



2026

**PHYSICAL ACTIVITY COUNCIL'S
OVERVIEW REPORT ON
PARTICIPATION**

The Physical Activity Council's annual study tracking sports, fitness, and recreation participation
in the U.S.

Research Methodology

Participation Data

All participation statistics were derived from an annual online study focused on participation during the 2025 calendar year by Sports Marketing Surveys USA (SMS) A Buffalo Groupe Company. The participation questionnaire is a collaboration with the Physical Activity Council (PAC), comprised of eight sports industry associations. SMS retained Digital Research International (DRI) to program, field, and manage the survey.

Sample Specification

During 2025, a total of 18,000 online interviews were carried out with a nationwide sample of individuals from U.S. proprietary online panels representative of the U.S. population of people ages six and older. Strict quotas associated with gender, age, income, region, and ethnicity were followed to ensure a balanced sample.

The 2025 participation survey sample size of 18,000 completed interviews provides a high degree of statistical accuracy. All surveys are subject to some level of standard error—that is, the degree to which the results might differ from those obtained by a complete census of every person in America. A sport with a participation rate of five percent has a confidence interval of plus or minus 0.32 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.

A weighting technique was used to balance the data to reflect the total U.S. population ages six and above. The following variables were used: gender, age, income, ethnicity, household size, region, and population density. The total population figure used was 310,635,717 people aged 6 and older.

Activity reporting is based on a rolling 12-month participation rate. All charts represent data from U.S. population aged 6 and over, unless otherwise specified. If you have specific questions regarding the methodology, please contact Sports Marketing Surveys USA at info@sportsmarketingsurveysusa.com.

Please note that some information includes data that was collected during previous surveys, as some questions are not asked every year.



Research Methodology

Youth Interviews

All interviews of children under 13 were carried out following the guidelines set out in the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 (COPPA). No children were contacted directly. The panel is a balanced sample of households with children in each age group, but contact is always made through designated adult panelists. The adult panelist receives the survey invitation on behalf of a specified child, age six to 12, and they are asked to complete the survey together. Respondents ages 13 to 17 are contacted in a manner like respondents ages 6 to 12, but they are asked to complete the survey themselves.

Quality Assurance – Multiple levels:

- Respondents are prevented from taking the survey again within 3 months
- Our panel provider has a suite of technology platforms to prevent fraud
- Technical fingerprinting to eliminate duplicates
- LOI offense checking – eliminates “speeders”
- Pattern response checking
- Internal QA questions (e.g., colors of the American flag)
- Internal consistency checks (e.g., a limit on the number of total participation days)
- Open-end response quality algorithm
- Ongoing response visual checks

About the Physical Activity Council (PAC)

The survey that produces the data for the 2026 Physical Activity Council’s Overview Report is managed by Sports Marketing Surveys, USA, a Buffalo Groupe Company and hosted by the partnership of the Physical Activity Council (PAC). This partnership is made up of the leading organizations in U.S. sports, fitness, and leisure industries. While the overall aim of the survey is to establish levels of activity and identify key trends in sports, fitness, and recreation participation, each partner produces detailed reports on specific areas of interest. Partners include Health and Fitness Association (HFA); National Golf Foundation (NGF); Outdoor Industry Association (OIA); People for Bikes; Sport and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA); Snowsports Industries America (SIA); Tennis Industry Association (TIA); USA Football; and United States Tennis Association (USTA).

2020 to 2025 Activity Levels Among Americans

* Population Ages 6+



New Frequency Definitions

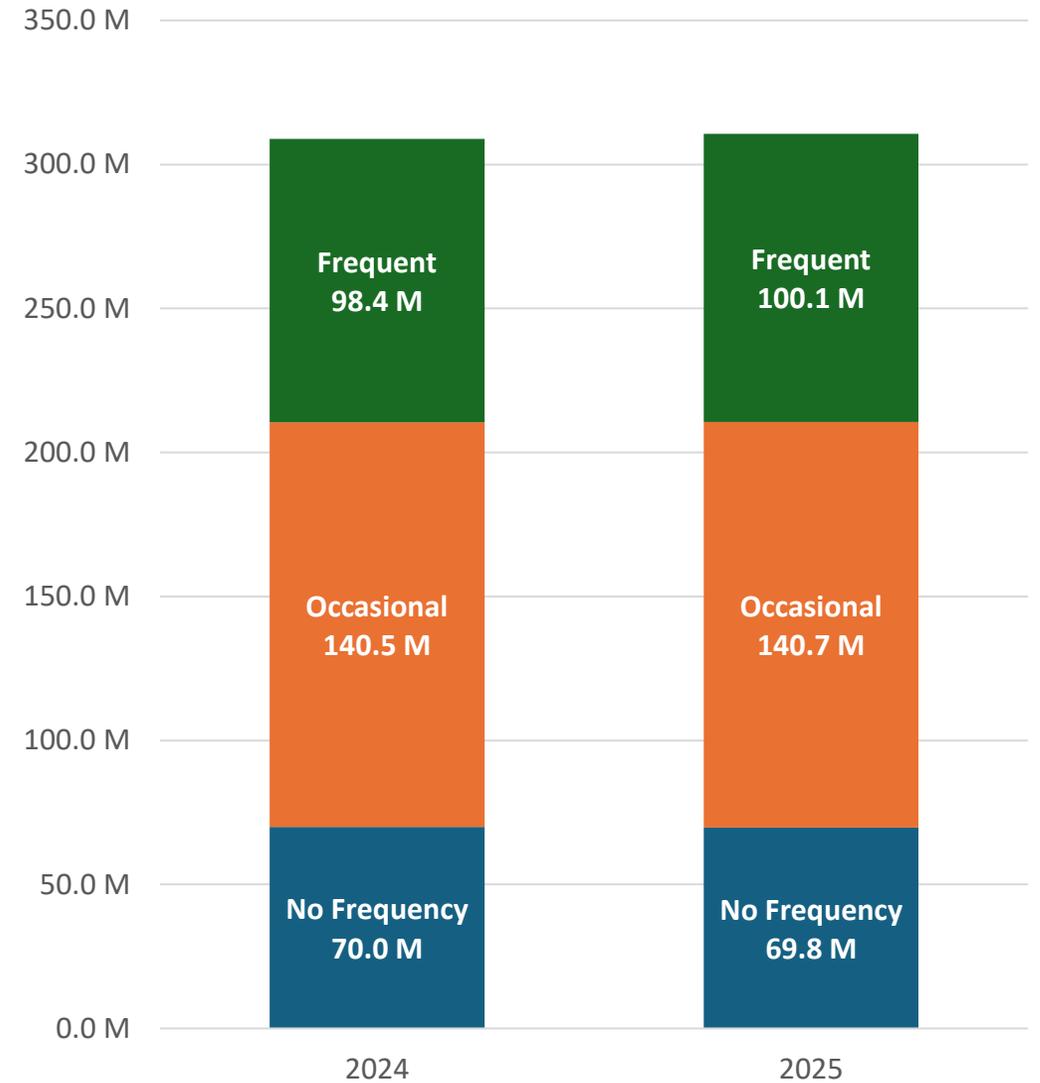
To better align with current CDC physical activity guidelines, new frequency categories have been established for 2024 and 2025. The new classifications are as follows:

- **No Frequency:** Defined as an individual who self-reports no participation in moderate or vigorous physical activity during the week.
- **Occasional Activity:** Defined as participation in moderate or vigorous activity fewer than 3 days per week, totaling less than 150 minutes.
- **Frequent Activity:** Defined as participation in moderate or vigorous activity at least 3 times per week, totaling 150 minutes or more.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Total Duration</u>
No Frequency	0 days	0 minutes
Occasional	< 3 days/week	< 150 minutes/week
Frequent	≥ 3 days/week	≥ 150 minutes/week

