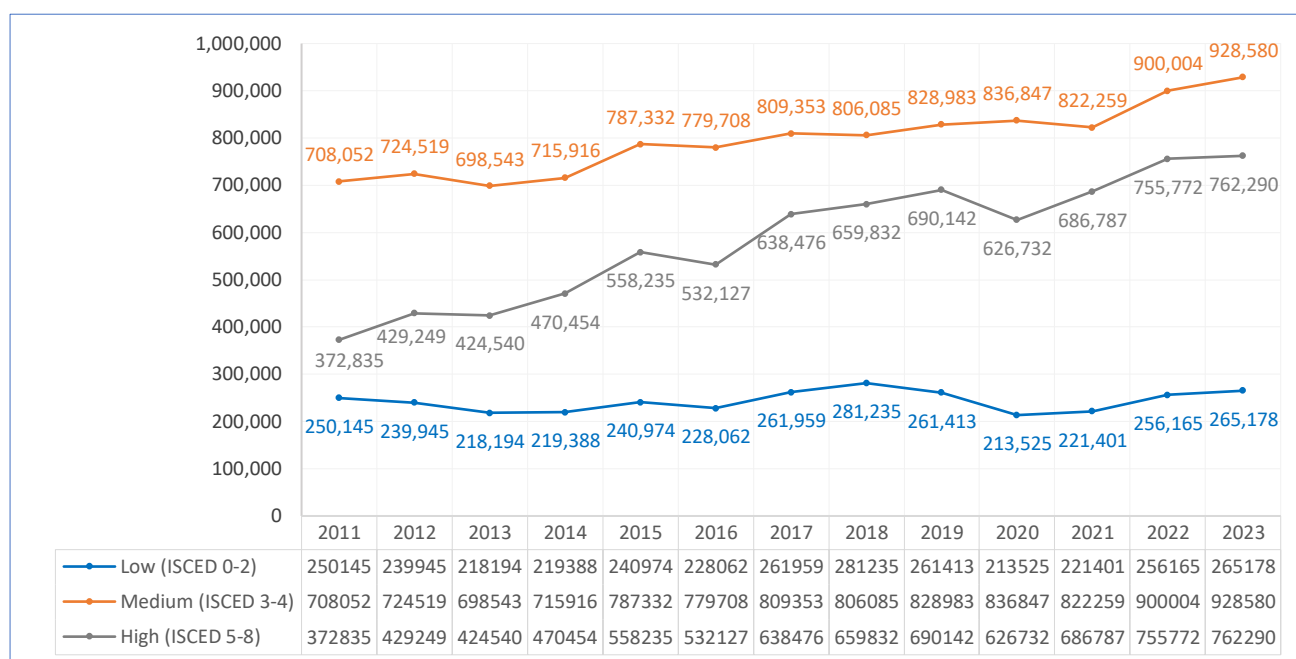


Figure 19: Total sport employment: actual numbers by level of education 2011-2023 for the EU+UK

The strongest growth over that period was amongst those with high education levels. This group grew by 389 455 (+104.5%) over the 13-year period. The numbers of those with low level qualifications did not significantly change whereas numbers with medium level qualifications increased by 220 528 (+31.1%).

Looking at the period 2019-2020, those with high level qualifications decreased by 63 410 (-9.2%) and those with low level qualifications also went down by 47 888 (-18.3%). This possibly reflects the findings on age above, i.e. fewer younger workers were being recruited or retained during the pandemic.

The period 2020-2023 showed a different tendency. During the period of post-pandemic recovery, those employed in sport with high level qualifications increased by 135 558 (+21.6%) whereas those with low level qualifications only increased by 51 653 (+24.2%).

g) Total sport employment by type of working contract

Figure 20 shows the percentage shares of full and part-time working contracts in the total sport employment up to the end of 2023.

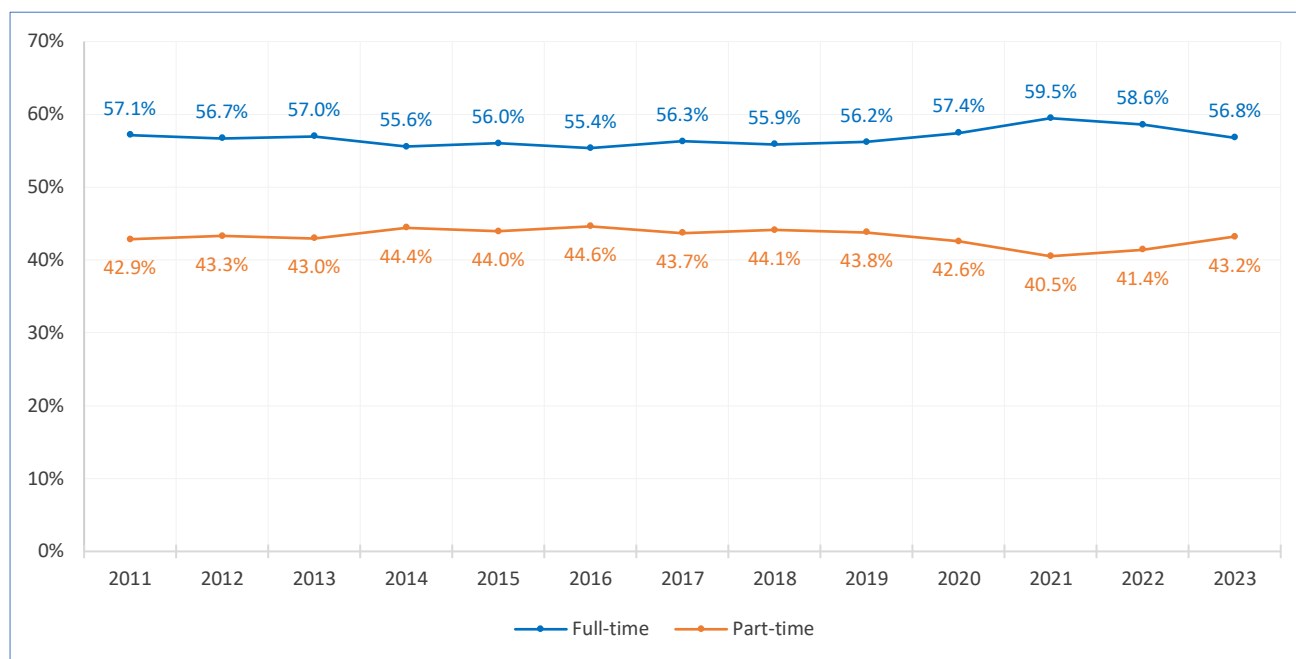


Figure 20: Total sport employment: percentage shares by type of working contract 2011-2023 for the EU+UK

It appears that most people in the sector were employed on full-time contracts, and there was very little change over the period 2011- 2023.

There was little variation in the percentages of full and part-time contracts up to 2019 in sport employment. However, the period 2019-2020 showed a decline in part-time employment (-1.2 percentage points) and a corresponding rise in full-time employees.

Despite a continuing decline throughout 2021, overall, the period from 2020 to 2023 showed the percentage share of part-time employees in sport was rising again (+0.5 percentage points).

This may suggest that the balance of full- and part-time employment may have been returning to the pre-Covid levels. It will be important to see if this trend continues when the statistics for 2024 are available.

In 2023, sport employment favoured part-time contracts more than total EU+UK employment (all economic sectors) by a very wide margin (43.2% in the sport sector versus 18.9% for EU employment in all economic sectors).

Figure 21 shows the actual numbers of people employed on full- and part-time contracts in sport through the period from 2011 to 2023.

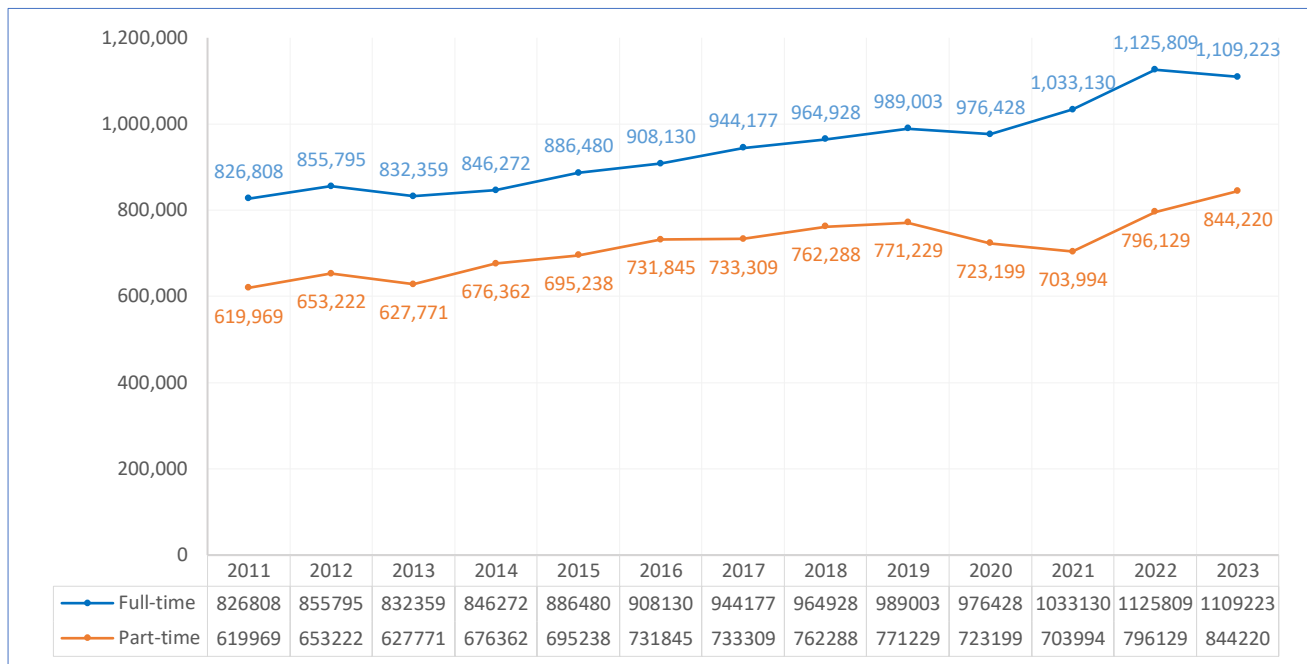


Figure 21: Total sport employment: actual numbers by type of working contract 2011-2023 for the EU+UK

This showed a steady growth of both full- and part-time contracts up to 2019 with the only dip being the year 2013 when Eurostat and the NSOs changed the way they collected and collated employment data.

The period 2019-2020 tells a slightly different story. We can see that the number of part-time contracts in sport diminished by 48 030 (-6.2%). The period from 2020 to 2023 showed an increase of part-time contracts by 121 021 (+16.7%) and the number of full-time contracts by 132 795 (+13.6%). This may suggest that post-pandemic there is a trend back in favour of part-time employment in sport. It will be interesting to see if this trend continues when the statistics for 2024 become available.

There are also some interesting findings regarding the gender breakdown of full- and part-time workers in sport by type of contract for EU sport employment only (similar statistics are not available for the UK).



Figure 22 shows the distribution of female and male workers in sport employment according to part-time and full-time contracts in 2023.

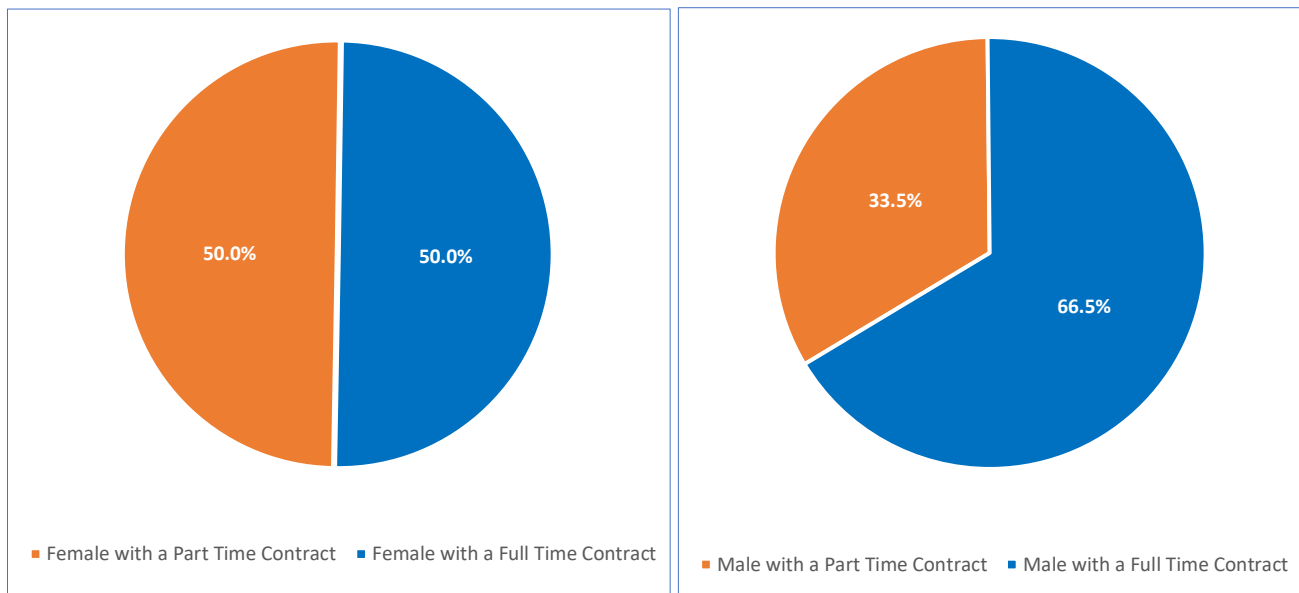


Figure 22: Total sport employment: percentages of females and males by type of contract for EU only

In total, 50% of females had a part-time contract in sport, whereas 33.5% of male workers did. These findings suggest that in 2023, part-time employment in sport was far more prevalent for females than for males.

h) Total sport employment by professional status

This part of the analysis looks at the breakdown between those who are employed (both full-time and part-time) and those who are self-employed in sport. Figure 23 shows the percentage shares of total sport employment by employed and self-employed status over the 13-year period.

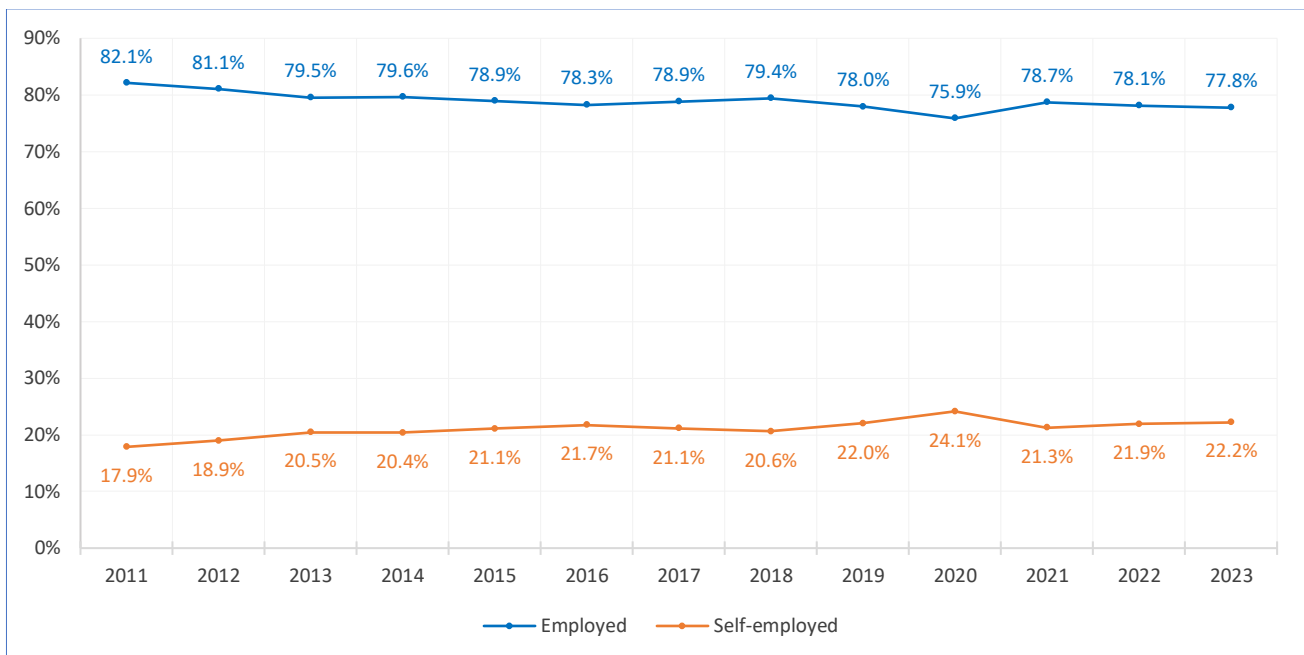


Figure 23: Total sport employment: percentage shares by professional status 2011-2023 for the EU+UK

In 2023, just over three quarters of the persons employed in sport (77.8%) had employed status and 22.2% were self-employed.

The trend from 2011 to 2023 showed an increase in self-employment (+4.3 percentage points).

A significant growth in self-employment was noticeable in the period 2019 to 2020 during the pandemic (+2.1 percentage points) but by 2021 this had declined to a percentage share closer to that of 2019. In the whole period from 2020 to 2023, self-employment in sport declined by -1.9 percentage points.

In 2023, the percentage share of self-employed people in the total sport employment was considerably higher than that for total EU+UK employment (all economic sectors) (22.2% in the sport sector versus 13.1% in all EU+UK economic sectors).

Figure 24 shows the actual numbers of people from 2011 to 2023 in sport according to employed or self-employed status.

