

FROM MOMENT TO MAINSTREAM:

WHAT CONSUMERS IN 7 COUNTRIES REALLY
THINK ABOUT WOMEN'S SPORTS

MAY 2024

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



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[Parity](#) is a sports marketing and sponsorship platform focused on professional women athletes. Our mission is to close the gender income and opportunity gap in pro sports.



[SurveyMonkey](#) is a global leader in online surveys and forms that empowers people with the insights they need to make decisions with speed and confidence.

INTRODUCTION



“Everyone’s talking moment and momentum - I don’t like either of those words but it’s outstanding what’s happening in women’s sports.”

Cathy Englebert, *Commissioner, WNBA, overheard at the 2024 CAA World Congress of Sports*



“Women’s sports is having a moment that it should have always had.”
Serena Williams, *Tennis GOAT* ¹



“This isn’t a moment in time. It’s a movement.”
Susie Piotrkowski, *VP Women’s Sports Programming, ESPN and espnW* ²



Whether you consider it a moment, a movement, momentum, or plain outstanding, the signs are clear: women’s sports are experiencing a surge of attention right now, and not just from the most ardent fans. For those who support women’s sports, these are exciting times, but they raise a litany of pressing questions: how pervasive is women’s sports fandom in 2024? Is the phenomenon regional or international? Who’s tuning in more, men or women, and why? How influential are women athletes and what opportunities might this create for brands?

To satisfy our curiosity we partnered with SurveyMonkey, the leading online survey platform, to field what may be the largest international study of women’s sports fans conducted to date. Between March 28 - April 10 2024 more than 14,000 people from seven countries shared their thoughts on women’s sports, equality at the Olympics and Paralympics, the influence of female athletes, and much more.





SUMMARY OF FINDINGS





The pro sports playing field is far from even

Roughly two-thirds (64%) say men have more opportunities in professional sports than women. The same percentage (64%) believe there is not enough media coverage of professional women's sports, and 53% say brands are not investing enough in women's sports.

7 out of 10 people now watch women's sports

If the argument that "no one watches women's sports" wasn't already dead, it is now. Almost three-quarters (73%) say they watch women's sports at least a few times a year – not too far behind the percentage who watch men's sports with the same frequency (81%).

More men watch women's sports frequently

If you thought women's sports were largely for female fans, think again. A relatively even 75% of men and 71% of women say they watch women's sports at least a few times a year. Meanwhile, 23% of men watch women's sports weekly or more frequently, compared with 15% of women.





Women's sports are gaining momentum among fans

Over half (54%) of women's sports fans³ only began watching within the last three years. Top reasons to watch are a desire to support women (41%), the quality of play (33%), and an interest in following individual women athletes (32%). Meanwhile, 28% say they are watching more women's sports this year compared to last year, largely due to personal interest and the quality/ enjoyment factor.