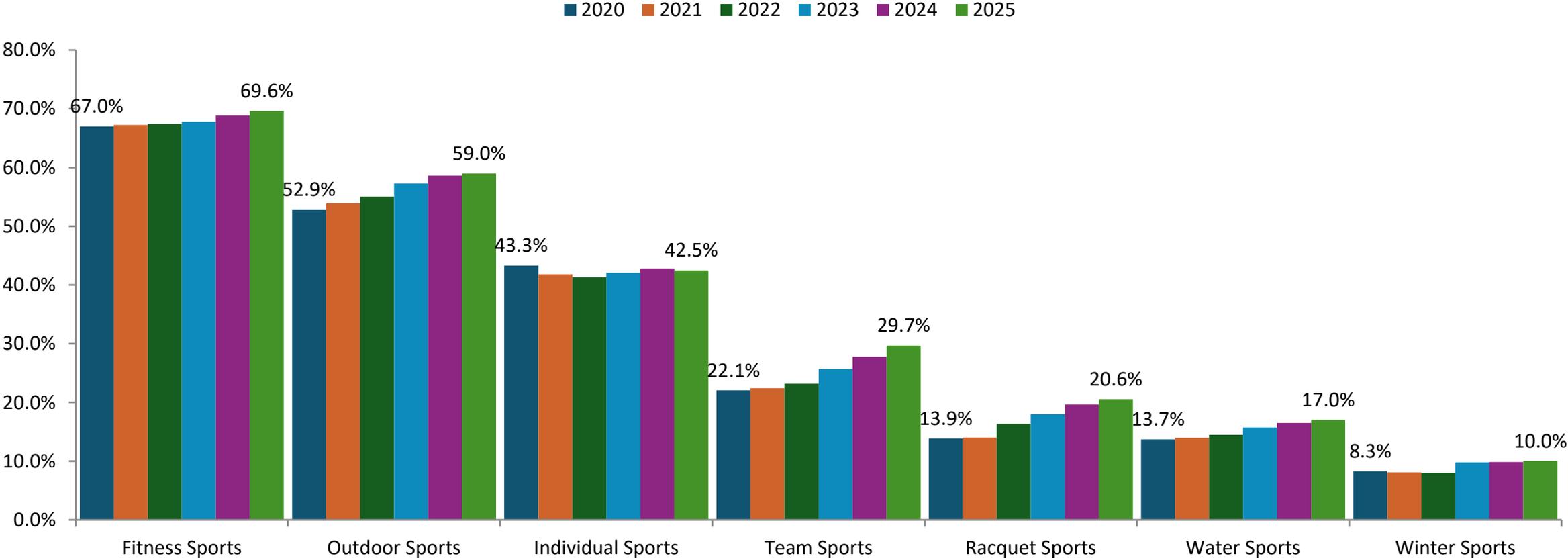
Activity by Frequency

*American Population Ages 6+



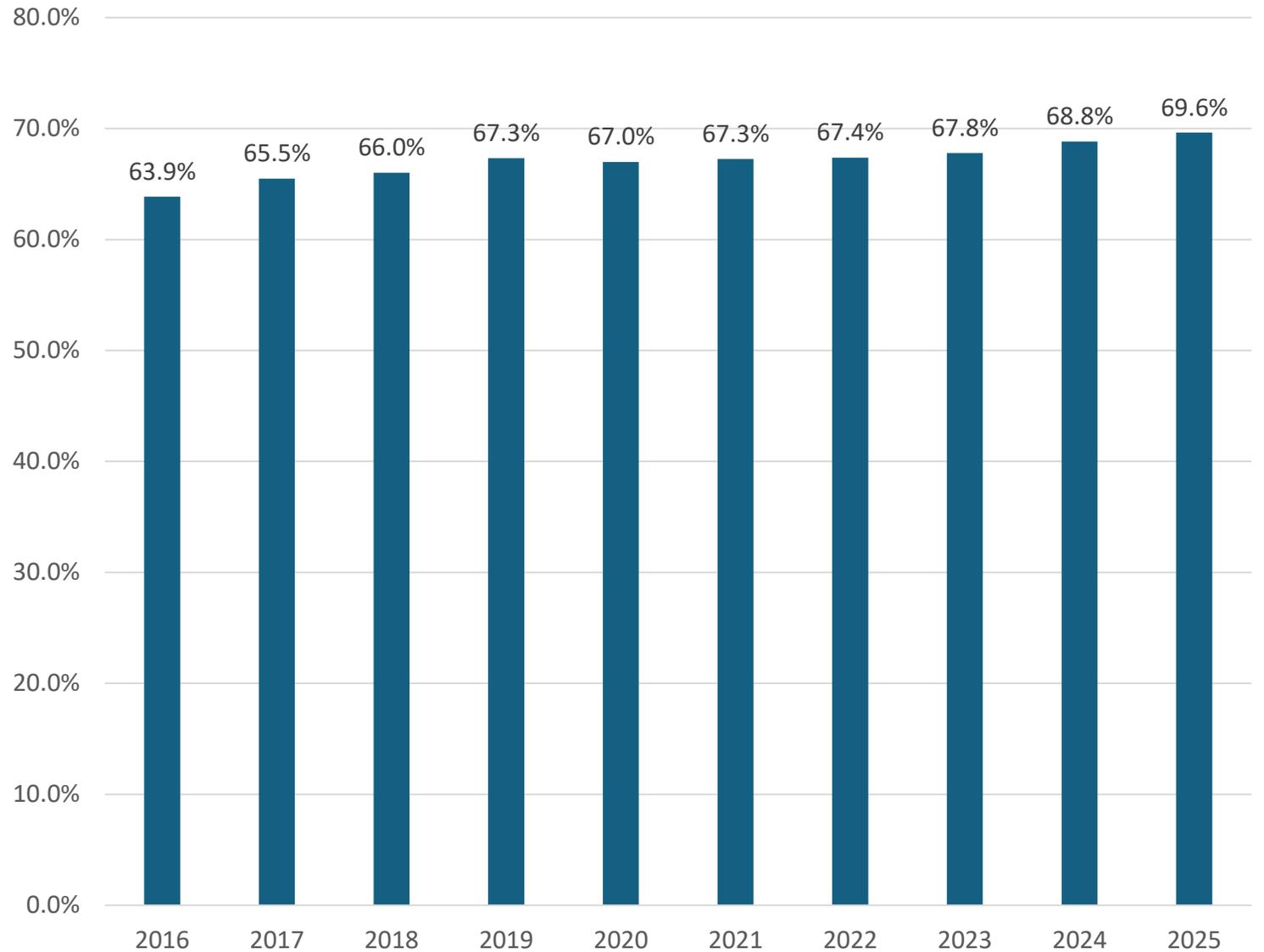
2020 - 2025 Total Participation Rates by Sports Category Trended