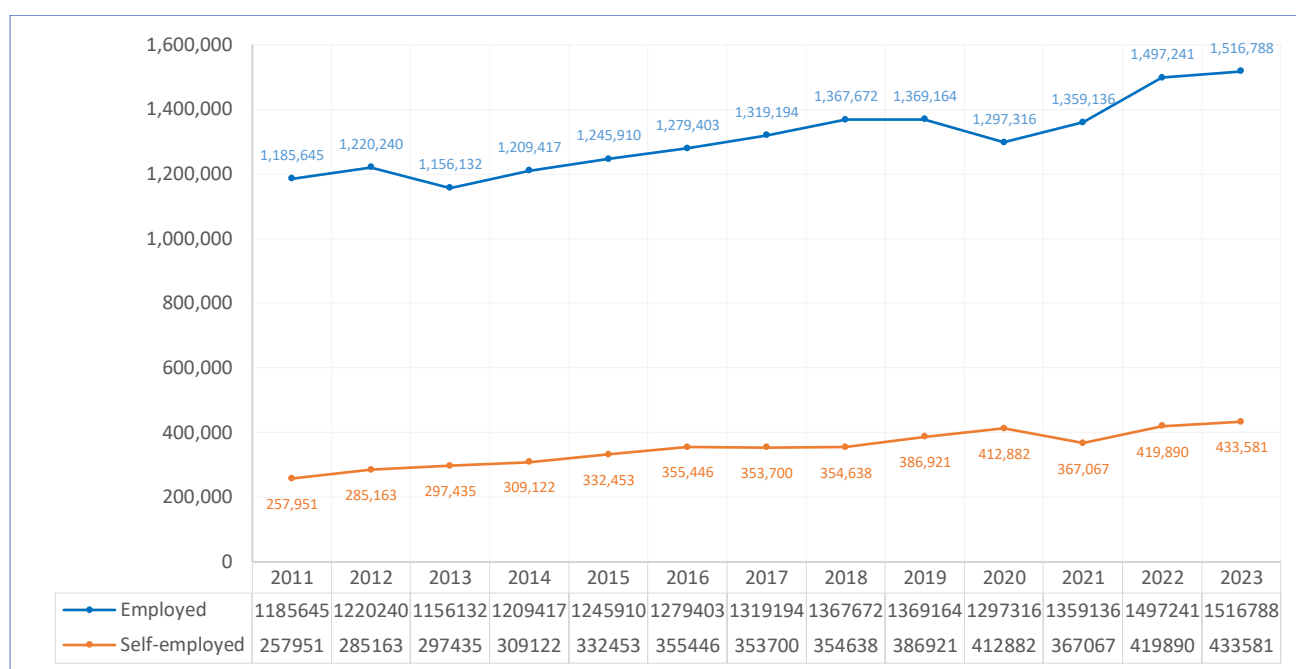


Figure 24: Total sport employment: actual numbers by professional status 2011-2023 for the EU+UK

Whereas there was a significant trend in the direction of self-employment in terms of percentage shares (Figure 23), the rise of self-employed workers in sport from 2011 to 2023 was considerable, 175 630 self-employed people (+68.1%) when compared with those on employed contracts, 311 143 persons (+27.9%).

When looking specifically at 2019-2020 (the Covid period), there was a growth in self-employed workers (+6.7%), and a decline for those on employed contracts (-5.2%). However, comparing 2020 and 2023, we can see a noticeable increase in self-employed workers in sport by 20 699 (+5%).

Figure 25 shows the breakdown of self-employed workers in sport employment by gender for the EU (similar statistics for the UK are not available).

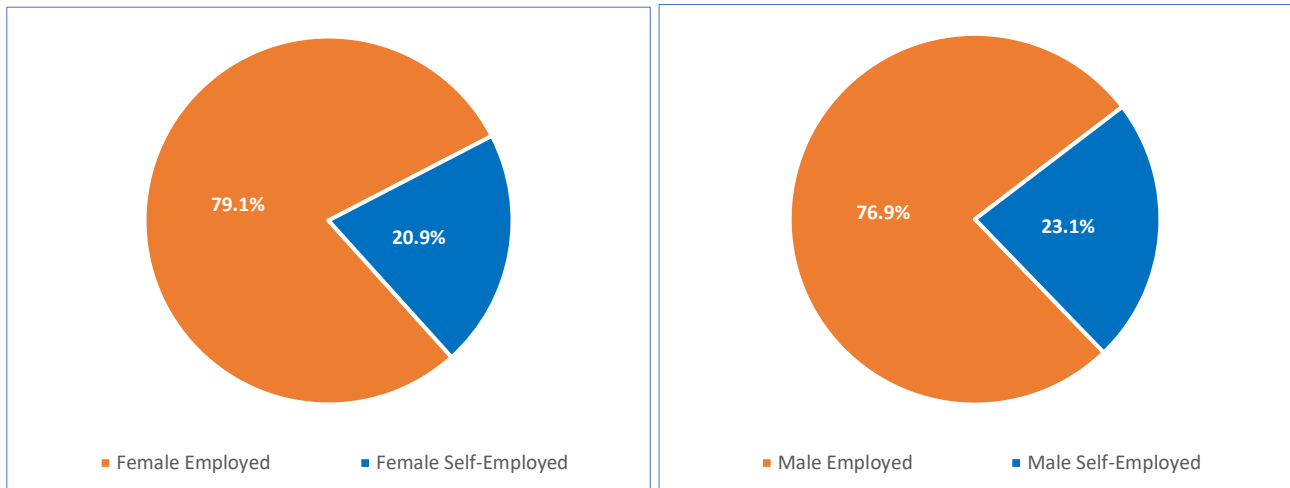


Figure 25: Total sport employment: percentages of females and males by professional status for EU only

According to the data, in total sport employment, male workers were slightly more likely to be self-employed compared to females in the sport sector (+2.2 percentage points).

Figure 26 shows the breakdown of the self-employed group by age in 2023.

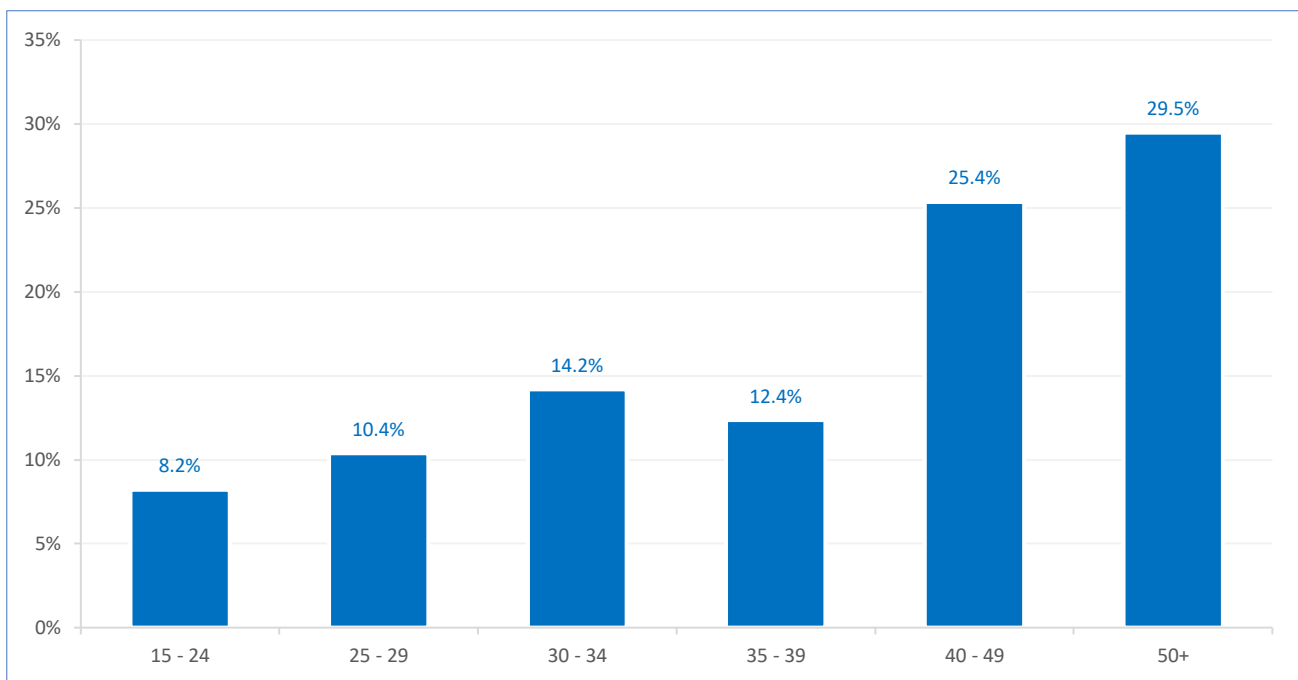


Figure 26: Total sport employment: proportions of self-employed people by age for EU only

It is interesting to note that 54.9% of self-employed people in sport were aged 40 years or older. Nevertheless, just under one fifth (18.6%) were below the age of 30.



5

**WORKERS WITH A
SPORT AND FITNESS
OCCUPATION
(ISCO 342)
IN THE EU+UK**

5. WORKERS WITH A SPORT AND FITNESS OCCUPATION (ISCO 342) IN THE EU+UK

This section uses Eurostat and National Statistics Offices (NSO) figures for the period from 2011 to 2023 to estimate and breakdown the number of people with a sport and fitness occupation (classified as ISCO 342) in both sport and non-sport organisations (NACE 93.1 and other NACE codes).

This occupational group ISCO 342 comprises the following sport-specific occupations:

- 3421 - Athletes and Sports Players
- 3422 - Sports Coaches, Instructors and Officials
- 3423 - Fitness and Recreation Instructors and Programme Leaders.

It is important to highlight that the figures in this section are for people with a sport and fitness occupation in all types of organisations: sports organisations but also all other types of organisations whose main business is not the provision of sport (for example, fitness staff in hotels). Unlike NACE 93.1, ISCO 342 does not include occupations such as cleaners, managers, receptionists, office staff and caterers etc.

a) Total number of workers with a sport and fitness occupation (ISCO 342)

Figure 27 shows the actual number of workers with a sport and fitness occupation in EU+UK (in sport and non-sport organisations) from 2011 to 2023.

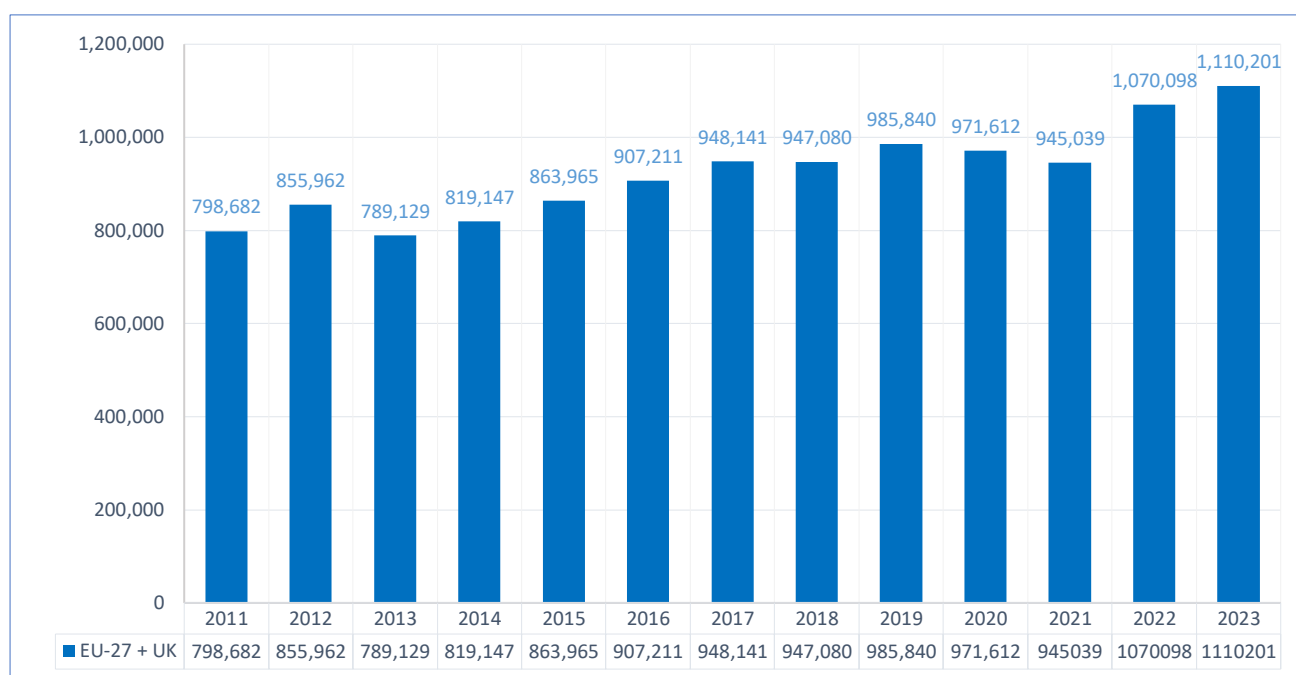


Figure 27: Actual numbers of workers with a sport and fitness occupations 2011-2023 for the EU+UK

As of 2023, it stood at 1 110 201 which represented 56.7% of the total sport employment. This compares with a figure of 798 682 in 2011. Thus, there was a growth during this period from 2011 to 2023 of 311 519 workers (+39%) with a sport and fitness occupation.

In the period from 2011 to 2019, the overall trend was for the number of people with a sport and fitness occupation to grow with some fluctuations, but 2019-2020 saw a decline of 14 228 workers (-1.4%) and this negative trend accelerated further in 2021. This is less than the decline in total sport employment as a whole (-3.7%) in the same period, suggesting workers with a sport and fitness occupation may have been less immediately impacted by the pandemic than other occupations.

From the low point in 2021, by 2023 there was a growth of 165 162 workers with a sport and fitness occupation (+17.5%) which appears to be a remarkable gain, unprecedented in the period 2011-2023.

Figure 28 shows the total number of workers with a sport and fitness occupation for each country in the EU+UK for the years 2019, 2022 and 2023.

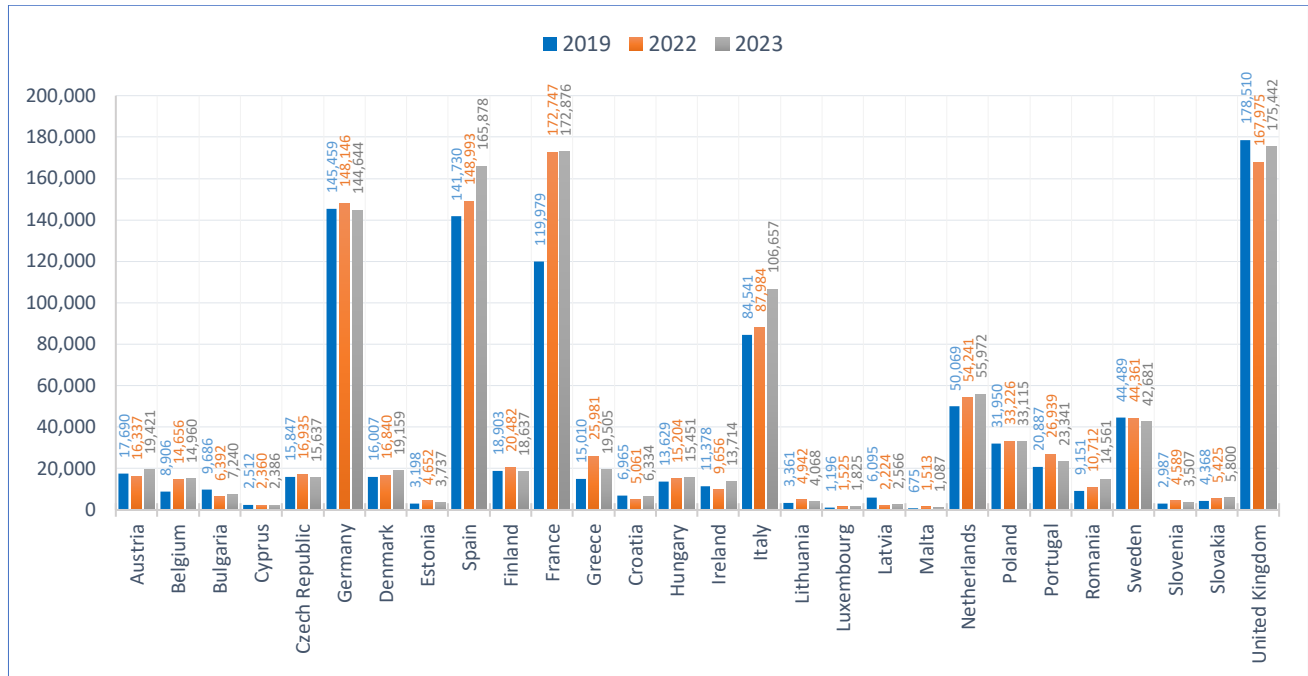


Figure 28: Total numbers of workers with a sport and fitness occupation by country in 2019, 2022 and 2023

Between 2019 and 2022, France overtook the UK with a total of 172 747 (+44%) compared to the UK's 167 975 (-5.9%). It should be noted, however, that the national statistical office in France (INSEE) changed its definitions in 2020 which may partly account for this change.

The period 2022-2023 showed some changes with the UK edging a slight lead. By 2023, the UK gained 7 467 sport and fitness workers (+4.4%) while in France the number remained fairly static.

In 2023, the four countries with the largest numbers of people with a sport and fitness occupation were the UK with 175 442 (15.8% of the total for all countries), France with 172 876 (15.6% of the total number), Spain with 165 878 (14.9%) and Germany with 144 644 (13%). That represented 59.3% of the total numbers of workers with a sport and fitness occupation in the EU+UK.

The four countries with the smallest numbers were Malta with 1 087 (0.1% of the total number), Luxembourg with 1 825 (0.16%), Latvia with 2 224 (0.23%) and Cyprus with 2 386 (0.22%). It is important to note that for these countries, the sample is very small, so the level of reliability has to be carefully taken into consideration.

Figure 29 shows positive and negative growth in workers with a sport and fitness occupation in the EU+UK countries for the period 2019-2023.

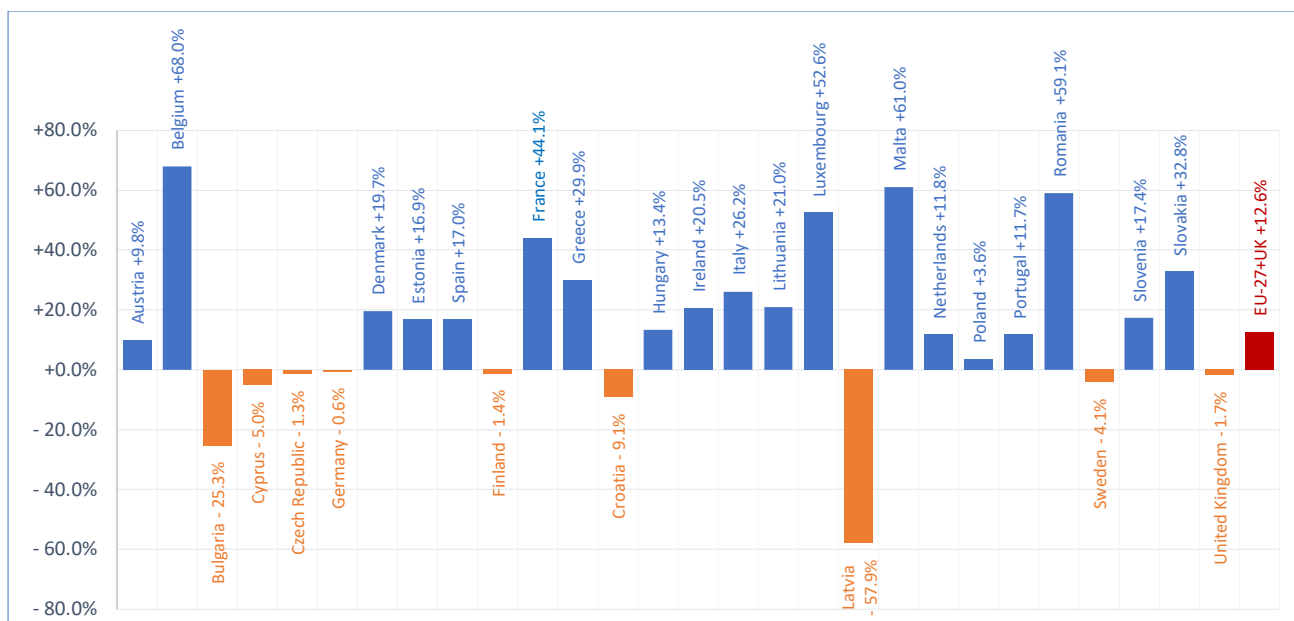


Figure 29: Growth rates for workers with a sport and fitness occupation for each country 2019 and 2023

In total, 19 of these countries showed positive growth and the remaining 9 showed negative growth. The four countries with the greatest growth rates for workers with a sport and fitness occupation during this period were Belgium (+68%), Malta (+61%), Romania (+59.1%), and Luxembourg (+52.5%). The four countries most negatively affected were Latvia (-57.9%), Bulgaria (-25.3%), Croatia (-9.1%) and Cyprus (-5%). It is notable that those showing the greatest positive and negative growth rates between these years are also those with the smallest populations of workers with a sport and fitness occupation. Therefore, relatively small real changes are likely to show up as large percentages. Considering the period from 2020 to 2023, there was an average positive growth rate of +12.6% of workers with a sport and fitness occupation which is 3.4 percentage points greater than the growth in total sport employment (+9.2%).

b) Workers with a sport and fitness occupation (ISCO 342) by gender

Figure 30 highlights the percentages of female and male workers with sport and fitness occupation.

