

THE EFFECT OF LOCKDOWN ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



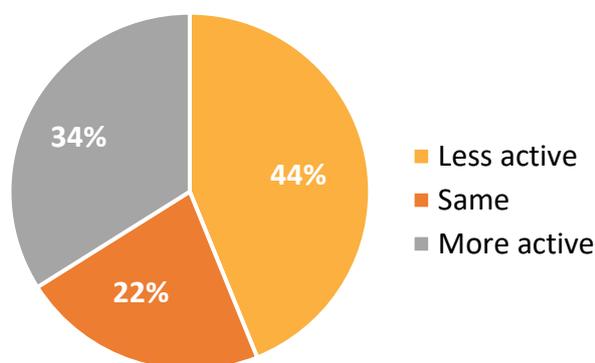
Written by *Supporting a healthy, active region.*

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The summary findings are representative of the genders, locations, age groups and ethnicities of the respondents. The results should be interpreted as a snapshot and are only indicative of intended behaviour.

1260 completed responses were analysed.

A larger proportion of respondents thought they had been less active during lockdown (Alert Levels 3 and 4) compared to their usual routine.



Factors that encouraged physical activity during lockdown:

- An excuse for leaving the house
- Increased flexibility in daily schedule
- Lack of traffic

Factors that discouraged physical activity during lockdown:

- Cancellation of organised sports and activities, closure of facilities (including playgrounds)
- Reduction of incidental physical activity (e.g. active commute)
- Decreased motivation, increased anxiety, loneliness and boredom with the limited options



While there were limitations in how people could be active, physical activity was an important part of people’s lockdown routine (for 82%) and they enjoyed being active differently and within their bubbles (for 71%). Being active with family members, around the home, and at no cost was a positive experience for most respondents. This experience may have increased desire for more flexible work schedules, better work/life balance and reduced extracurricular activities post-lockdown to maintain some free time.

80% of respondents were looking forward to returning to previous ways of being physically active once alert levels allowed. They were particularly interested in attending organised sports (50%), participating in active recreation (70.1%), re-joining team and group activities (71%), and going to the gym (25.5%) and pool (21.6%). Females were more likely to be hesitant, while young people, males, and New Zealand Europeans were more likely to have few or no barriers to returning to previous routines.

FACTORS THAT COULD PREVENT PARTICIPATION IN THE FUTURE

- Physical distancing and to hygiene standards were front of mind (although this has likely decreased during Alert Level 1). People were looking to providers and facilities to follow rules and enforce them.
- Fear of a second outbreak – this would likely lead to individuals avoiding some physical activity practices or locations (e.g. team or combat sports, gyms, pools) as soon as there might be new cases. This could mean fluctuating participation levels over the next few months.
- Lack of free time with the return to work and school – this is now perceived as a bigger issue after the increased flexibility of lockdown.
- Cost and value for money are an increased concern for many individuals and will likely remain an issue for the short term due to loss of income, lower disposable income, changing priorities, etc.

Common barriers to return to physical activity routines