*American Population Ages 6+



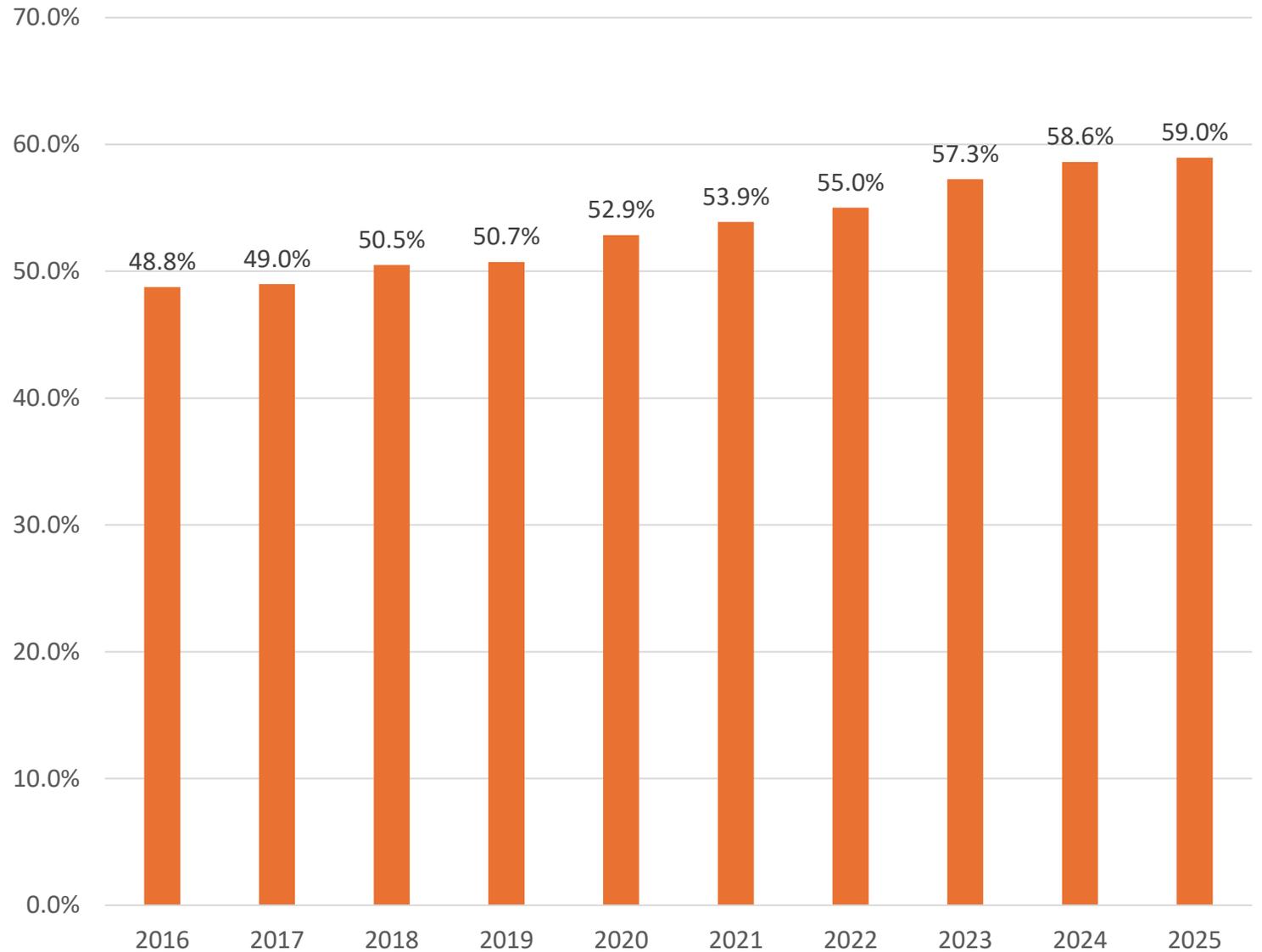
10-Year Historical Trend- *Fitness Activities*

*American Population Ages 6+



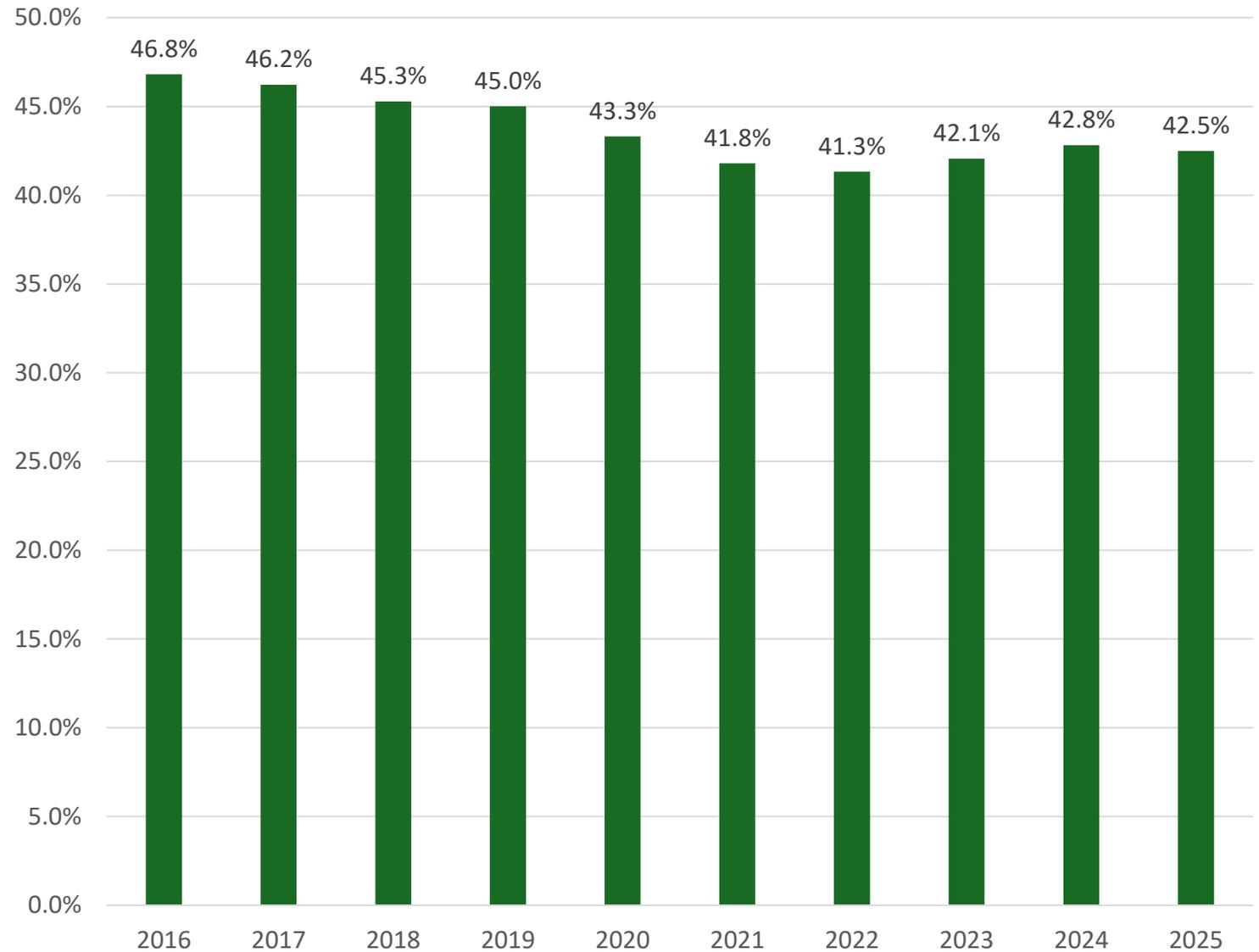
10-Year Historical Trend- *Outdoor Activities*