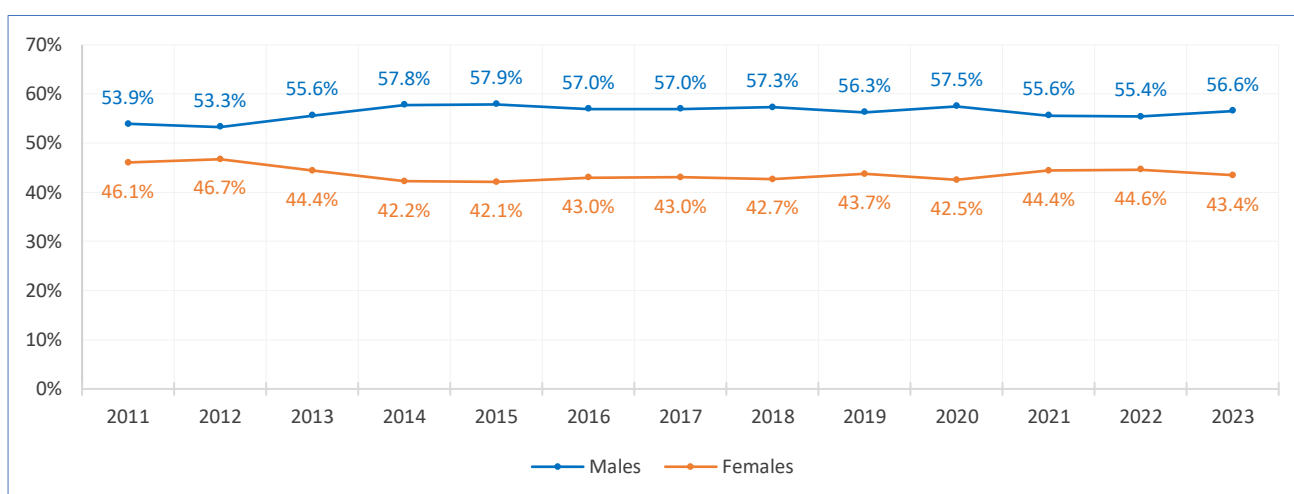


Figure 30: Workers with a sport and fitness occupation: percentage shares by gender 2011-2023 for the EU+UK

As in the case of the EU+UK total sport employment, in 2023, workers with a sport and fitness occupation were more likely to be male than female, and the gap widened by 5.4 percentage points from 2011 (gap in 2011 was 7.8 percentage points, gap in 2023 was 13.2 percentage points).

This compares with a male-female gap in total sport employment of 10 percentage points.

In the period 2019-2020, the gap widened to 15 percentage points, suggesting that females with a sport and fitness occupation were particularly negatively impacted by the pandemic.

Figure 31 shows the actual numbers of workers with a sport and fitness occupation in EU+UK by gender over the period from 2011 to 2023.

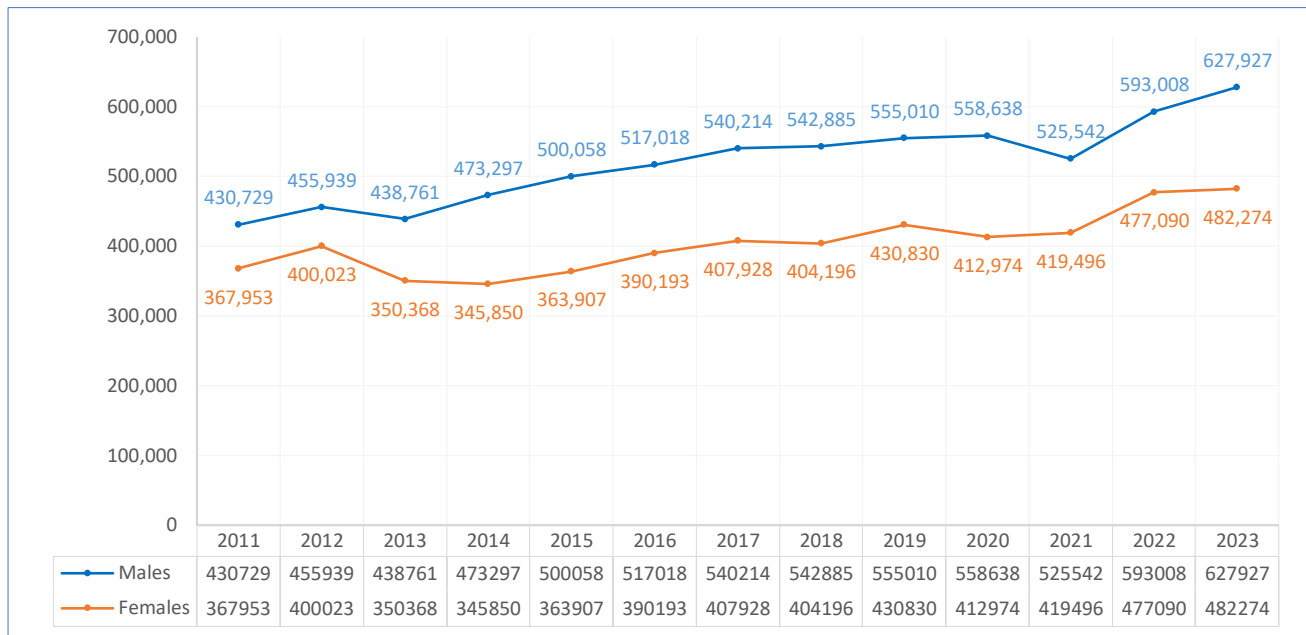


Figure 31: Workers with a sport and fitness occupation: actual numbers by gender 2011-2023 for the EU+UK

The period 2011-2023 saw a growth of 114 321 female workers with a sport and fitness occupation (+31.1%) compared to men 197 198 (+45.8%). In the period from 2019-2020, there was a decline of 17 856 female with a sport and fitness occupation (-4.1%).

However, the period 2020-2023 then showed an uptick of 69 300 (+16.8%). This was the biggest increase in females with a sport and fitness occupation in the whole period 2011-2023 and was slightly greater than the growth of females in total sport employment in the same period (+15.7%).



c) Workers with a sport and fitness occupation (ISCO 342) by age band

Figure 32 shows the breakdown of workers with a sport and fitness occupation in EU+UK by age band. These are the age bands provided by Eurostat.

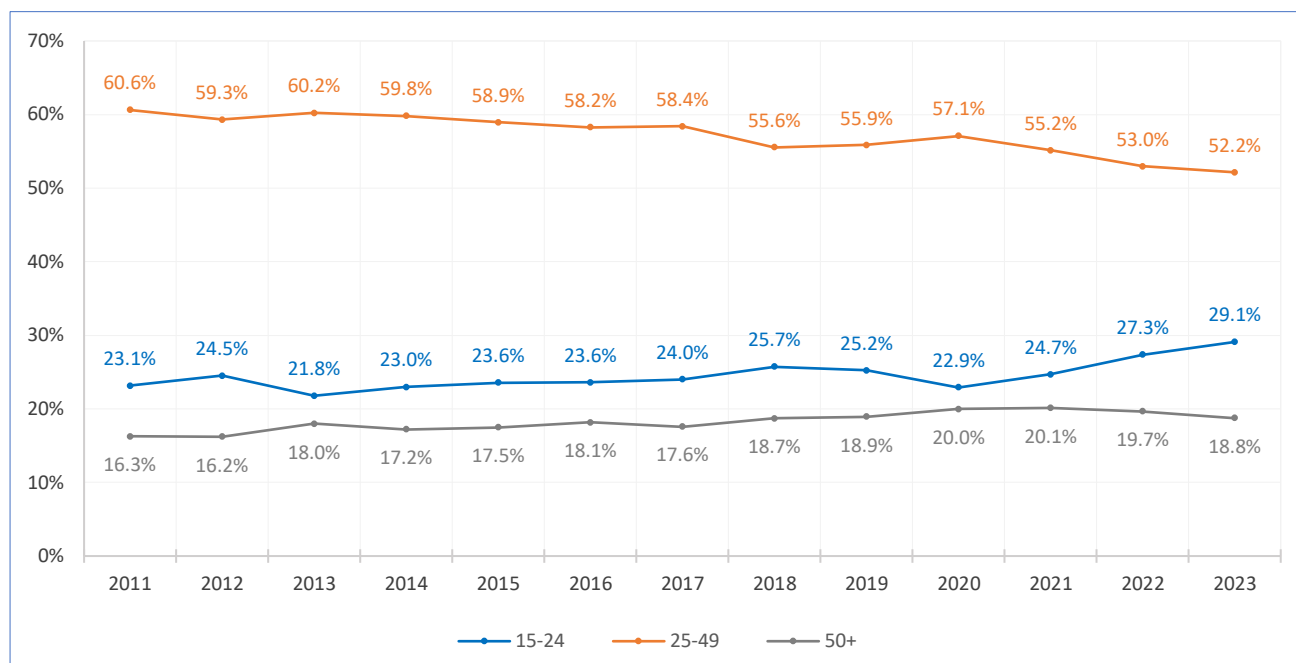


Figure 32: Workers with a sport and fitness occupation: percentage shares by age groups 2011-2023 for the EU+UK

In 2023, the majority of workers with a sport and fitness occupation were in the 25-49 age group (52.2%).

The trend in the period from 2011 to 2023 was for both the older and younger age groups to increase their shares of workers with a sport and fitness occupation at the expense of the middle group. This appears to have changed significantly in 2019-2020 during the pandemic. The percentage share of older workers with a sport and fitness occupation increased (+3.2 percentage points), the percentage share of younger workers (15-24) declined (-2.3 percentage points).

However, there was a sharp increase in the period 2020-2023 for the 15–24-year-olds (+6.2 percentage points) mainly at the expense of the middle group (25-49) whose share declined (-4.9 percentage points). This was unprecedented in the period 2011-2023.



Figure 33 shows the actual numbers of people employed with a sport and fitness occupation in EU+UK by age bands.

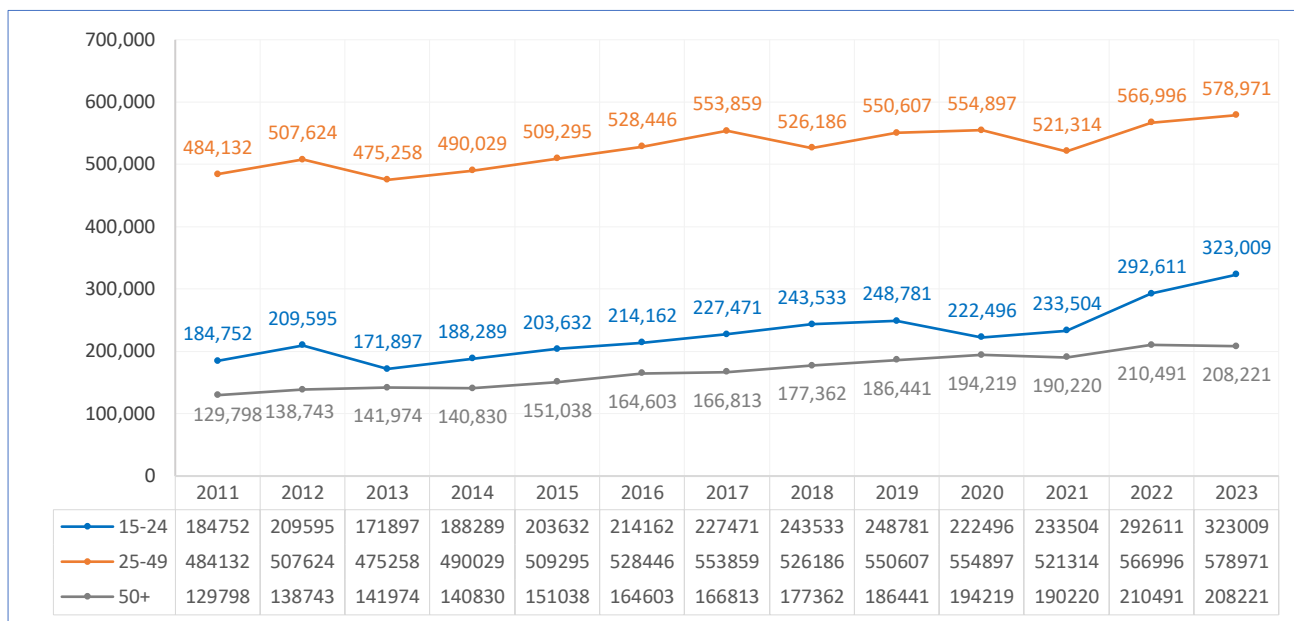


Figure 33: Workers with a sport and fitness occupation: actual numbers by age bands 2011-2023 for the EU+UK

Up to 2019, the growth of sport and fitness workers in the older age group (+35.4%) was greater than that for the younger group (+29.9%). Those in the middle age group increased (+14.6%) so there was a tendency in the direction of an aging workforce for those having a sport and fitness occupation. In the period 2019-2020, the older age group grew (+4.2%) as did the middle age group (+0.8%). However, in the year 2019-2020, there were 26 285 fewer young workers with a sport and fitness occupation (-10.6%). The decline in young workers was greater than that in the total sport employment (-3.7%) in the same year.

However, the period from 2020 to 2023 showed a sharp increase in the number of younger workers with a sport and fitness occupation by 100 513 (+45.2%) which was unprecedented in the 13-year period. This compares with a 26% increase for young workers in total sport employment which suggests that almost twice as many young people were becoming sport and fitness workers than other occupations in the sport sector during this period.

Figure 34 below shows the distribution of males and females in each of the age groups for the EU only (similar figures for the UK are not available).

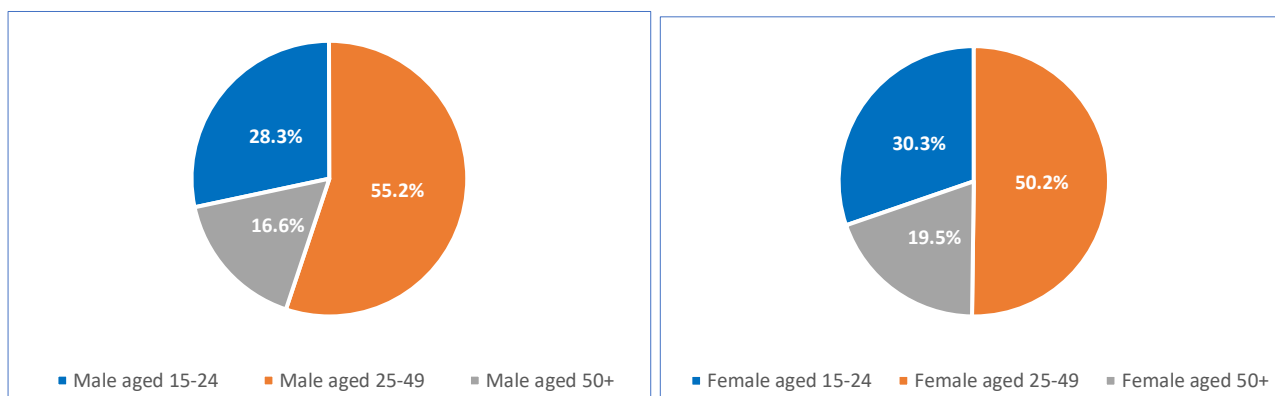


Figure 34: Workers with a sport and fitness occupation: percentages of males and female by age for the EU only.

In 2023, females were more strongly represented in the 15-24 (+2 percentage points) and 50+ age groups (+2.9 percentage points) but males were in the majority in the 25-49 age group and had a +5-percentage point lead over females.

d) Workers with a sport and fitness occupation (ISCO 342) by level of education

Figure 35 shows the percentages of workers with a sport and fitness occupation by level of education for the years 2011-2023. The levels here are those taken from UNESCO’s International Classification of Education (ISCED) which align fairly closely with the levels used in the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

	ISCED 2011 (data from 2014 onwards)	ISCED 1997 (data up to 2013)
Low education	Levels 0-2	Levels 0-2
Medium education	Levels 3-4	Levels 3-4
High education	Levels 5-8	Levels 5-6

ISCED 0 = Early childhood education
 ISCED 1 = Primary education
 ISCED 2 = Lower secondary education
 ISCED 3 = Upper secondary education
 ISCED 4 = Post-secondary non-tertiary education
 ISCED 5 = Short-cycle tertiary education
 ISCED 6 = Bachelor’s degree or equivalent tertiary education level
 ISCED 7 = Master’s degree or equivalent tertiary education level
 ISCED 8 = Doctoral degree or equivalent tertiary education level

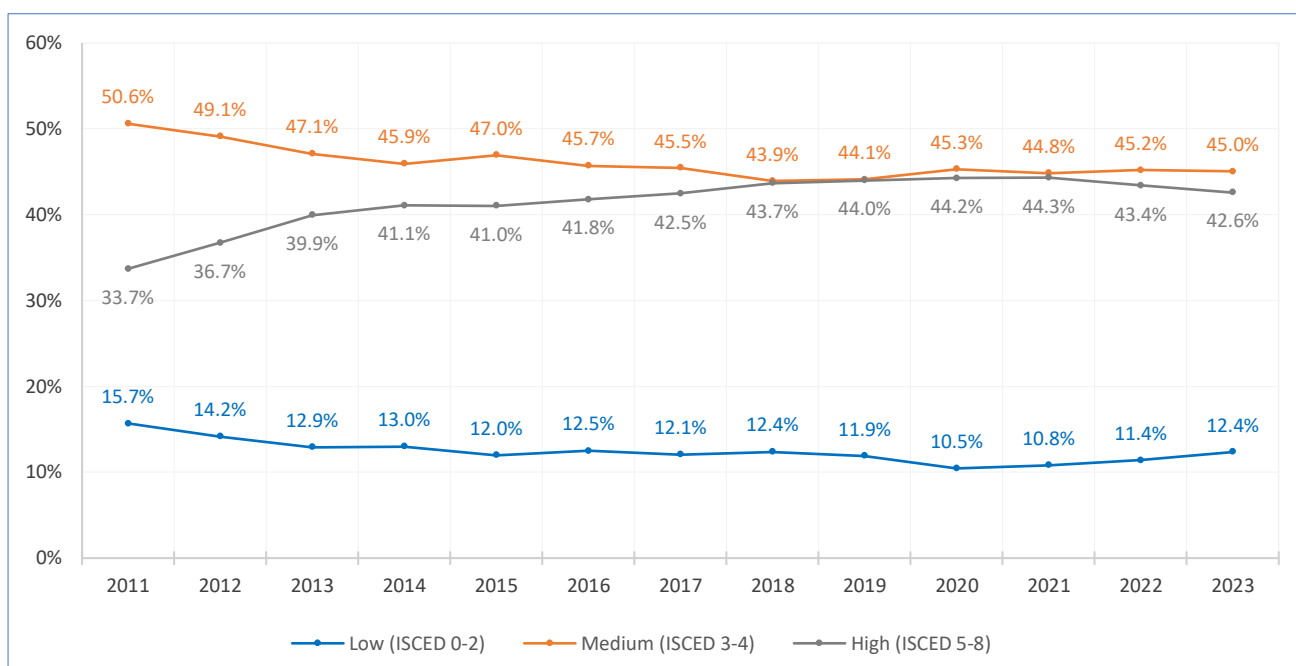


Figure 35: Workers with a sport and fitness occupation: percentage shares by level of education 2011-2023 for the EU+UK

From the collated statistics, it appears that the largest proportion workers with a sport and fitness occupation in 2023 had a middle education level, but this was only 2.4 percentage points greater than the share of those with high level qualifications. From 2011 to 2023, the percentage share of those with a sport and fitness occupation with low level qualifications decreased by -3.3 percentage points whereas those with high level qualifications increased by a significant +8.9 percentage points. Those with middle level qualifications went down by 5.6 percentage points. Over this 13-year period there was a tendency for workers with a sport and fitness occupation to become ‘better educated’.