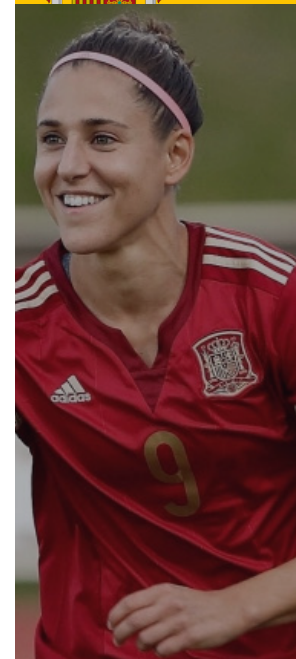
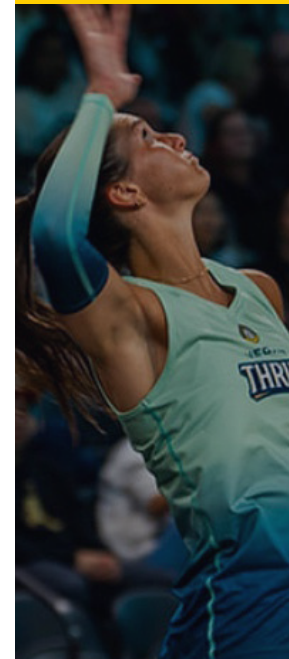
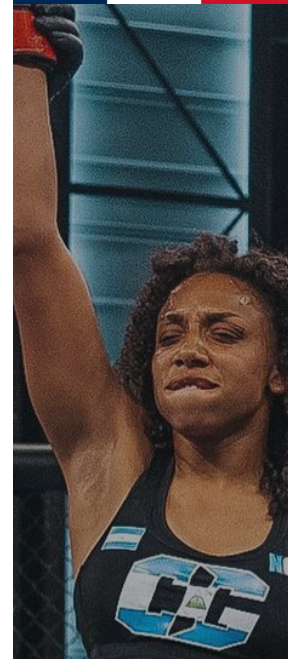
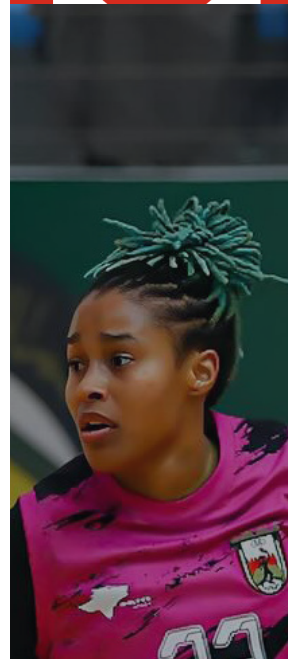
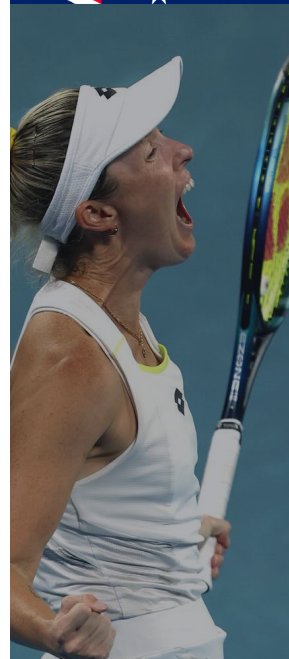
Paris 2024 will set a key gender equity milestone - and most people have no idea

83% say it's important to have equal gender representation at the Olympics and Paralympics - but only 17% of those surveyed were previously aware that Paris 2024 will be the first Olympic Games to feature the same number of male and female athletes competing for glory.

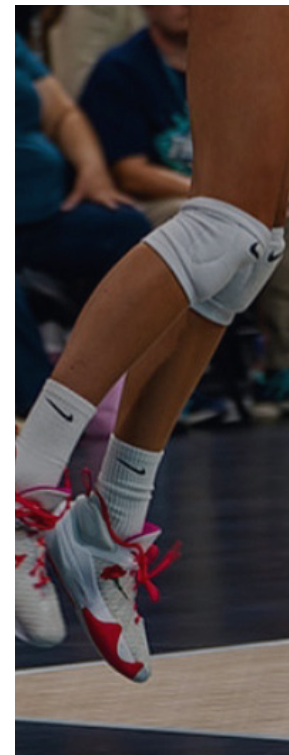
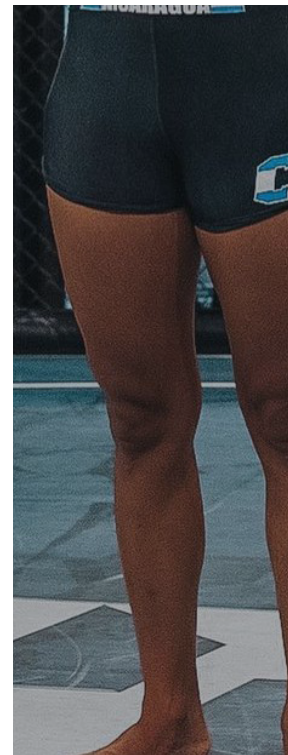
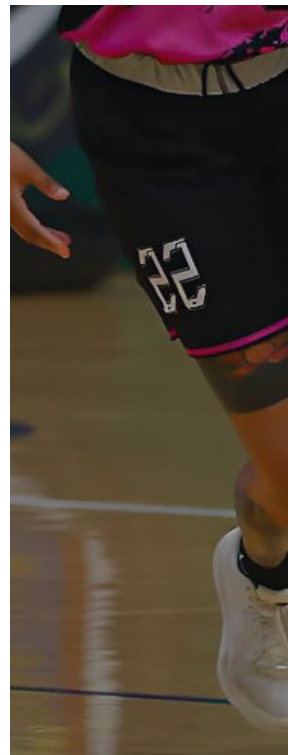
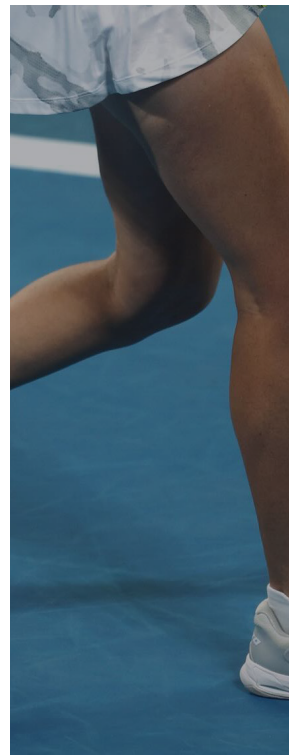
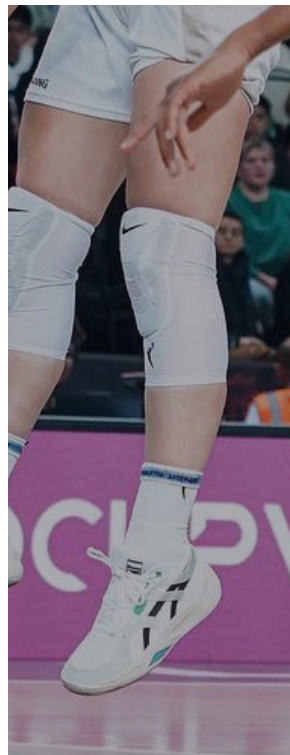
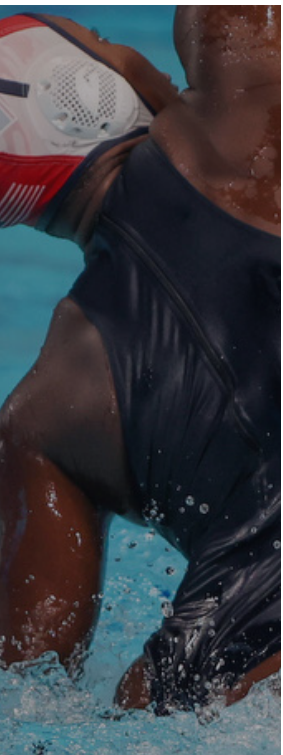
Women athletes hold significantly more sway than other types of influencers