*American Population Ages 6+



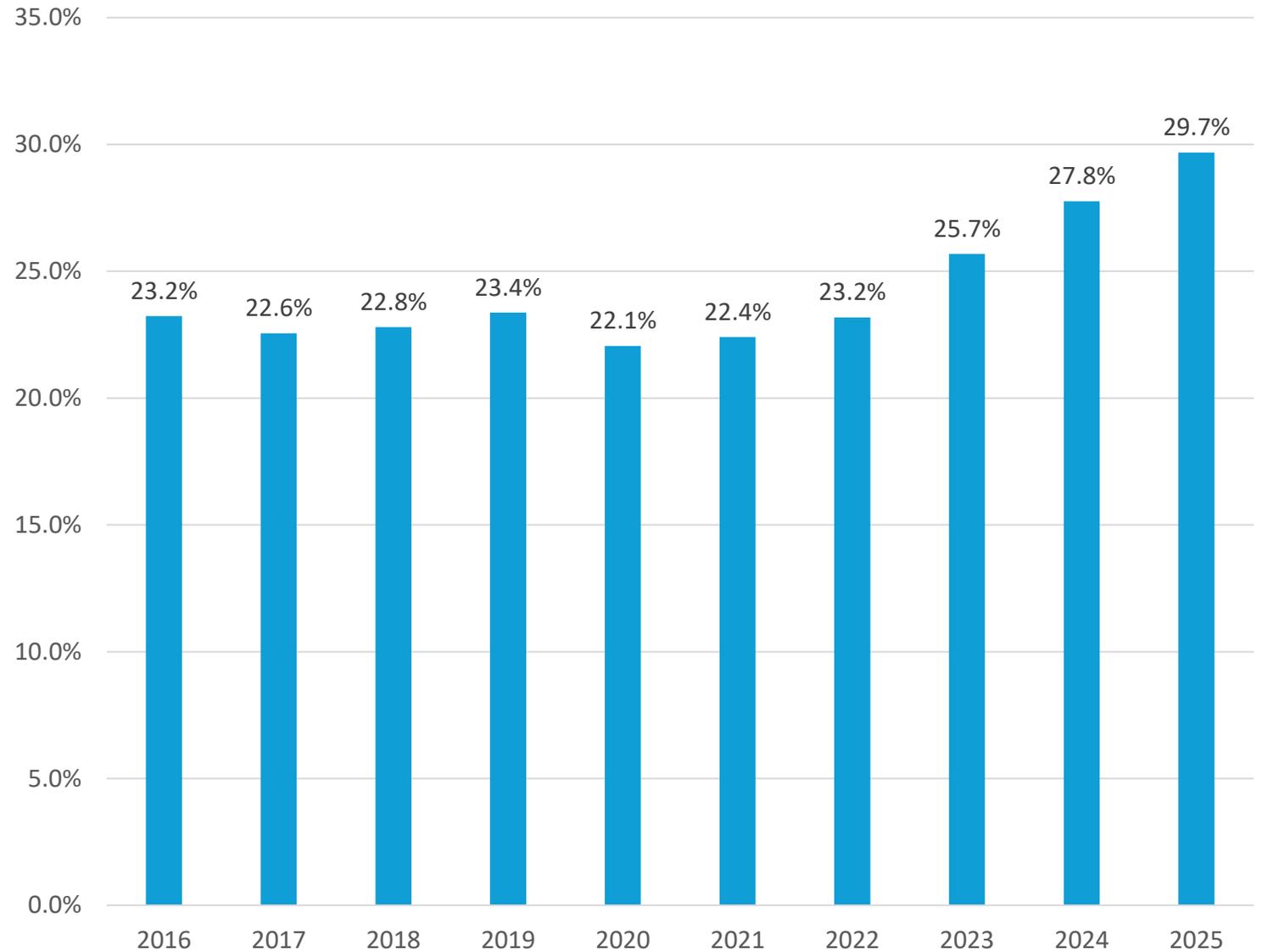
10-Year Historical Trend- *Individual Activities*

*American Population Ages 6+



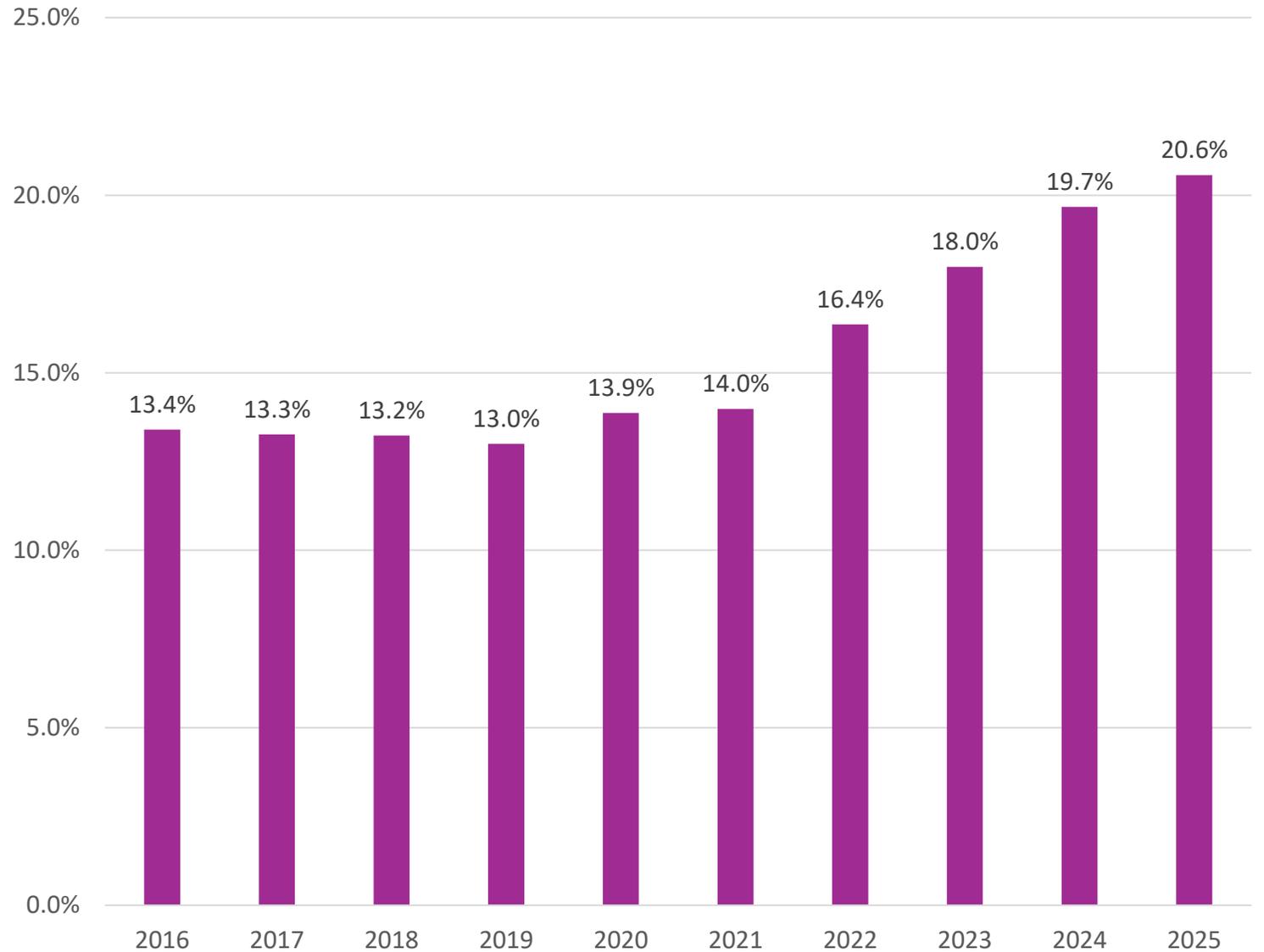
10-Year Historical Trend- *Team Sports Activities*