The period 2019-2020 showed a slight increase of those with high and middle level qualifications. However, there was a more noticeable decline in those with low level qualifications of -1.4 percentage points.

The period 2020-2023 showed a slight decrease in the share of those with high level qualifications (-1.6 percentage points). Those with middle level qualifications remained relatively stable. However, there was a noticeable increase in the share of those with low level qualifications (+1.9 percentage points). These findings are similar to those for total sport employment as a whole.

Figure 36 shows the actual numbers of workers with a sport and fitness occupation in the EU+UK by level of education for the period 2011-2023.

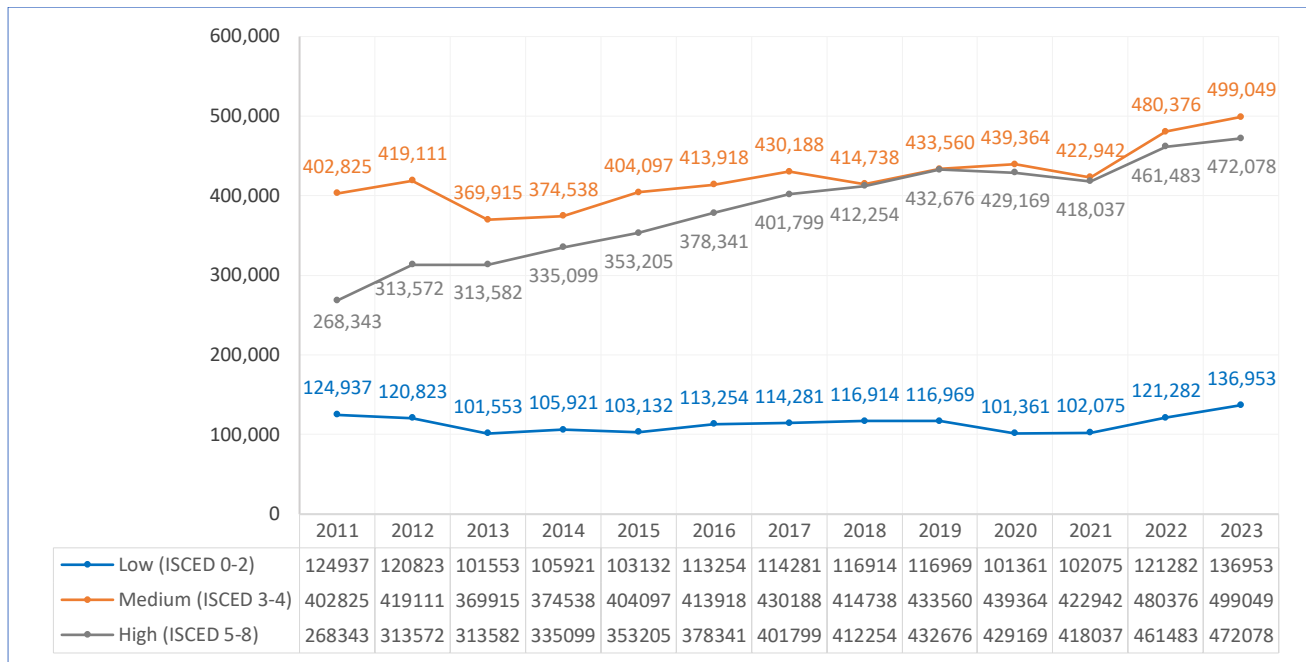


Figure 36: Workers with a sport and fitness occupation: numbers by level of education 2011-2023 for the EU+UK

The greatest growth from 2011 to 2023 was in the high education group by 203 735 (+75.9%). Those in the middle education level rose by 96 224 (+23.9%) and those in the low education group increased by 12 016 (+9.6%). The period 2019-2020 saw a sharp decline in those with low education by 15 608 (-13.3%) but this is reversed in 2020-2023 with a rise of 35 592 (+35.1%). This was an unprecedented rise and very much against the trend from 2011-2019.



e) Workers with a sport and fitness occupation (ISCO 342) by type of working contract

Figure 37 shows the percentage shares of workers with a sport and fitness occupation by full and part-time contracts.

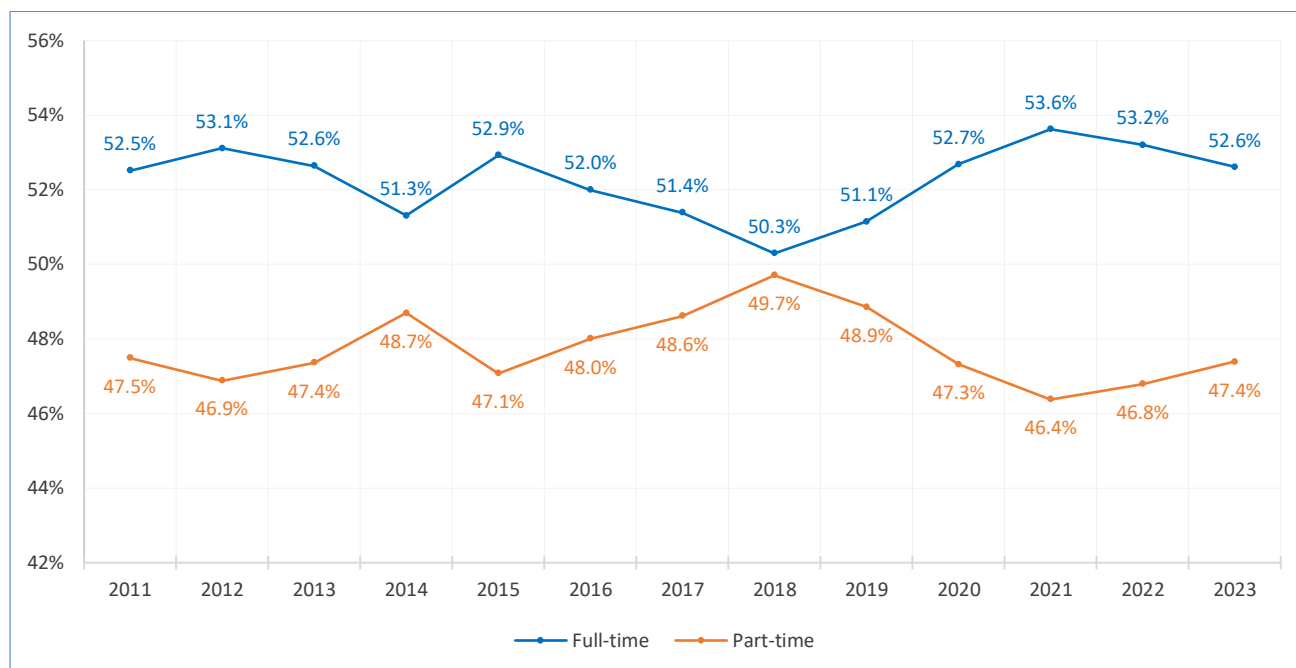


Figure 37: Workers with a sport and fitness occupation: percentage shares by type of working contract 2011-2023

In 2023, 52.6% of those workers were on full-time contracts and 47.4% were part-time.

The period 2011-2019 saw an increase in part-time employment by +2.4 percentage points. In fact, the year 2018 saw almost an equal balance of workers with a sport and fitness occupation on full- and part-time contracts.

The period 2019-2020 sees a decline in part-time contracts by -1.6 percentage points, a trend which continues into 2021. However, by 2023 the percentage share of part-time contracts for workers with a sport and fitness occupation increased by +1 percentage point. It will be interesting to see if this upward trend in part-time contracts continues when the statistics for 2024 become available.

When compared to total sport employment in the EU+UK, part-time working was more prevalent for workers with a sport and fitness occupation by 4.2 percentage points.

It is also interesting that the fluctuations in the balance of full- and part-time sport and fitness workers over the period 2011 to 2023 were more significant than those in total sport employment, suggesting perhaps that employment in this group was more affected by rising and falling demand in the sector.

Figure 38 shows the total actual numbers of workers with a sport and fitness occupation in the EU+UK over the 13-year period by type of working contract (part-time and full-time).

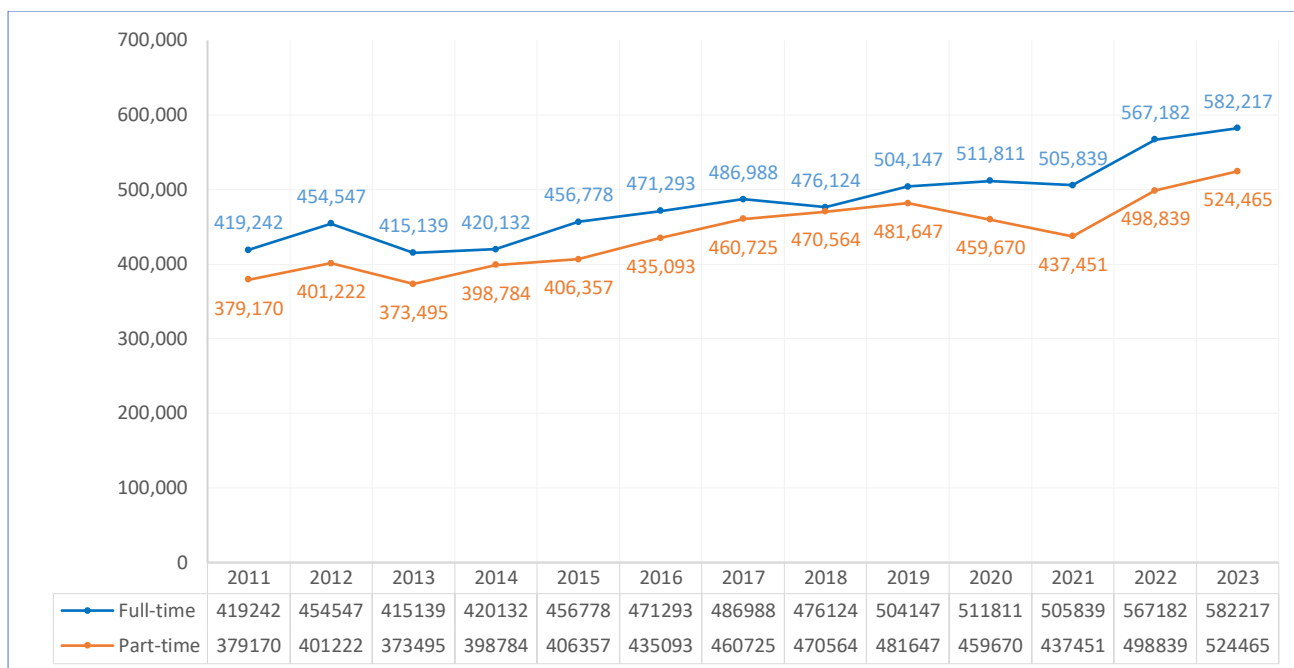


Figure 38: Workers with a sport and fitness occupation: actual numbers by type of working contract 2011-2023

In the period from 2011 to 2019, the growth of workers with a sport and fitness occupation with part-time contracts was greater than that for those with full-time contracts (+27.0% of part-timers compared to +20.2% for full-timers).

The period 2019 to 2020 showed a decline in part-time contracts by 21 977 positions (-4.6%), and this downward trend continued into 2021.

However, in 2021-2023 there was a growth in full-time contracts (+15.2%) but a greater growth in part-time contracts (+19.9%). It appears that during the Covid period there was a decline in the part-time employment of sport and fitness workers, but since then there was a gradual trend in favour once again of part-time working.

There are also some interesting findings regarding the breakdown of full-time and part-time sport and fitness workers by gender.



Figure 39 shows the distribution of female and male workers with a sport and fitness occupation according to part-time and full-time employment in 2023.

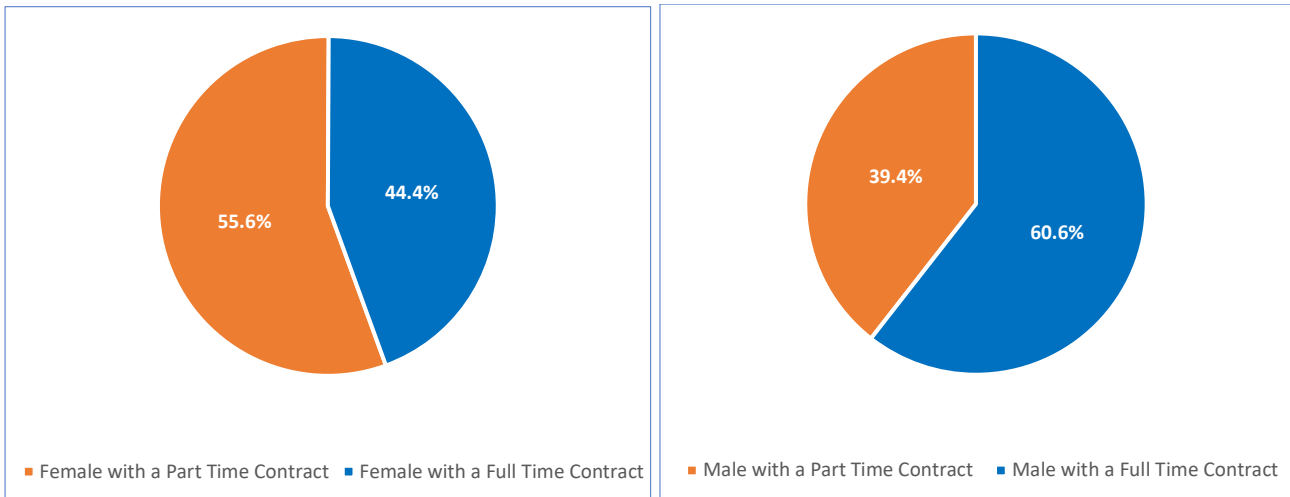


Figure 39: Workers with a sport and fitness occupation: percentages of females and males with part-time and full-time contracts

The proportion of female workers on part-time contracts exceeded those in full-time employment in 2023 (+11.2 percentage points). On the other hand, the proportion of male workers on full-time contracts exceeded males on part-time contracts (+21 percentage points). Part-time contracts for people with a sport and fitness occupation were significantly more prevalent for females than for males in 2023.

f) Workers with a sport and fitness occupation (ISCO 342) by professional status

This part of the analysis looks at the breakdown between those workers with a sport and fitness occupation who have employed status (both full-time and part-time) and those who are self-employed. Figure 40 shows the percentage shares of those workers who had employed and self-employed status.

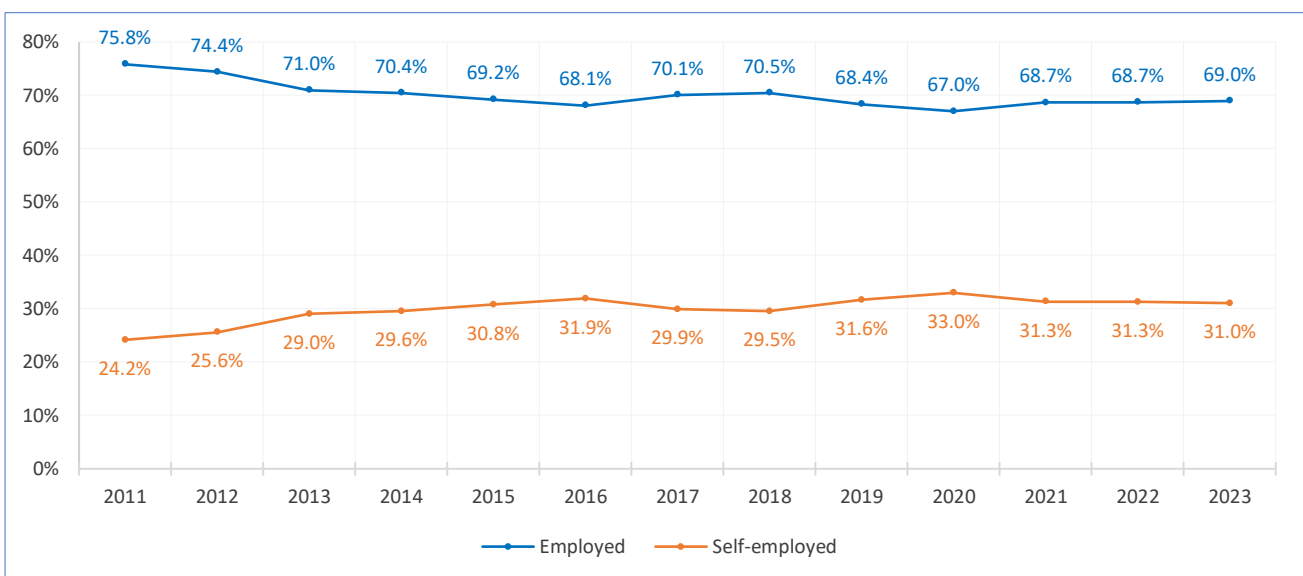


Figure 40: Workers with a sport and fitness occupation: percentage shares by professional status 2011-2023

Over the 13-year period, there was a clear trend in favour of the self-employed, reaching nearly one third of all workers with a sport and fitness occupation (31%) in 2023.

