

# RESEARCH SUMMARY

## PARTICIPATION OF AUSTRALIAN WOMEN AND GIRLS IN TRADITIONALLY MALE- DOMINATED SPORTS 2016-2018

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## Background

There have been increased opportunities for women and girls to play male-dominated sports. However, we do not know the impact of these opportunities on participation rates.

## Aim

To investigate the changing sport participation trends of women and girls, and in particular the increasing rates of participation in traditional male-dominated sports

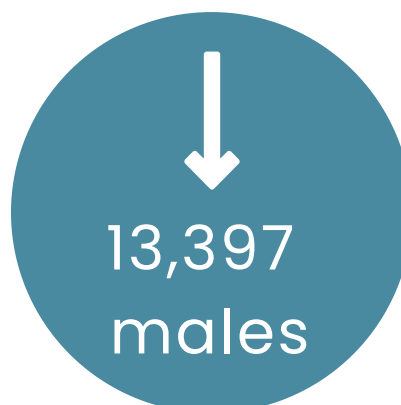
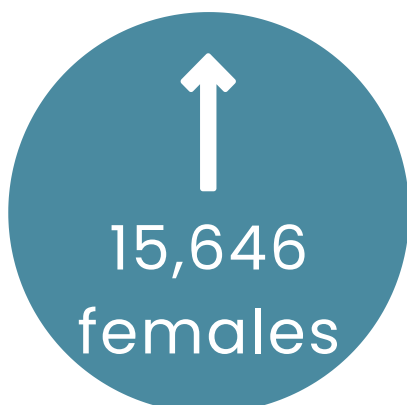
## Methods

Australian community-level registered sport participant data from five sports (three male-dominated, one female-dominated, and one gender-neutral) was tracked over the three years 2016-2018.

**Increased participation for women/girls in male-dominated sports but their retention is much lower than boys/men.**

# Results: sport participation

- Over the 3 years (2016–2018), there was considerable increase in number of female participants. However, male participation decreased considerably.



- In year 1, women and girls playing in the male-dominated sports were most likely 'new' to sport and not transitioning from other sports.
- Of women and girls transitioning into male-dominated sports many come from playing female-only sport.
- Over the 3 years, there was increased participation for women/girls in male-dominated sports, but their retention was much lower than boys/men.
- In all 3 years, many women and girls transitioned from female-only sport to male-dominated sports, reflecting increased opportunities and choices. However, men and boys were more likely to be retained.

## Discussion

The transition trends of female participants suggest that:

- female-only sports should consider development and growth strategies to retain players and attract new ones,
- traditionally male-dominated sports should develop organizational capacity and address gender issues to accommodate for the growth of female participation, and prevent dropout.

More broadly, sport organizations should consider retention strategies across both genders and age groups, as male retention rates still remain higher than female retention rates, and there remains a large drop-off in participation during adolescence.

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