*American Population Ages 6+



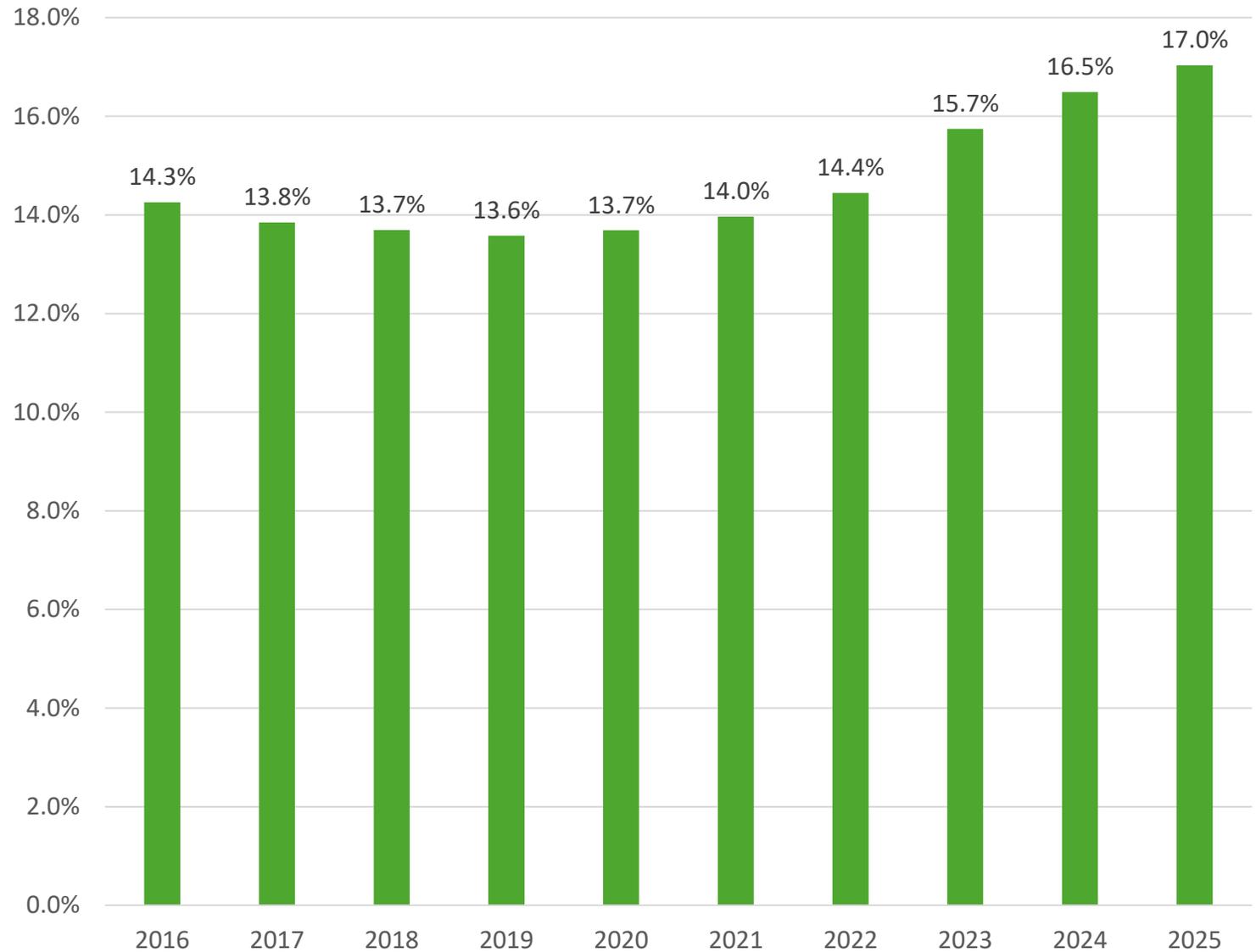
10-Year Historical Trend- *Racquet Activities*

*American Population Ages 6+



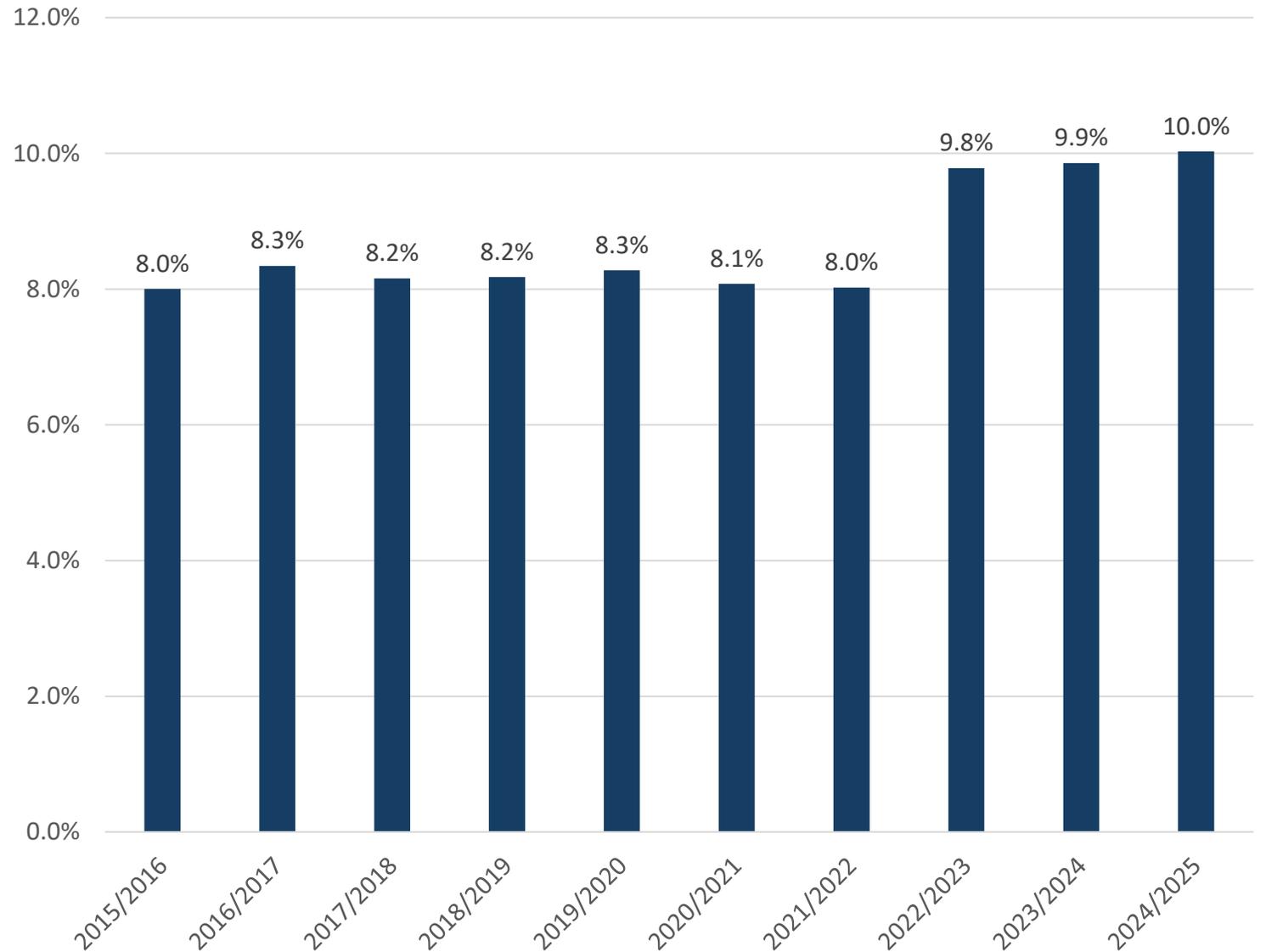
10-Year Historical Trend- *Water Activities*