This was 8.1 percentage points higher compared to the percentage of self-employees engaged within the EU+UK total sport employment which suggests that in 2023 self-employment was more prevalent for sport and fitness workers than sport employment as a whole.

The period 2019-2020 showed an increase for the self-employed workers with a sport and fitness occupation (+1.4 percentage points) but 2020-2023 saw a loss (-2 percentage points). It is interesting to note that, like the decline in part-time contracts discussed in *Section e)* above, the increase in self-employed workers with a sport and fitness occupation began in 2018-2019 before the Covid pandemic.

Figure 41 shows the total actual numbers of workers with a sport occupation in the EU+UK by professional status (employed and self-employed).

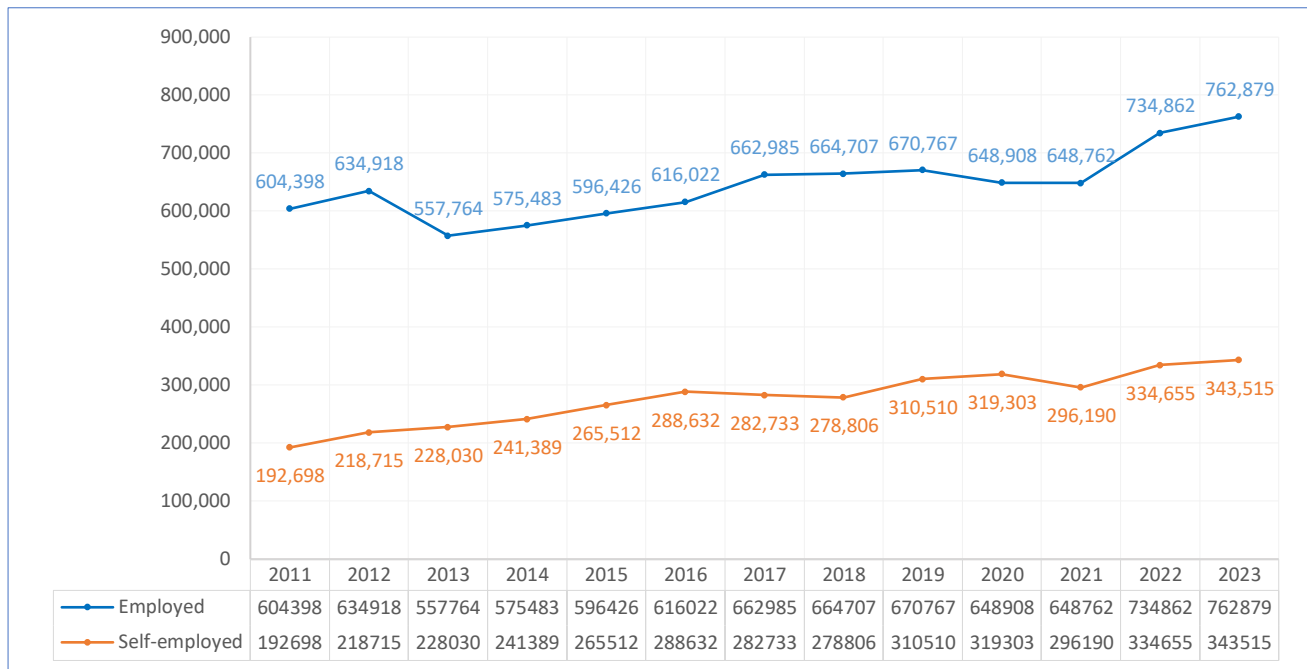


Figure 41: Workers with a sport and fitness occupation: actual numbers by professional status 2011-2023

By 2023, the sector had 762 879 employed and 343 515 self-employed. When we consider the growth trends, self-employed workers increased by 150 817 (+78.3%) compared to those employed, which increased by 158 481 (+26.2%) during the period from 2011 to 2023. Whereas the growth of self-employed workers flattened in the period from 2016 to 2018, a marked increase in growth by 64 709 (+23.2%) resumed in 2018-2023 despite a 7.2% dip in 2021.



Figure 42 shows the percentages of male and female workers with a sport and fitness occupation according to their professional status in the EU only (similar statistics are not available for the UK) in 2023.

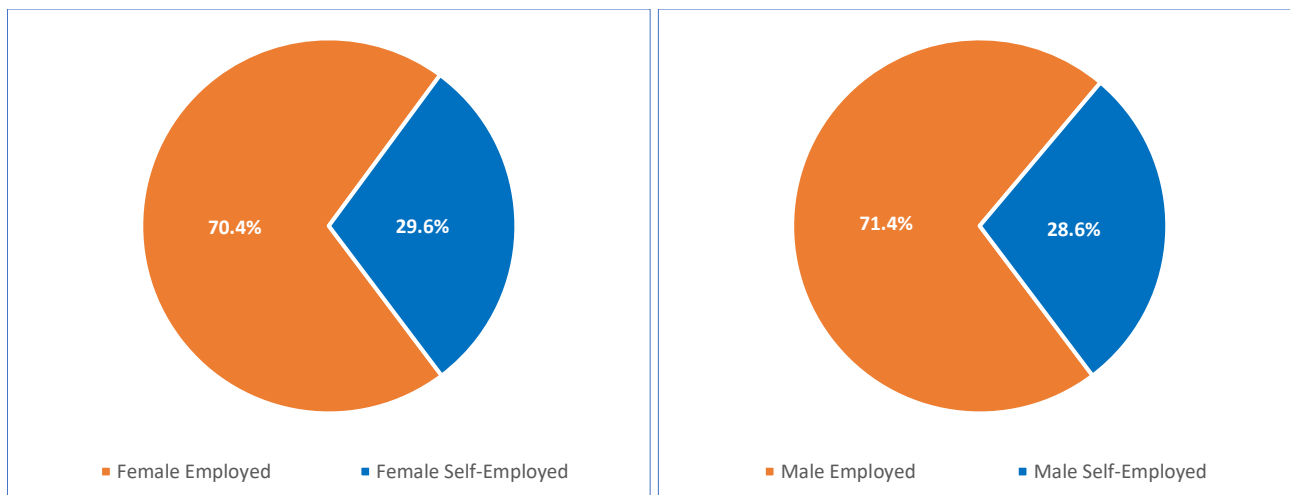


Figure 42: Workers with a sport and fitness occupation: percentages of females and males by professional status for EU

The differences of proportion between genders in relation to their professional status are minor, with female workers with a sport and fitness occupation being slightly more likely to be self-employed than male (+1 percentage point).

Figure 43 shows the percentages of self-employed workers with a sport and fitness occupation by age groups for the EU only (similar figures are not available for the UK).

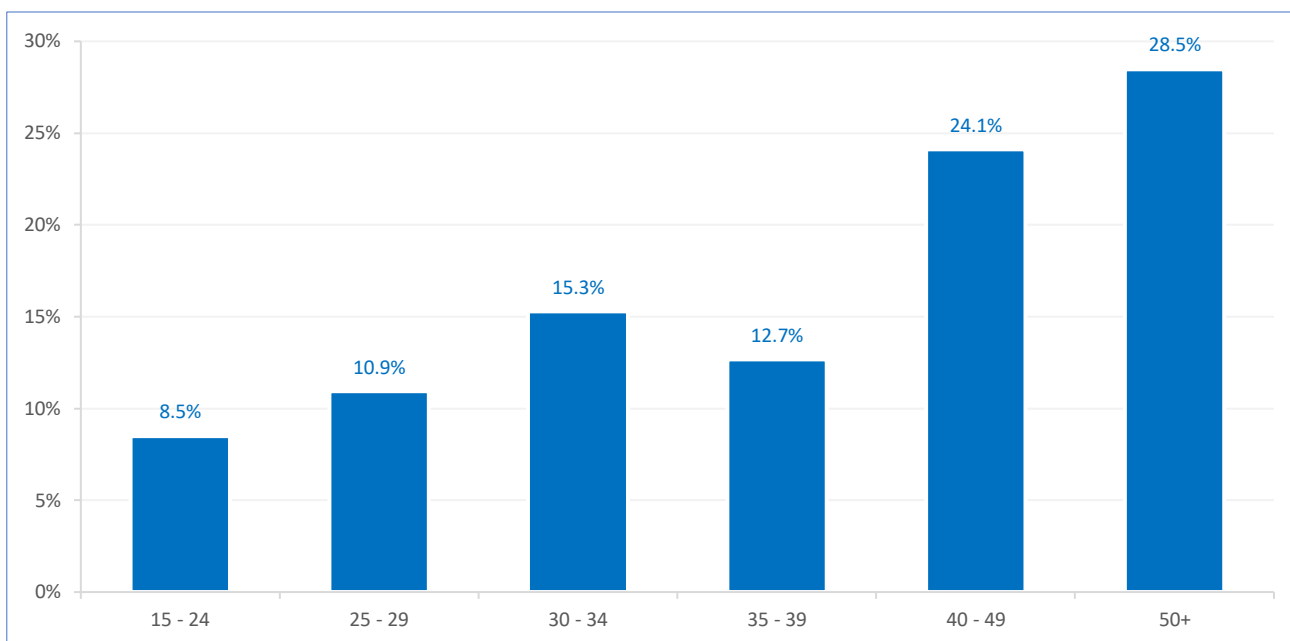


Figure 43: Workers with a sport and fitness occupation: percentages of self-employed by age for the EU only

This shows that 52.6% of those self-employed workers with a sport and fitness occupation were over 40 years of age which is 2.6 percentage points higher than similar findings for total sport employment in the EU+UK.

g) Distribution of workers with a sport and fitness occupation (ISCO 342) by specific occupation

From the available official statistics, it has been possible to break down the overall figure for ISCO 342 (workers with a sport and fitness occupation) into more specific occupations. Whereas the figures are not available for all countries, we can estimate percentages for the years 2019 and 2023. However, these numbers need to be carefully interpreted.

Figure 44 shows the breakdown of workers with a sport and fitness occupation into more specific occupational groups.

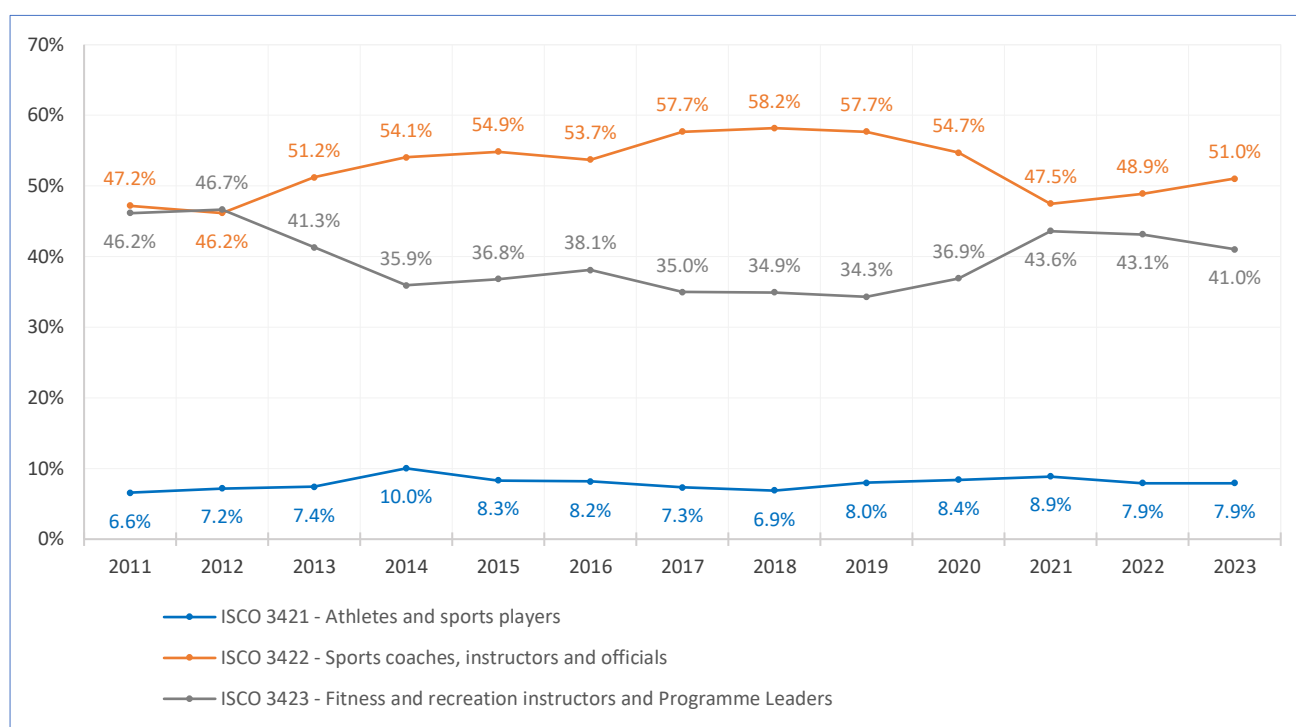


Figure 44: Workers with a sport and fitness occupation: percentage shares by type of occupation 2011-2023

Throughout the period from 2011 to 2019, the percentage share of fitness and recreation instructors and programme leaders (ISCO 3423) declined (-11.9 percentage points) whilst the share of sports coaches, instructors and officials (ISCO 3422) increased (+10.5 percentage points) with an increase in athletes and players by 1.4 percentage points (ISCO 3421).

The period 2019-2021 reversed this trend with an increase of fitness and recreation instructors and programme leaders (+9.3 percentage points) and a decrease in sports coaches, instructors and officials (-10.2 percentage points).

However, 2021-2023 then shows an increase in sports coaches, instructors and officials (+3.5 percentage points) and a decrease in fitness and recreation instructors and programme leaders (-2.6 percentage points). The percentage share of athletes and players also went down (-1 percentage points). It is important to note that these are percentage shares, not real numbers.

h) Workers with a sport and fitness occupation (ISCO 342) within and outside sport organisations (NACE 93.1)

Figure 45 shows the distribution of workers with a sport and fitness occupation in the EU+UK between sport organisations (NACE 93.1) and non-sport organisations (those not classified under NACE 93.1).

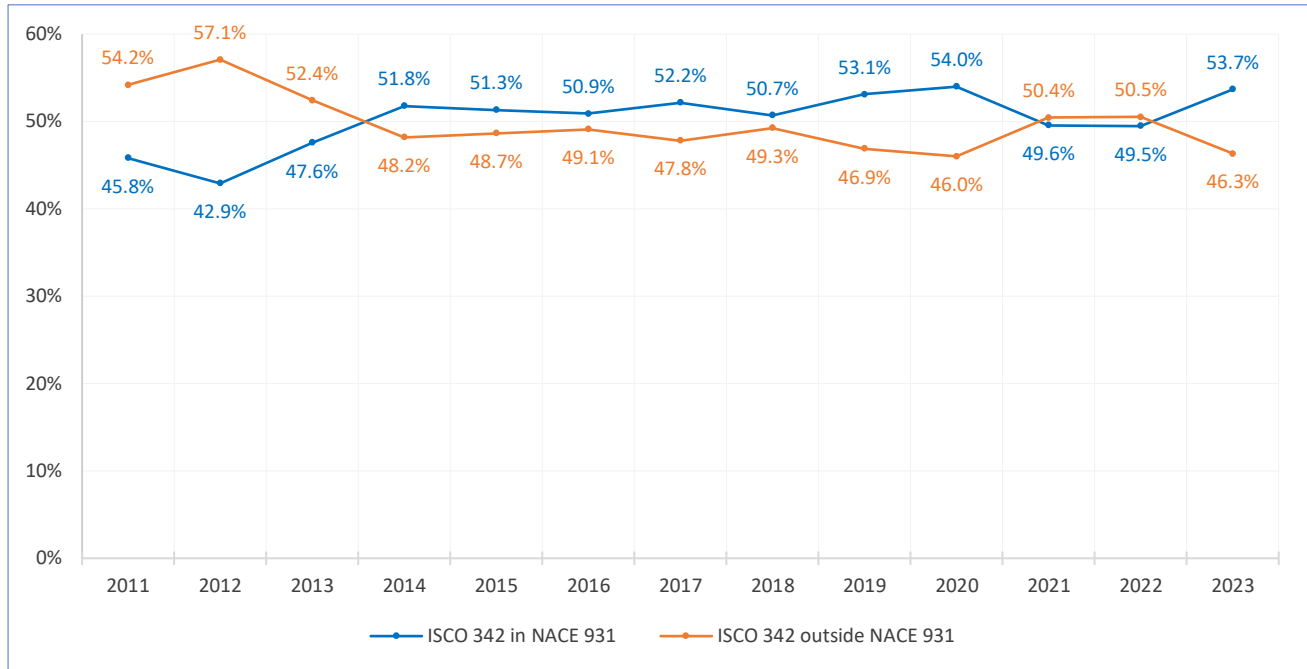


Figure 45: Workers with a sport and fitness occupation: percentage shares inside and outside sport organisations 2011-2023

In 2023, the majority workers with a sport and fitness occupation were employed in sport organisations (53.7%) such as sport federations, sport clubs, NOCs etc. This grew from 45.8% in 2011.

It is notable that in the period 2021-2022 the proportions were almost equal with an increase of workers with a sport and fitness occupation working in other types of organisations (non-sport), but 2022-2023 showed a significant increase in the percentage of those working in sport organisations (+4.2 percentage points) and a corresponding decrease in the percentage working outside sport organisations.



6

**PEOPLE EMPLOYED
IN SPORT
ORGANISATIONS
(NACE 93.1)
IN THE EU+UK**

6. PEOPLE EMPLOYED IN SPORT ORGANISATIONS (NACE 93.1) IN THE EU+UK

This section uses Eurostat and National Statistic Offices (NSO) figures for the period from 2011 to 2023 to estimate and breakdown the number of people employed in sport organisations (classified as NACE 93.1 – Sport Activities). NACE 93.1 is made up of the following (4 digits):

- 93.11 Operation of sports facilities
- 93.12 Activities of sport clubs
- 93.13 Fitness facilities
- 93.19 Other sports activities

By sport organisation we mean an organisation whose main business is the provision of sport (e.g., sport clubs, sport federations, fitness centres). The following figures include people working in a sport organisation and having a sport-specific occupation (e.g., a coach) OR a non-specific sport occupation (e.g., administrator or receptionist).

a) Total number of people employed in sport organisations (NACE.93.1)

Figure 46 shows the total number of people employed in organisations whose main business is sport (NACE 93.1).