88% regard pro women athletes as impactful role models for young women. Women's sports fans are 2.8 times more likely to purchase a product recommended by a woman athlete rather than by another type of influencer. And 32% of all women's sports fans (37% of female women's sports fans) say they are more likely to purchase products from a brand that supports women's sports or partners with female athletes.





COUNTRY-SPECIFIC HIGHLIGHTS





UNITED STATES (5,408 respondents)

- Despite 85% of Americans saying that equal gender representation is important at the Olympics and Paralympics, only 15% of Americans were previously aware that Paris 2024 will be the first Olympic Games with an equal number of male and female athletes.
- Half of all Americans say brands aren't investing enough in women's sports, but there's a 14 percentage point gap between women (57%) and men (43%) who believe this.
- Roughly the same percentage of men (73%) and women (70%) watch women's sports at least a few times a year. But men are more likely to tune in frequently: 23% of US men watch women's sports weekly or more often, while just 15% of US women say the same.
- Star power is a key driver in the US. 36% of American women's sports fans watch in order to follow individual athletes - the highest percentage of any country.
- Basketball is by far the most popular women's sport to watch in the US - unlike every other country where football/ soccer and tennis occupy the top two spots. Volleyball, tennis, soccer, softball/ baseball and golf round out the US top 6, with an honorable mention for gymnastics.
- 38% of American fans of women's sports say they are more likely to purchase products from a brand that supports women's sports or partners with female athletes. This is the highest percentage of any country - and it's even higher for female fans of women's sports (44%).



UNITED KINGDOM (1,972 respondents)

- Professional women's sports are surging in the UK, where 36% of women's sports fans say they're watching more this year than last - the highest of any country surveyed. 60% of women's sports fans have begun watching in the last 3 years, and increased media coverage is the top reason why, cited by 38%.
- 58% in the UK say professional women's sports don't get enough media coverage, including 68% of women compared to 47% of men - the second biggest gender difference on this question. UK men rank lowest of any group on this question.
- The UK has the highest percentage of people (87%) who say it's important for the Olympics and Paralympics to have equal gender representation. Still, only 18% are aware that Paris 2024 will be the first ever Olympic Games in which equal numbers of women and men athletes compete.
- When asked what makes them want to watch women's sports, 42% in the UK say it's to support women, 33% cite the quality of play, and 28% watch because of differences in the way the sport is played compared to the men.
- Only 23% of UK women's sports fans have bought women's sports merchandise compared to 42% of UK men's sports fans who've bought men's sports merch.