*American Population Ages 6+



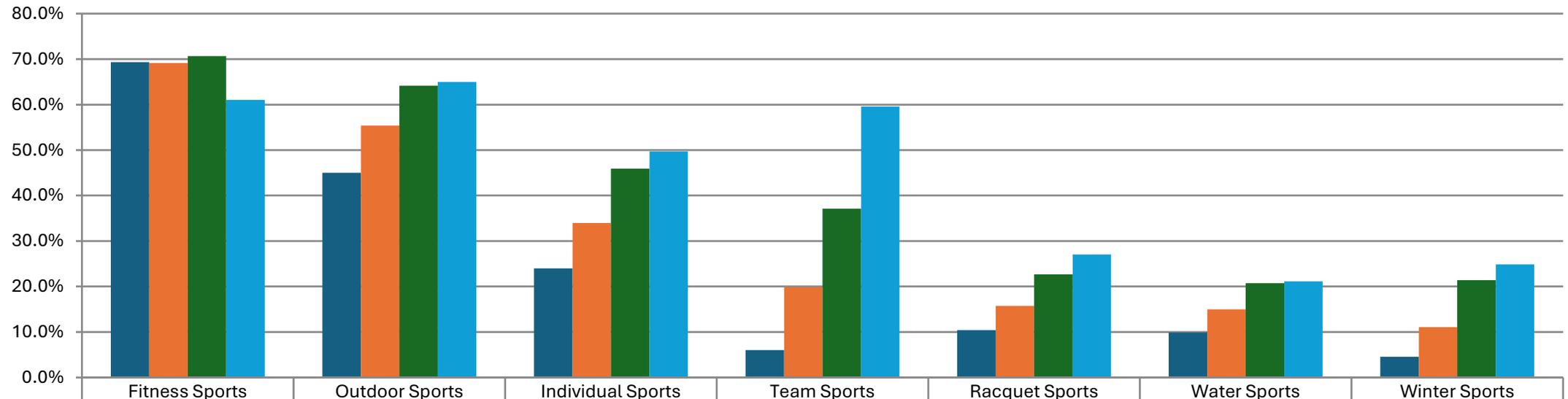
10-Year Historical Trend- *Winter Activities*

*American Population Ages 6+



2025 Participation by Generation

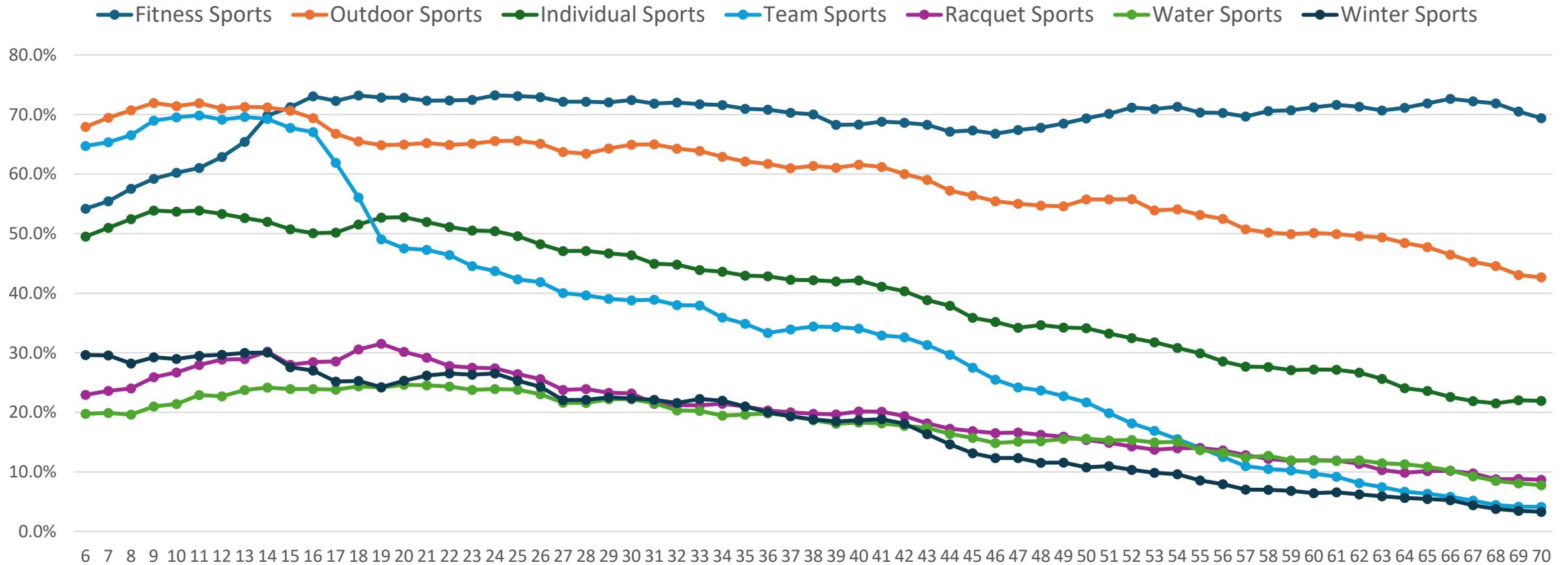
*Populations Ages 6+ who were active at least once in 12 months



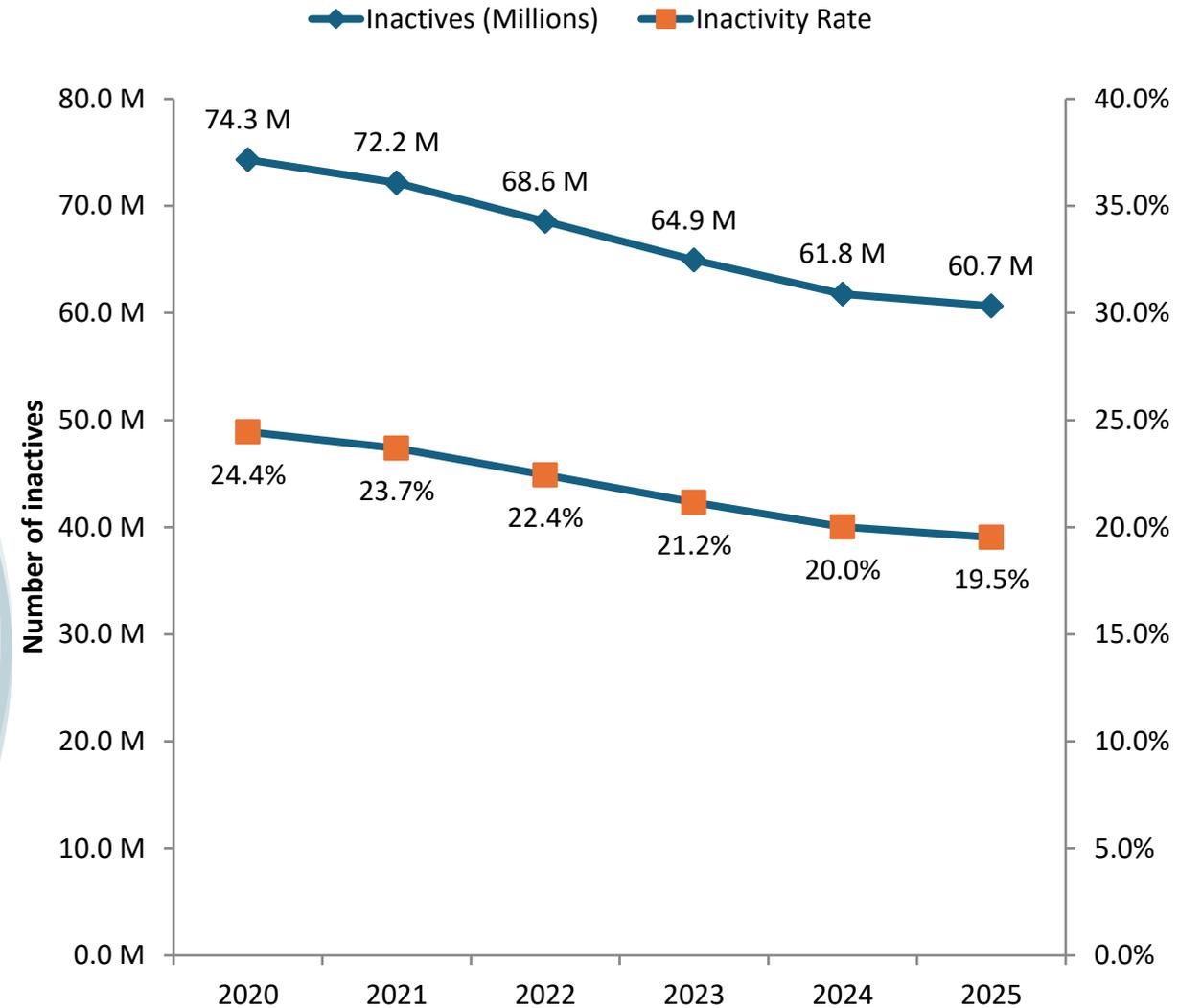
■ Boomers (1945~1964)	69.4%	45.0%	24.0%	6.0%	10.4%	9.9%	4.5%
■ Gen X (1965~1979)	69.1%	55.4%	34.0%	19.9%	15.8%	15.0%	11.1%
■ Millennials (1980~1999)	70.6%	64.2%	45.9%	37.1%	22.7%	20.7%	21.4%
■ Gen Z (2000+)	61.0%	65.0%	49.7%	59.6%	27.1%	21.1%	24.8%