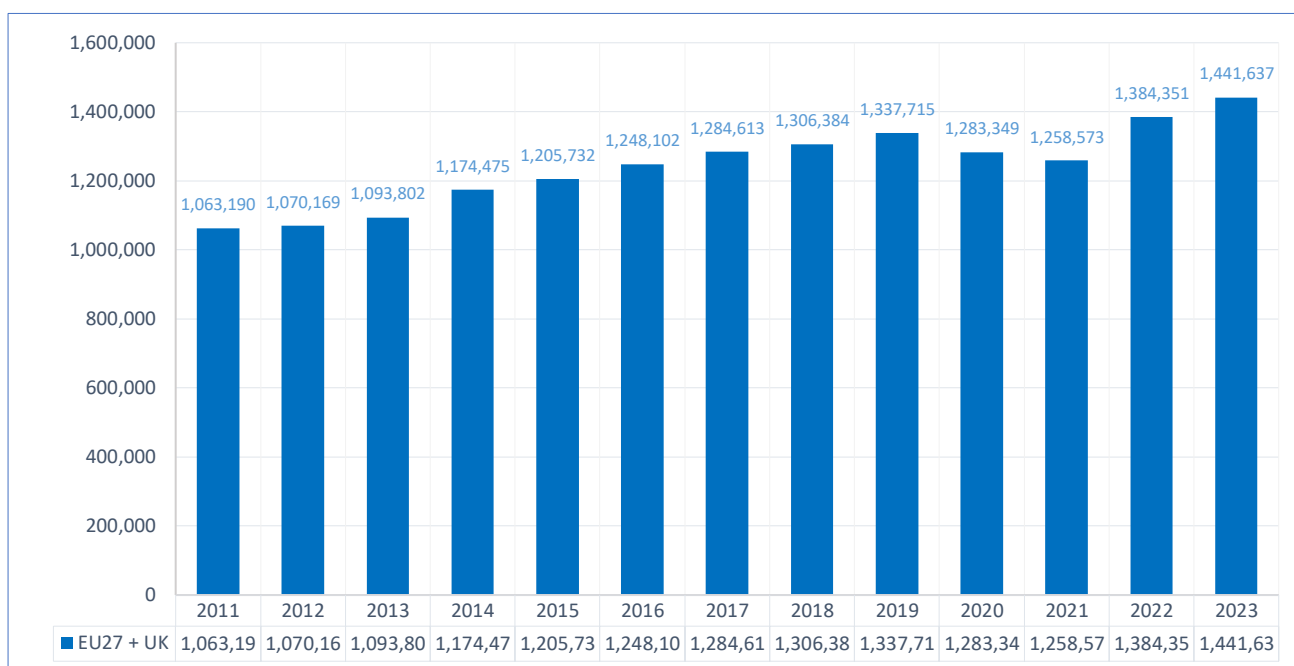


Figure 46: Total number of people employed in sport organisations 2011-2023

In 2023, the total number of people employed in sport organisations was 1 441 637. This represented 73.6% of the total sport employment and a growth of 35.6% since 2011. Despite the decline during the Covid period of 2019-2020, there was an overall upward trend over the period from 2011 to 2023.

From 2011 to 2019, we can see uninterrupted growth (+25.8%) of people employed in sport organisations but it was lower than the growth in total sport employment (+30.8%). The period from 2019 to 2020 saw a fall of 54 336 positions (-4.1%), a downward trend which continued into 2021. This was marginally higher than the decline in total sport employment in the same period (-3.7%). However, 2020-2023 then saw a growth of 158 288 positions (+12.3%).

Figure 47 shows the actual numbers of people employed in sport organisations for the years 2019, 2022 and 2023 by country.

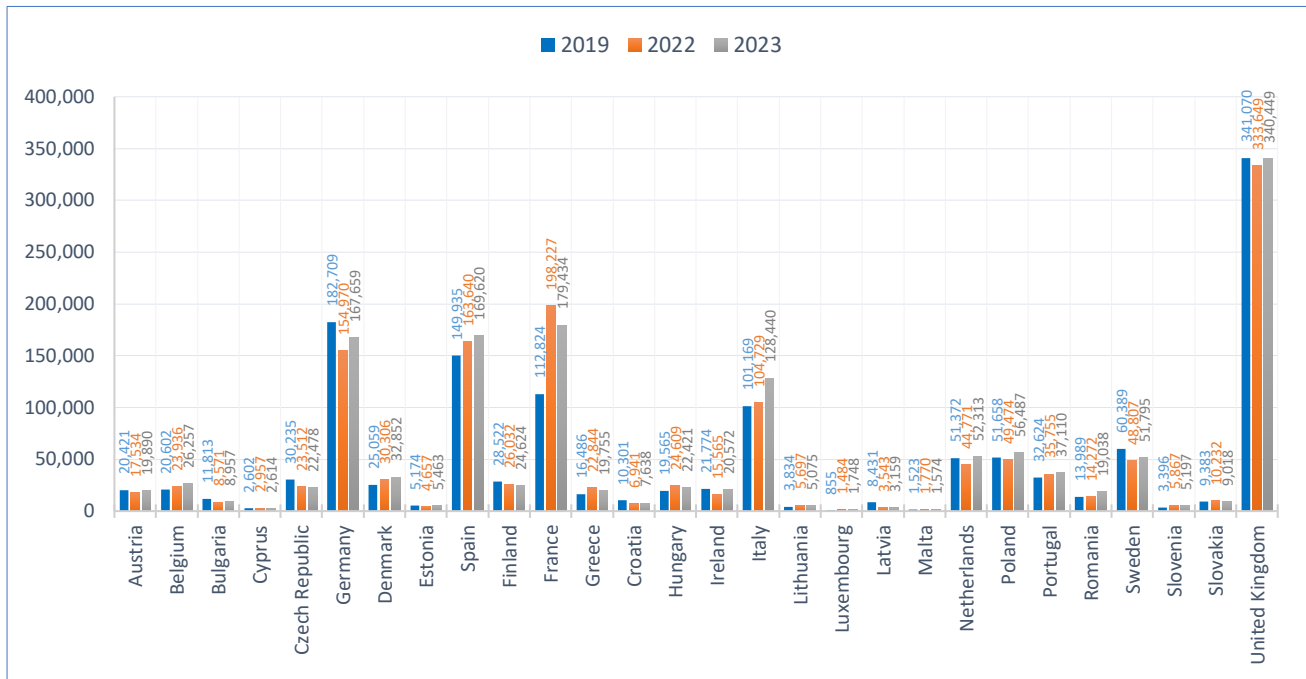


Figure 47: Total numbers of people employed in sport organisations for each country in 2019, 2022 and 2023

The four countries with the largest numbers in 2023 were the UK with 340 449 (23.6% of those working in sport organisations for the EU+UK), France with 179 434 (12.5%), Spain with 169 620 (11.8%) and Germany with 167 659 (11.6%).

The UK and Germany both experienced a decline of people employed in sport organisations in the period from 2019 to 2022. By 2023, the UK had almost returned to the 2019 number whilst Germany had not. France saw a remarkable growth of 76.2% in 2019-2022 (but this may be partly explained by definitional changes by the French statistical office) but then fell back by -9.5%.

Those with the smallest numbers employed in sport organisations were Malta (1 574), Luxembourg (1 748), Cyprus (2 614) and Latvia (3 159).



Figure 48 shows positive and negative growth for people employed in sport organisations for the years 2019 and 2023.

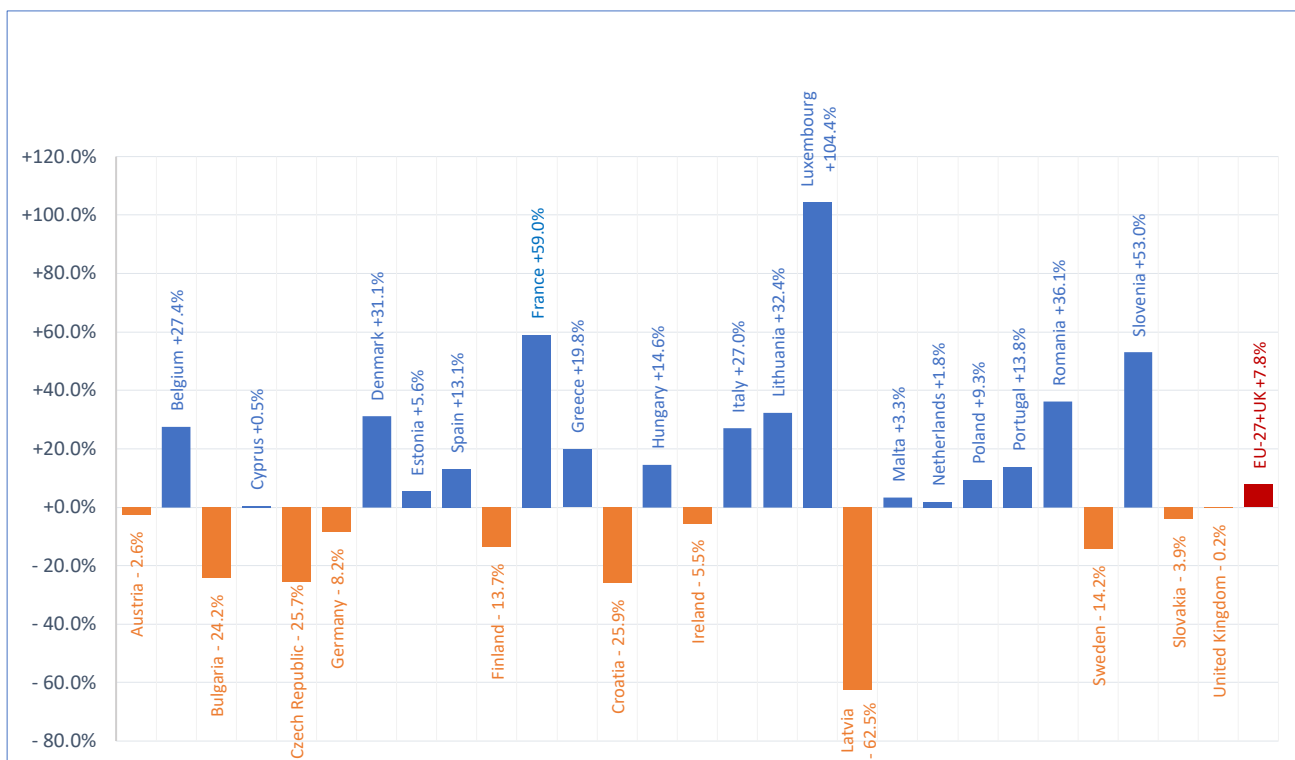


Figure 48: Positive and negative growth for people employed in sport organisations for each country 2019 and 2023

In total, 17 countries were showing positive growth during that period with the remaining 11 countries showing negative growth. The four countries with the strongest growth were Luxembourg (+104.4%), France (+59%), Slovenia (+53%) and Romania (+36.1%). Those with the greatest negative growth were Latvia (-62.5%), Croatia (-25.9%), Czech Republic (-25.7%) and Bulgaria (-24.2%). The average for all countries in the EU+UK is +7.8%. However, it should be noted that some of these countries have quite small numbers of people in sport employment and small changes in real numbers can result in large percentage changes.

b) People employed in sport organisations (NACE 93.1) by gender

Figure 49 shows the percentage shares of females and males employed in sport organisations in EU+UK over the 13-year period from 2011 to 2023.

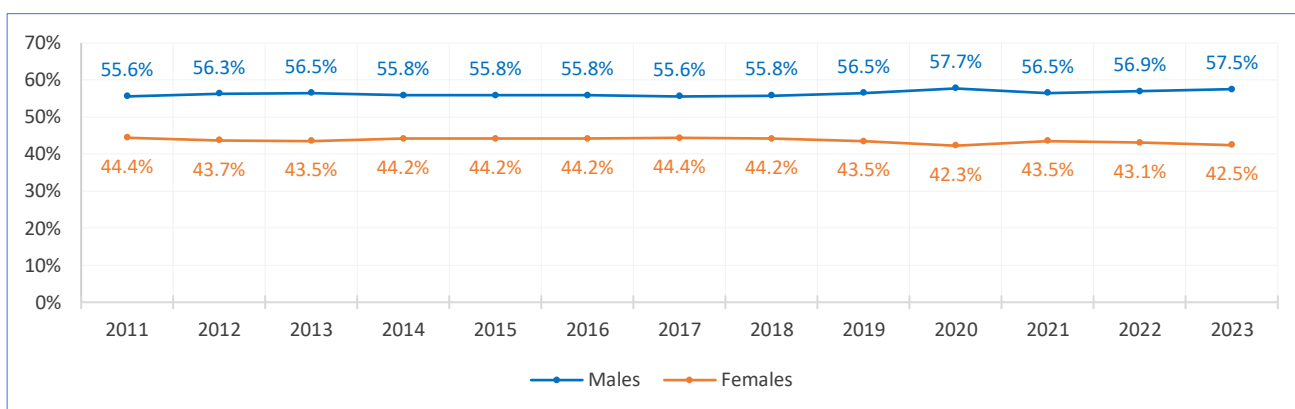


Figure 49: People employed in sport organisations: percentage shares by gender 2011-2023

In 2023, those employed in sport organisations were more likely to be male (57.5%) than female (42.5%). The gap between males and females in sport organisations was greater than that in the total sport employment (55% male, 45% female). The gap was relatively stable up to 2019 (+9 percentage points in favour of males) but by 2023 had widened to 15 percentage points.

Figure 50 shows the total numbers of people employed in sport organisations in EU+UK by gender over the period from 2011 to 2023.

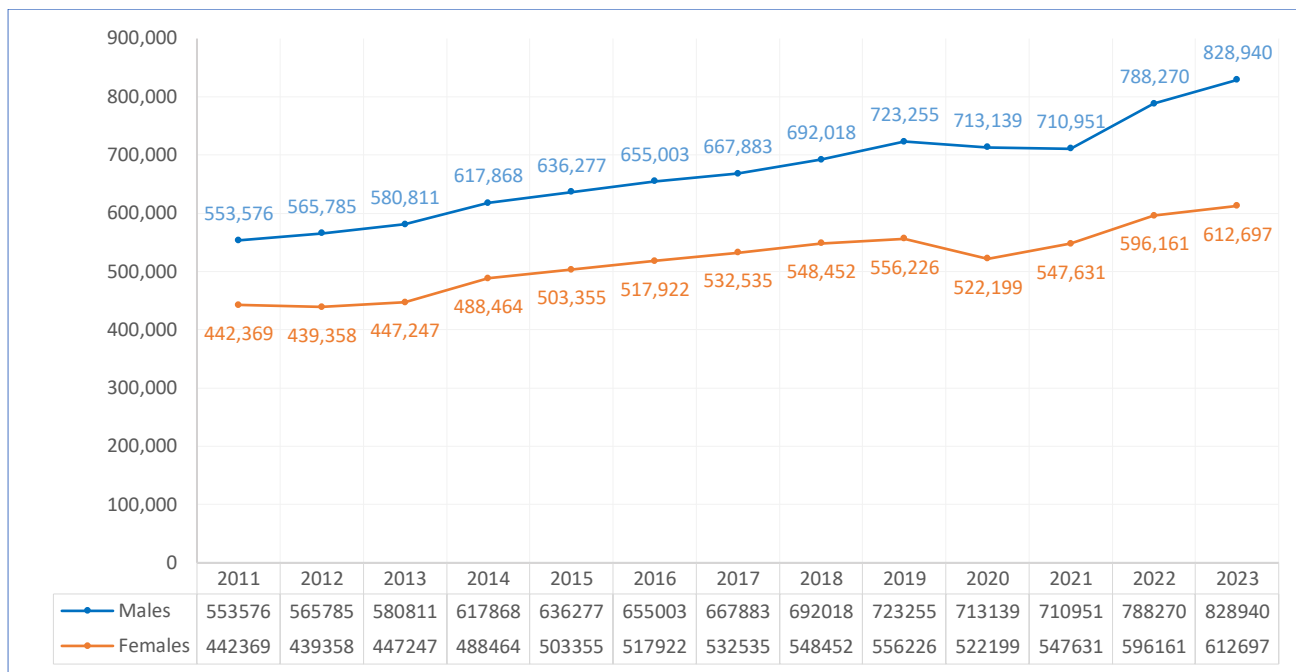


Figure 50: People employed in sport organisations: percentage shares by gender 2011-2023

From 2011 to 2023, the growth in the number of females working in sport organisations in EU+UK was 170 328 (+38.5%) which was higher by 13.6 percentage points than female growth in the total sport employment (+24.9%). This suggests that whereas more women were entering the total sport employment, a significant growth took place in those employed in sport organisations (NACE 93.1). By comparison, there was a growth of +49.7% in males employed in sport organisations.

In 2019-2020, the number of female workers went down by 34 027 (-6.1%) compared to the number of men (-1.4%). However, 2020-2023 showed growth in female employment in sport organisations by 90 498 (+17.3%). By comparison, the numbers of males increased by +16.2% which suggests a marginal improvement in female employment in sport organisations during this period.



c) People employed in sport organisations (NACE 93.1) by age band

Figure 51 shows the percentage breakdown of people employed in sport organisations by age bands. These are the age bands used by Eurostat.

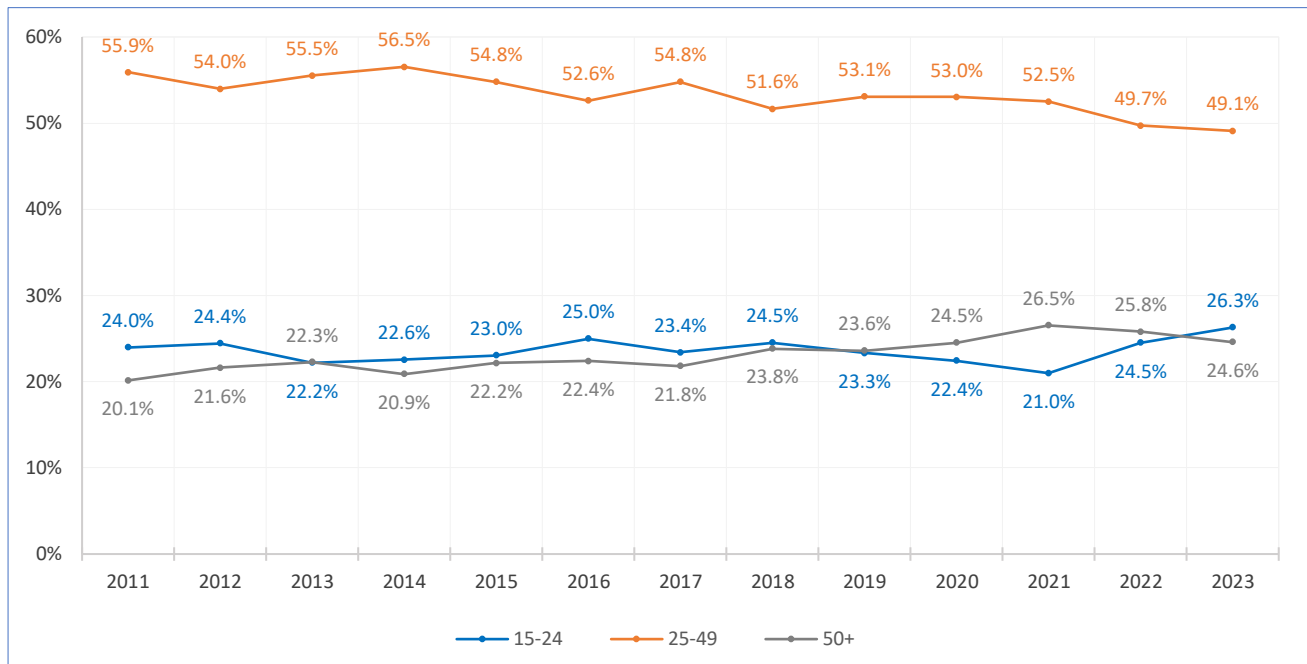


Figure 51: People employed in sport organisations: percentage shares by age bands 2011-2023

In 2023, the majority of people employed in sport organisations in EU+UK were in the 25-49 age group (49.1%) which was similar to the EU+UK total sport employment. 26.3% were aged 15-24 and 24.6% were aged 50+.

The trend over the last 13 years was for the middle age group to decrease, and the younger and older age groups to marginally increase. The distribution of age groups amongst those employed in sport organisations and its evolution since 2011 was very similar to the distribution and evolution of age groups for the EU+UK total sport employment.

It is notable that there was a sharp decline in the employment of younger workers in sport organisations in the period 2019-2021 (-2.3 percentage points) followed by a recovery (+5.3 percentage points) in 2021-2023. In fact, by 2023, the share of younger workers in sport organisations exceeded the previous high point of 2016.



Figure 52 shows the total numbers of people employed in sport organisations in EU+UK by age band over the period from 2011 to 2023.

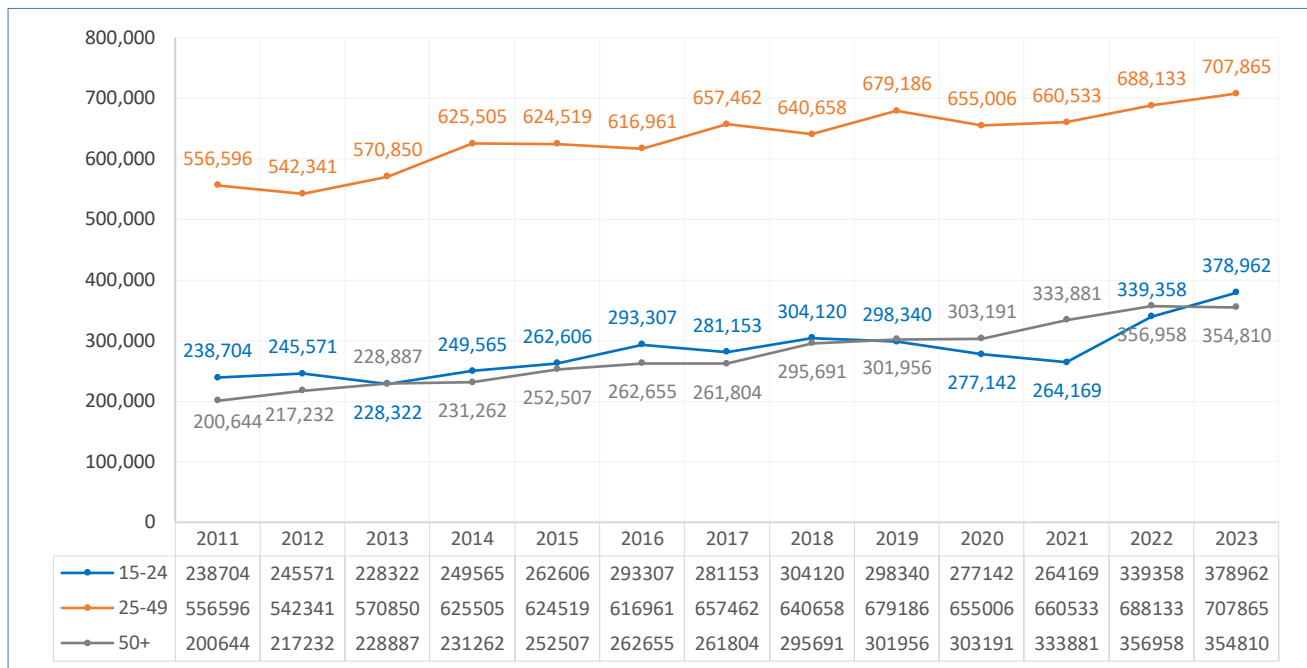


Figure 52: People employed in sport organisations: actual numbers by age bands 2011-2023

Up to 2019, the growth of people employed in sport organisations in the older age group (+50.5%) was two times greater than that for the younger group (+25.0%) and more than twice that of the middle age band (+22.0%) so there was a tendency in the direction of an aging workforce for those employed in sport organisations in EU+UK. The period 2019-2021 showed a drop in younger workers of 34 171 (-11.5%) whereas the older age group showed an increase of 31 925 (+10.6%). Those in the middle age group declined (-3.6%).

The period 2021-2023 showed a continued slight growth in the older age group, a slight rise in the middle age group and a significant uptick in the younger age group of 114 793 (+43.5%).

Figure 53 below shows the distribution of age groups across male and female workers for the EU only (similar figures for the UK are not available) in 2023.

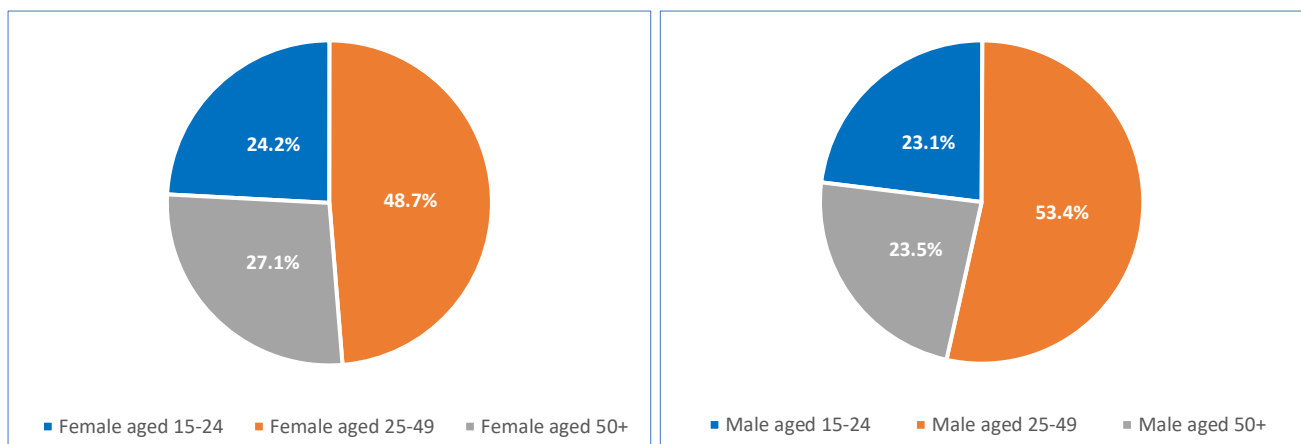


Figure 53: People employed in sport organisations: percentages of males and females by age groups in the EU only

In terms of proportion, females employed in sport organisations were slightly more strongly represented in the 15-24 age group (+1.1 percentage points) and more in the 50+ age group (+3.6 pp) but males were in the majority in the 25-49 age group where they had a +4.7 percentage point lead over females in 2023.

d) People employed in sport organisations (NACE 93.1) by level of education

Figure 54 shows the percentages of people working in sport organisations by level of education.

The levels here are those taken from UNESCO’s International Classification of Education (ISCED) which align fairly closely with the levels used in the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

	ISCED 2011 (data from 2014 onwards)	ISCED 1997 (data up to 2013)
Low education	Levels 0-2	Levels 0-2
Medium education	Levels 3-4	Levels 3-4
High education	Levels 5-8	Levels 5-6

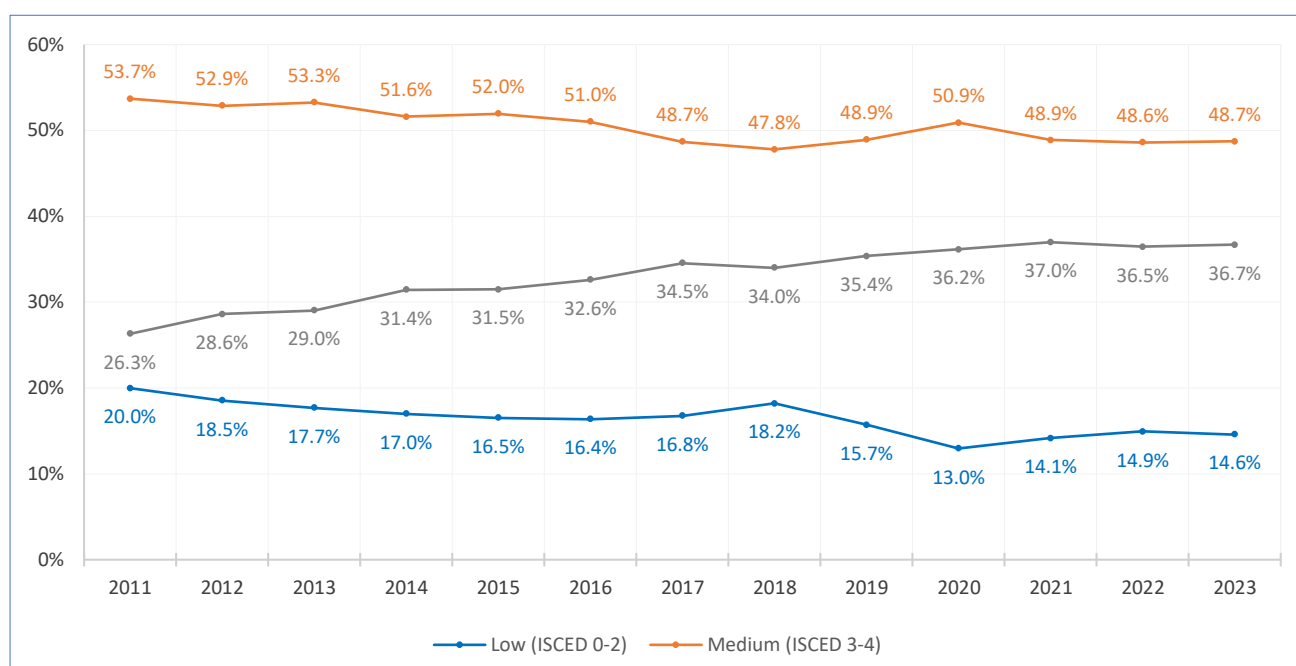


Figure 54: People employed in sport organisations: percentage share by age bands 2011-2023

In 2023, the greatest proportion of people employed in sport organisations had a middle education level (48.7%). This declined from 53.7% in 2011. Those with higher level qualifications increased from 26.3% in 2011 to 36.7% in 2023. Those with low level qualifications declined from 20% in 2011 to 14.6% in 2023.

In 2020 (the Covid period), the share of those employed in sport organisations with high level qualifications went up (+0.7 percentage points) and the share of those with low level qualifications declined (-2.7 percentage points). The share of those with middle level qualifications went up by +2.0 percentage points.

However, in the period 2020-2023 the share of those with low level qualifications recovered by 1.6 percentage points.

Figure 55 shows the actual numbers of people employed in sport organisations in EU+UK by level of education over the period from 2011 to 2023.

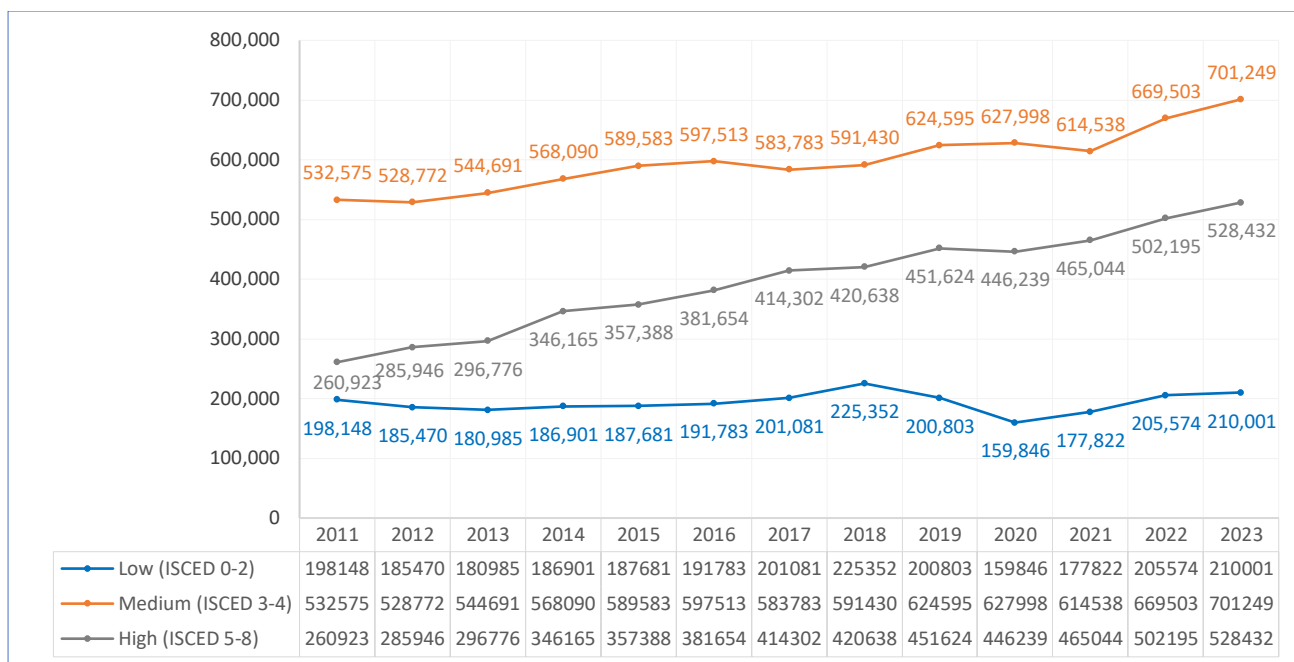


Figure 55: People employed in sport organisations: actual numbers by level of education 2011-2023

As we have seen earlier with total EU+UK sport employment, the greatest growth from 2011 to 2023 was in the high education group which grew by 267 509 workers (+102.5%). Those with middle level qualifications increased by 168 674 workers (+31.7%). In 2011-2023 those with low level qualifications has slightly increased by 7 426 workers (+6%).

e) People employed in sport organisations (NACE 93.1) by type of contract

Figure 56 shows the percentages of people employed in sport organisations by full- and part-time contracts.

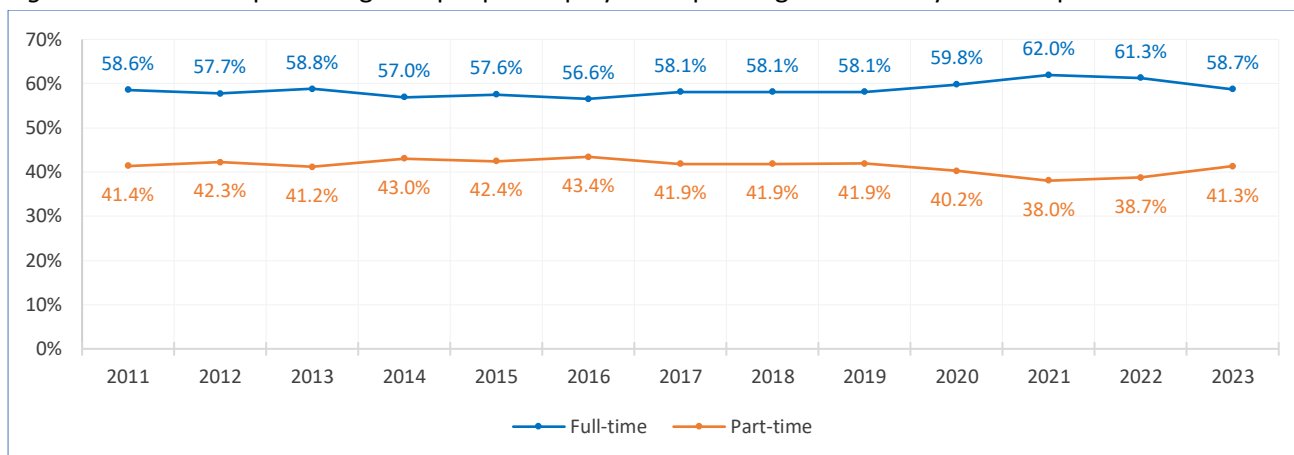


Figure 56: People employed in sport organisations: percentage shares by type of working contract 2011-2023

In 2023, 58.7% of those in employed in sport organisations were on full-time contracts and 41.3% were part-time. The proportion changed by only 0.1 percentage points over the 13-year period.

People employed in sport organisations were slightly less likely to be working on a part-time working contract compared to the EU+UK sport workforce as a whole (41.3% versus 43.2%) and even less likely than workers with a sport and fitness occupation (41.3% versus 47.4%).

In the period from 2011 to 2019, the proportions of full- and part-time contracts in sport organisations remained fairly stable. The period 2019-2021, however, showed a decline in part-time employment in this

group by 3.9 percentage points with a corresponding rise in full-timers. By 2023, there was a slight recovery in part-time employment by 3.3 percentage points. This may indicate a revival of part-time contracts in sport organisations in the post-pandemic period. It will be interesting to see if this trend continues when the statistics for 2024 become available.

Figure 57 shows the actual numbers of people employed in sport organisations in EU+UK by type of working contract over the period from 2011 to 2023.

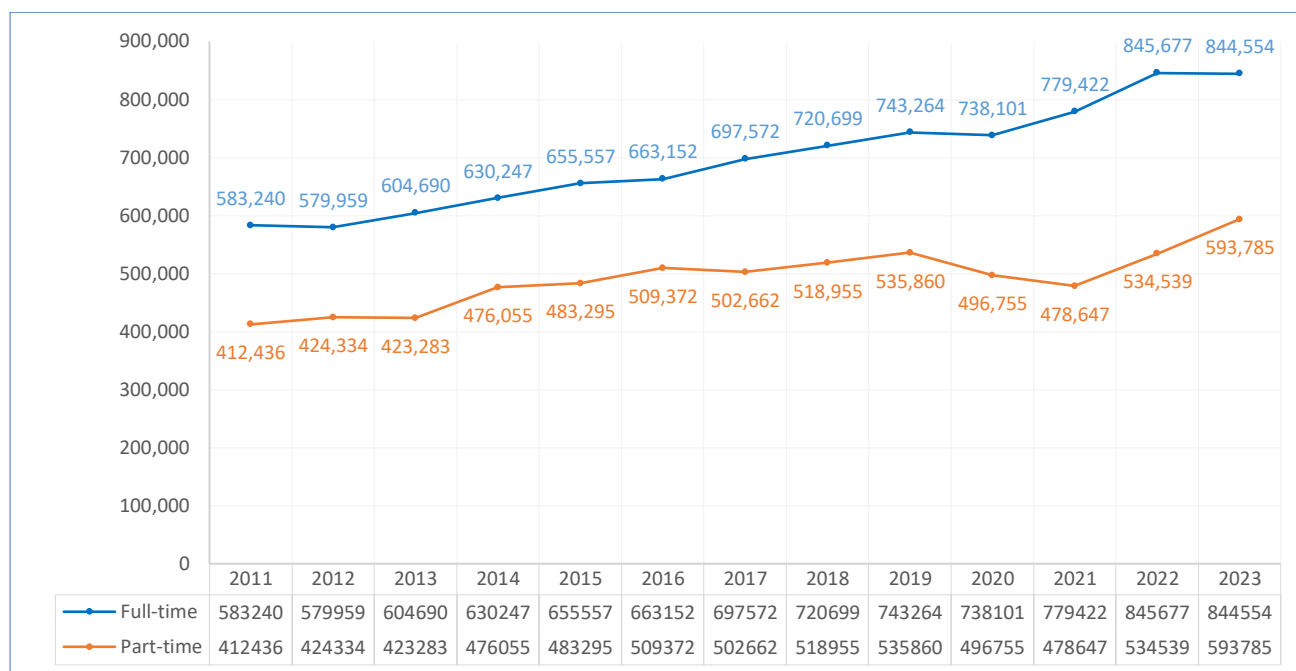


Figure 57: People employed in sport organisations: actual numbers by type of working contract 2011-2023

Up to 2019, the growth of people employed in sport organisations on part-time contracts was very similar to the growth of those working on full-time contracts (+29.9% for part-timers compared to +27.4% for full-timers).