2025 PAC Sport Categories by Age

*American Population Ages 6+

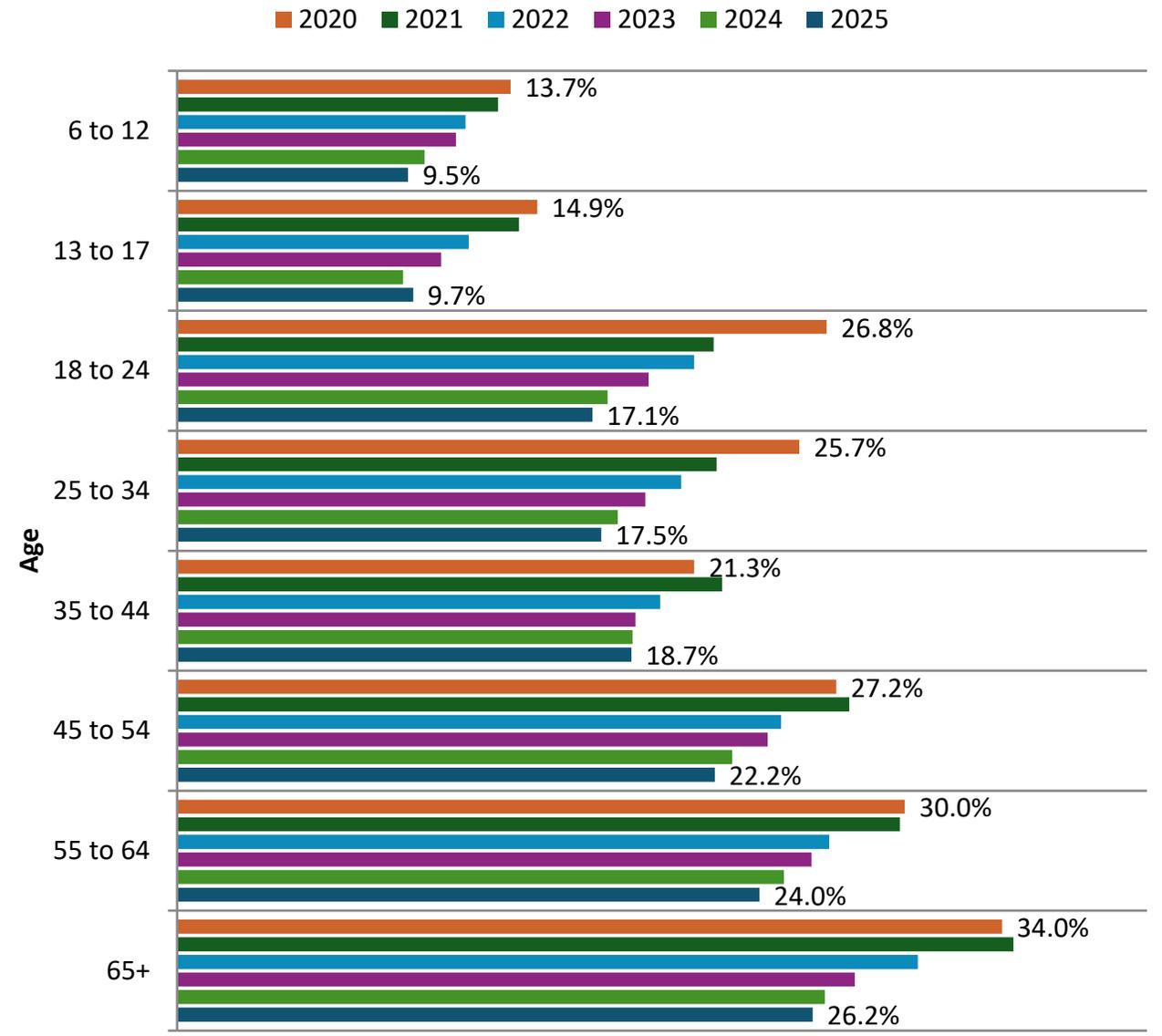


2020 to 2025 Inactivity Levels Among Americans Ages 6+



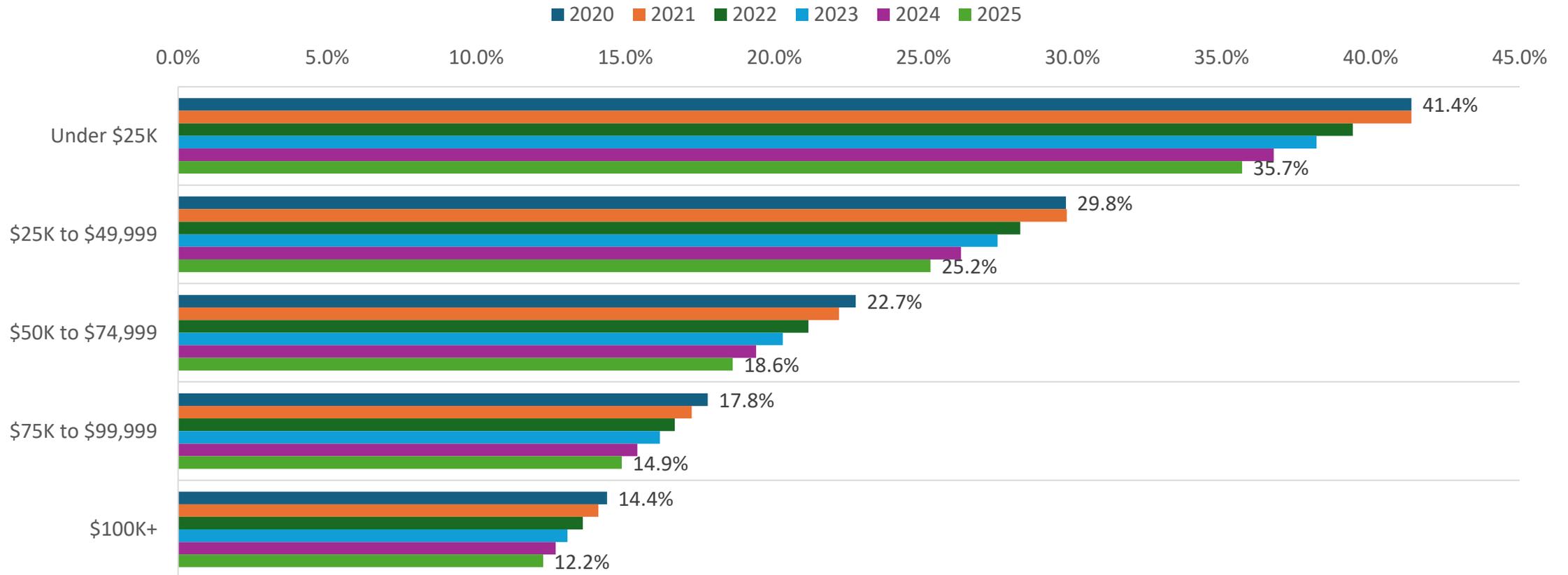
Inactivity by Age

*American Population Ages 6+



Inactivity by Income

*American Population Ages 6+



6 to 12	13 to 17	18 to 24	25 to 34
Camping	Fishing	Running/Jogging	Cardio Fitness
Running/Jogging	Running/Jogging	Cardio Fitness	Running/Jogging
Fishing	Camping	Working out with free weights	Working out with free weights
Swimming for Fitness	Treadmill	Treadmill	Treadmill
Basketball	Working out with free weights	Working out using machines	Working out using machines
Bicycling	Cardio Fitness	Camping	Camping
Hiking	Basketball	Hiking	Swimming for Fitness
Cardio Fitness	Bicycling	Bicycling	Fishing
Soccer	Hiking	Basketball	Hiking
Baseball	Swimming for Fitness	Yoga	Yoga
35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65+
Camping	Camping	Fishing	Fishing
Cardio Fitness	Fishing	Camping	Treadmill
Running/Jogging	Cardio Fitness	Treadmill	Camping
Treadmill	Treadmill	Cardio Fitness	Cardio Fitness
Working out with free weights	Working out with free weights	Working out with free weights	Swimming for Fitness
Fishing	Yoga	Hiking	Working out with free weights
Hiking	Running/Jogging	Swimming for Fitness	Yoga
Working out using machines	Working out using machines	Yoga	Hiking
Swimming for Fitness	Hiking	Working out using machines	Working out using machines
Yoga	Swimming for Fitness	Shooting	Shooting

Inactive American's Intent to Participate in the Next 12 Months by Age

*American Population Ages 6+

Under \$25,000	\$25,000 to \$54,999	
Camping	Camping	
Fishing	Fishing	
Cardio Fitness	Treadmill	
Running/Jogging	Cardio Fitness	
Working out with free weights	Working out with free weights	
Treadmill	Running/Jogging	
Working out using machines	Swimming for Fitness	
Swimming for Fitness	Hiking	
Hiking	Working out using machines	
Yoga	Yoga	
\$50,000 to \$74,999	\$75,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000+
Camping	Cardio Fitness	Treadmill
Fishing	Working out with free weights	Cardio Fitness
Cardio Fitness	Treadmill	Working out with free weights
Treadmill	Fishing	Fishing
Working out with free weights	Camping	Camping
Running/Jogging	Hiking	Working out using machines
Working out using machines	Working out using machines	Swimming for Fitness
Hiking	Swimming for Fitness	Yoga
Swimming for Fitness	Running/Jogging	Hiking
Yoga	Yoga	Running/Jogging

Inactive American's Intent to Participate in the Next 12 Months by Income

*American Population Ages 6+

List of Sports/ Activities in Grouped Categories

- ▶ **Fitness Activities:** Aquatic Exercise, Barre, Bodyweight Exercise & Bodyweight Accessory-Assisted Training (Calisthenics), Boot Camp Style Training, Boxing/MMA for Fitness, Cardio Kickboxing, Cross-Training Style Workouts, Dance, Step, and Other Choreographed Exercise to Music, Elliptical Motion/Cross-Trainer, Barbells, Dumbbells/Hand Weights, High Impact/Intensity Training, Kettlebells, Pilates Training, Rowing Machine, Running/Jogging, Stair-Climbing Machine, Stationary Cycling (Group/Recumbent or Upright), Stretching/Mobility Training, Swimming for Fitness, Tai Chi, Treadmill, Walking for Fitness, Weight/Resistance Machines, and Yoga.