The period 2019-2020, however, showed a decline of part-time workers in sport organisations by 39 105 (-7.3%) a trend which continued into 2021. This was greater than the decline in part-time workers in total sport employment (-6.2%) and was also greater than that for part-time contracts for workers with a sport and fitness occupation (-4.6%).

Full-time employment in sport organisations during this period showed a very slight increase but accelerated further in 2021.

The period 2020-2023 showed part-time employment in sport organisations increasing by 97 030 (+19.5%) with full-time employment rising by 106 453 (+14.4%).

There are also some interesting findings regarding the breakdown of full-time and part-time workers in sport organisations by gender.

Figure 58 shows the distribution of female and male workers in a sport organisation according to part-time and full-time contracts in 2023 for the EU only.

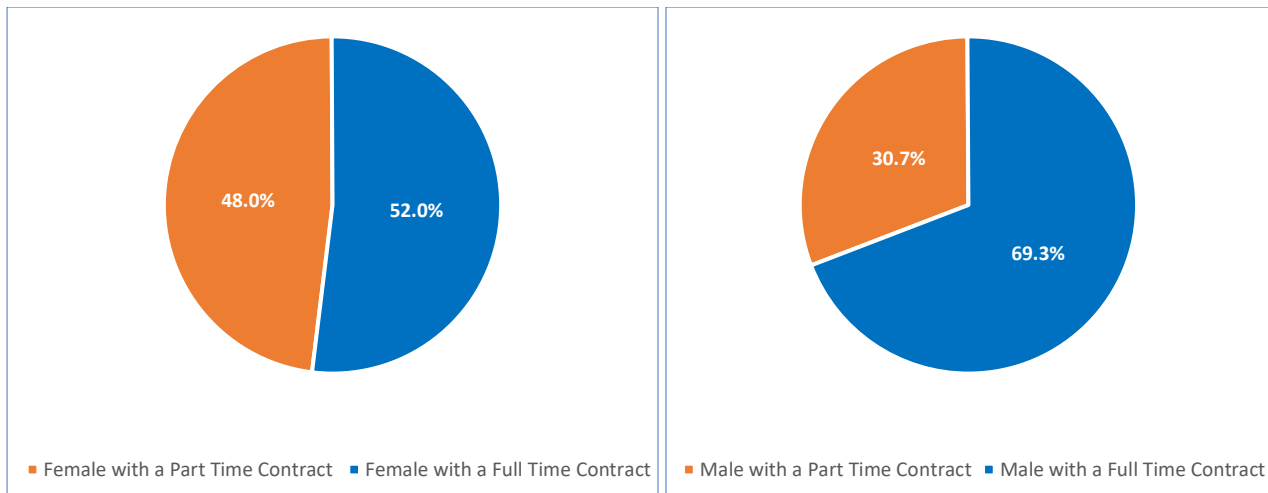


Figure 58: People employed in sport organisations: percentages of female and male full- and part-time contracts for EU only

In 2023, 48% of females employed in sport organisations were on part-time contracts compared to only 30.7% of males. Part-time working contract was by far more prevalent for females than for males employed in sport organisations in 2023.

f) People employed in sport organisations (NACE 93.1) by professional status

This part of the analysis looks at the breakdown between people in sport organisations who have employed status (both full-time and part-time) and those who are self-employed.

Figure 59 shows the percentages of people in sport organisations who had employed and self-employed status.

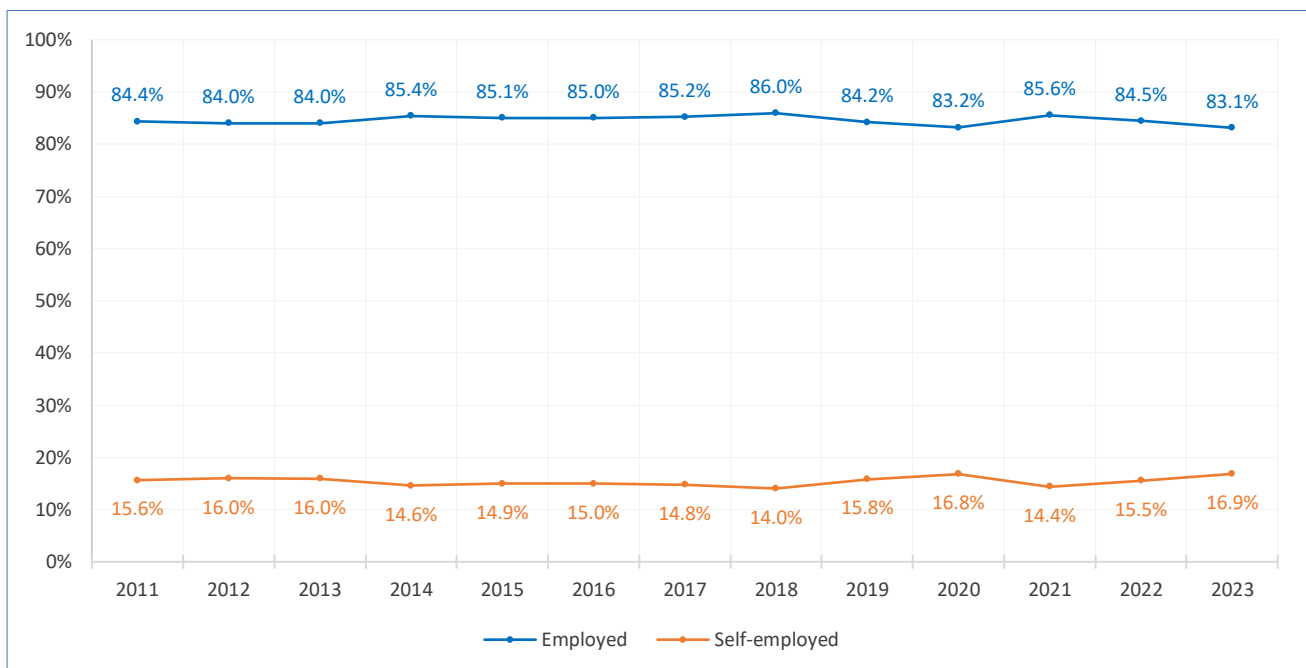


Figure 59: People employed in sport organisations: percentage shares by professional status 2011-2023

In 2023, 83.1% of this workforce were employed and 16.9% were self-employed. This has remained relatively static over the 13-year period. The level of self-employment in this group was smaller than that for the EU+UK total sport employment which stood at 22.2% in 2023.

Figure 60 shows the actual numbers of people employed in sport organisations in EU+UK by professional status over the period from 2011 to 2023.

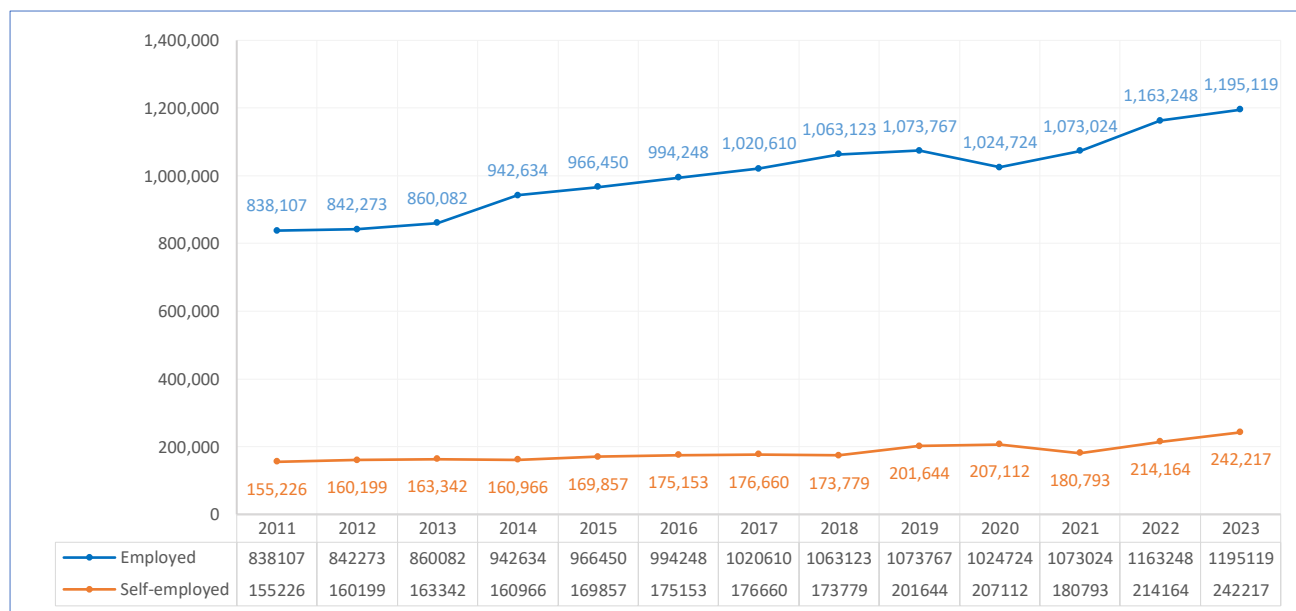


Figure 60: People employed in sport organisations: actual numbers by professional status 2011-2023

The total number of self-employed people in sport organisations in EU+UK grew by 86 991 (56%) over the 13-year period compared to a growth of 357 012 (42.6%) for employed status. People working in sport organisations more often had employed status compared to their counterparts in other types of organisations.

In the period 2019-2020, there was an increase in self-employed workers in sport organisations (+2.7%) which was followed by a decline (-12.7%) in 2021 and then a rise between 2021 and 2023 of +34%. 2023 saw the highest number of self-employed workers in this group in the whole 13-year period.

Figure 61 shows the proportions of male and female self-employed workers in sport organisations for the EU only (similar statistics are not available for the UK) in 2023.

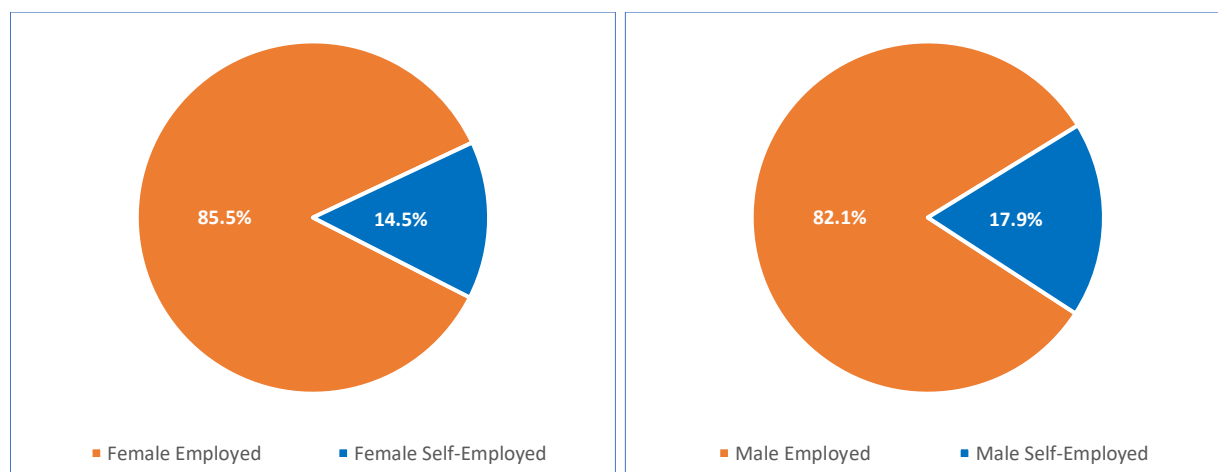


Figure 61: People employed in sport organisations: percentages of females and males by professional status for EU only

From the total number of females working in sport organisations in 2023, 14.5% of them were self-employed, whereas the percentage was 17.9% for males. Males employed in sport organisations were slightly more likely to be self-employed than females in 2023.

Figure 62 shows the percentages of self-employed people working in sport organisations by age groups for the EU (similar statistics are not available for the UK) in 2023.

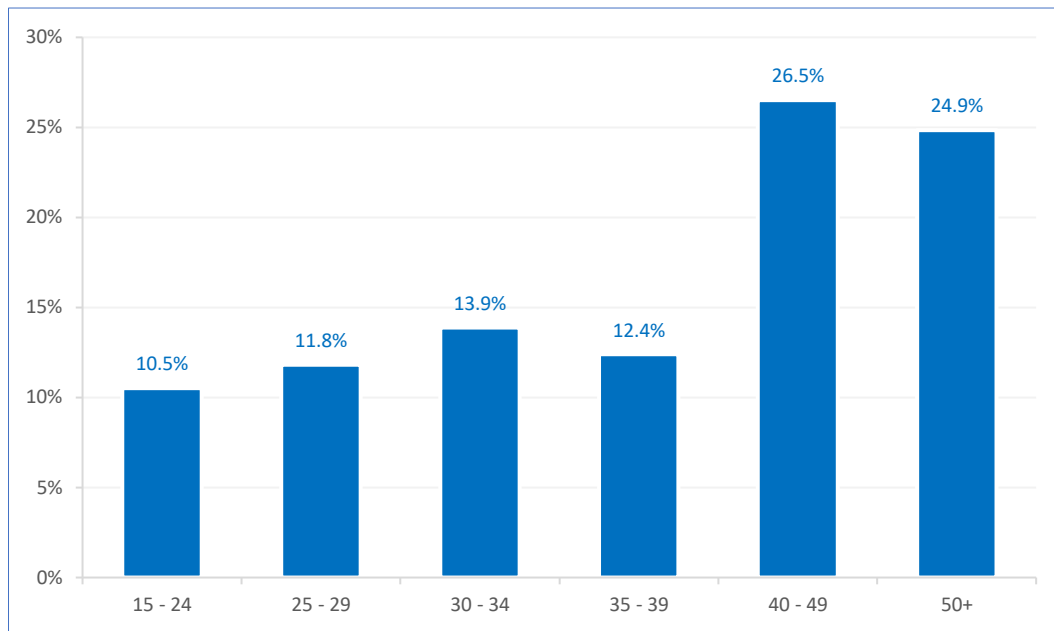


Figure 62: People in sport organisations: percentages of the self-employed by age groups for EU only

51.4% of people in sport organisations engaged as self-employed were aged over 40 years of age in 2023 which is 1.4 percentage points higher than similar findings for the EU+UK total sport employment.

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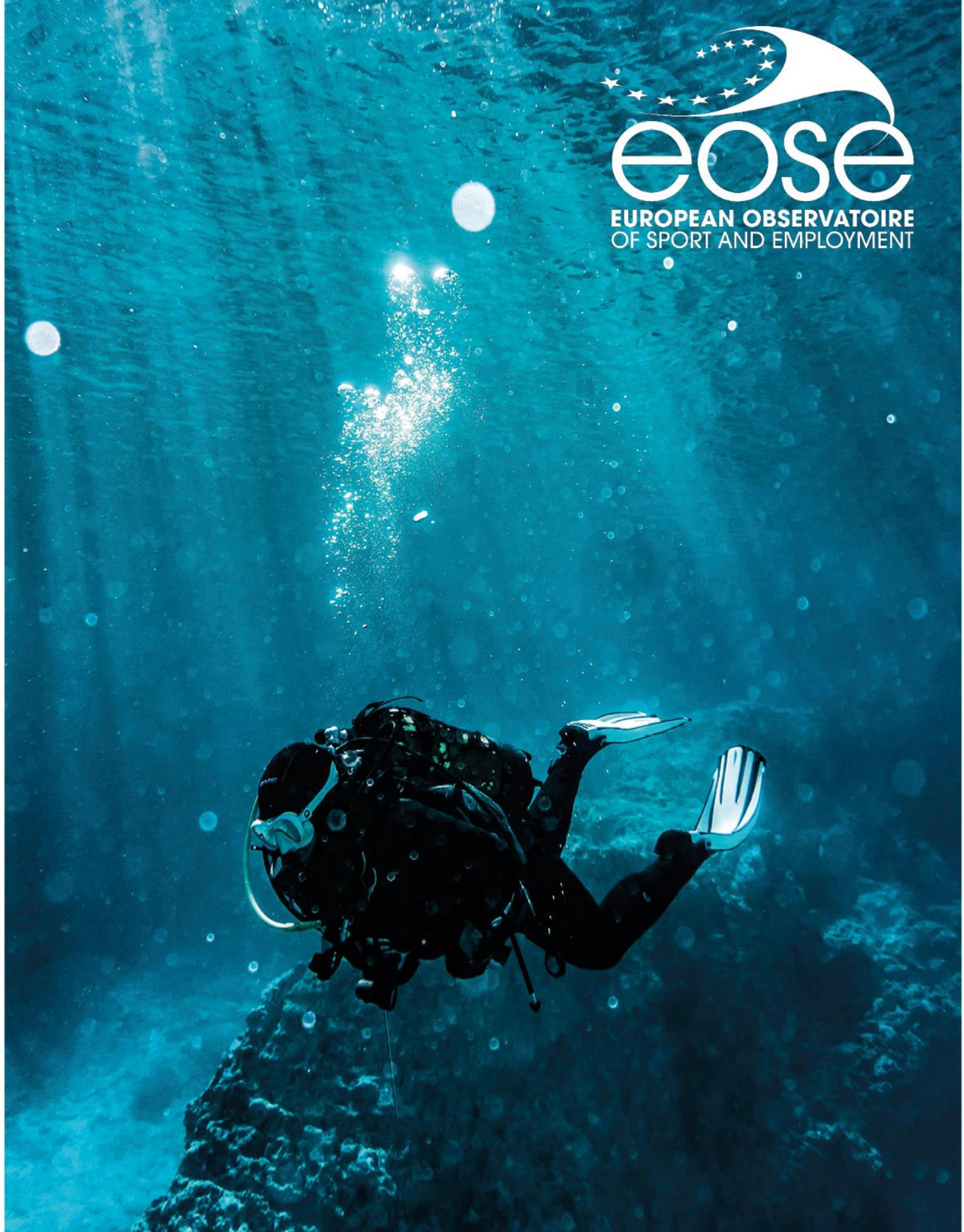
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