- ▶ **Individual Sports:** Adventure Racing, Archery, Bowling, Boxing for Competition, Disc Golf, Golf on a 9 or 18-hole Golf Course, Horseback Riding, Hunting (Bow, Handgun, Rifle, Shotgun), Ice Skating, Horseback Riding, Martial Arts, MMA for Competition, Roller Skating (2x2 Wheels, Inline Wheels), Shooting (Sport Clays, Trap/Skeet), Skateboarding, Target Shooting (Handgun, Rifle), and Triathlon (non-Traditional/Off Road, Traditional/Road).
- ▶ **Outdoor Sports:** Adventure Racing, Archery, Backpacking Overnight, Bicycling (BMX, Mountain/Non-Paved Surface), Birdwatching, Camping, Camping (RV), Canoeing, Climbing (Indoor, Sport/Bouldering, Traditional/Ice/Mountaineering), Cross-country/Nordic skiing, Downhill (Alpine) Skiing (Freeski/Freestyle/Telemark), Fishing (Fly, Freshwater/Other, Saltwater), Horseback Riding, Hiking (Day), Kayaking (White Water, Sea/Touring, Recreation), Rafting, Running/Jogging, Sailing, Scuba Diving, Skateboarding, Snorkeling, Snowboarding, Snowshoeing, Stand-Up Paddling, Surfing, Trail Running, Triathlon (non-Traditional/Off Road, Traditional/Road), Wakeboarding, Wakesurfing, Walking for Fitness, Wildlife Viewing, and Winter/Snow Fat Biking.
- ▶ **Racquet Sports:** Badminton, Cardio Tennis, Padel, Pickleball, Racquetball, Short Court Tennis (Pop/Paddle/Platform), Squash, Table Tennis, and Tennis.
- ▶ **Team Sports:** Baseball, Basketball, Cheerleading, Cricket, Field Hockey, Football (Flag, Modified Games, Tackle, Touch, 7-on-7), Gymnastics, Ice Hockey, Lacrosse, Paintball, Roller Hockey, Rowing/Crew, Rugby, Soccer (Indoor, Outdoor), Softball (Fast-Pitch, Slow-Pitch), Street/Dek/Ball/Floor Hockey, Swimming on a Team, Track and Field, Ultimate Frisbee, Volleyball (Beach/Sand, Court, Grass), Water Polo, and Wrestling.
- ▶ **Water Sports:** Boardsailing/Windsurfing, Canoeing, Kayaking (White Water, Sea/Touring, Recreational), Jet Skiing, Rafting, Rowing, Sailing, Scuba Diving, Snorkeling, Stand-Up Paddling, Surfing, Wakeboarding, Wakesurfing, and Water Skiing.
- ▶ **Winter Sports:** Cross-country/Nordic skiing, Downhill (Alpine) Skiing (Freeski/Freestyle/Telemark), Sledding/Saucer Riding/Snow Tubing, Snowboarding, Snowshoeing, Skinning (Uphill/AT), Splitboarding (Uphill/Snowboard Touring), Winter/Snow Fat Biking, and Snowmobiling.

Disclaimer

While proper due care and diligence has been taken in the preparation of this document, the Physical Activity Council cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information and does not accept any liability for any loss or damage caused as a result of using information or recommendations contained within this document.

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The 2025 participation research is a collaboration of:



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