AUSTRALIA (1,251 respondents)

- Australian men top the international charts for watching women's sports. 82% of Aussie men say they watch women's sports at least a few times a year and 28% say they watch women's sports weekly or more frequently. Both are the highest scores for the seven countries in which we surveyed, and outrank Australian women's answers.
- 78% of Aussie women watch women's sports at least a few times a year, the highest of any of the women's scores across countries, though only 15% watch weekly or more frequently.
- Like their UK counterparts, Australians rank cricket third in their list of top women's sports followed. Aussies are the only nationality to include netball and Australian Rules Football in their top 9.
- 51% of Australians say brands aren't investing enough in women's sports, including 59% of women and 44% of men - the second biggest gender difference on this question.
- Women's sports fandom is gaining momentum in Australia. 34% of Australian women's sports fans say they are watching more women's sports this year than last year - the second highest score across countries.



CANADA (1,743 respondents)

- 65% of Canadians say professional women's sports don't get enough media coverage, including 77% of women vs 55% of men - the biggest gender difference on this question.
- 56% of Canadians say brands aren't investing enough in women's sports, including 64% of women vs 48% of men - again, the biggest difference by gender on this question.
- Canada is the only country to list ice hockey in its top 5 women's sports watched or followed, and the only place where curling gets an honorable mention.
- 46% of Canadian women's sports fans tune in because they want to support women; 37% watch because of the quality of play; and 34% because of interest in individual athletes.
- 31% of Canadians and 35% of Canadian women's sports fans are more likely to purchase from brands that support women's sports and women athletes.
- Women's sports fans in Canada are 2.7 times more likely to purchase a product recommended by a woman athlete rather than by another type of influencer.





FRANCE (1,517 respondents)

- In France we saw the highest percentage of people, 66%, say brands aren't investing enough in women's sports today. French women (68%) and men (65%) both rank higher than their peers in any other country.
- Awareness that the Paris Summer Olympics will give equal competing opportunities to men and women is highest in France, but still at only 25%. Meanwhile, 81% in France believe gender equity is important at the Olympics and Paralympics.
- France is the only country we surveyed in which handball ranks in the top 5 women's sports to watch.
- 24% of French women's sports fans say they're watching more this year vs. last year. For those watching more, the biggest driver is increased media coverage of women's sports (40%).
- The top reasons why French people watch women's sports are the quality of play (37%), a desire to support women (36%), and because of differences in how women's sports are played relative to men's sports (33%).





GERMANY (1,290 respondents)

- Only 14% of Germans are aware that the Paris Summer Olympics is the first to offer equal places to male and female athletes - the lowest awareness of any country. Meanwhile, 74% say equal gender representation at the Olympics and Paralympics is important.
- Germans are the only nationality to proactively mention biathlon as one of their top women's sports to watch. Germans also rank athletics/ track and field fifth, which is higher than any other country.
- The top three reasons German fans of women's sports watch are the quality of play (39%), because they find women's sports exciting (33%), and because they want to support women (30%).
- German sports fans appear less likely than fans in other countries to buy sports merchandise. Only 19% of German women's sports fans and 32% of German men's sports fans have bought merchandise in the last three years - both being the lowest of any country.
- German women's sports fans are 4.9x more likely to purchase a product promoted by a professional women athlete than by any other type of influencer - the largest multiplier effect seen in any country.





SPAIN (1,193 respondents)

- Spaniards believe more strongly than any other nationality that it's important for girls to play sports growing up, with 96% saying it's important including 82% who say 'very important'.
- 79% of Spanish women and 63% of Spanish men say professional women's sports don't get enough media coverage - placing Spain second only to France.
- 26% of Spanish men watch women's sports at least weekly - higher than Spanish women (16%) and second only to Australian men, 28% of whom watch women's sports weekly or more frequently.
- About three-quarters (76%) of Spanish women's sports fans are relative newcomers who say they've been watching women's sports for three years or less - by far the highest percentage of anywhere we surveyed. Since football is the most watched women's sport in Spain, recent FIFA World Cup success seems a likely driver.
- 48% of Spanish women's sports fans say they are watching more women's sports thanks to increased media coverage - a significantly higher proportion than any other country.





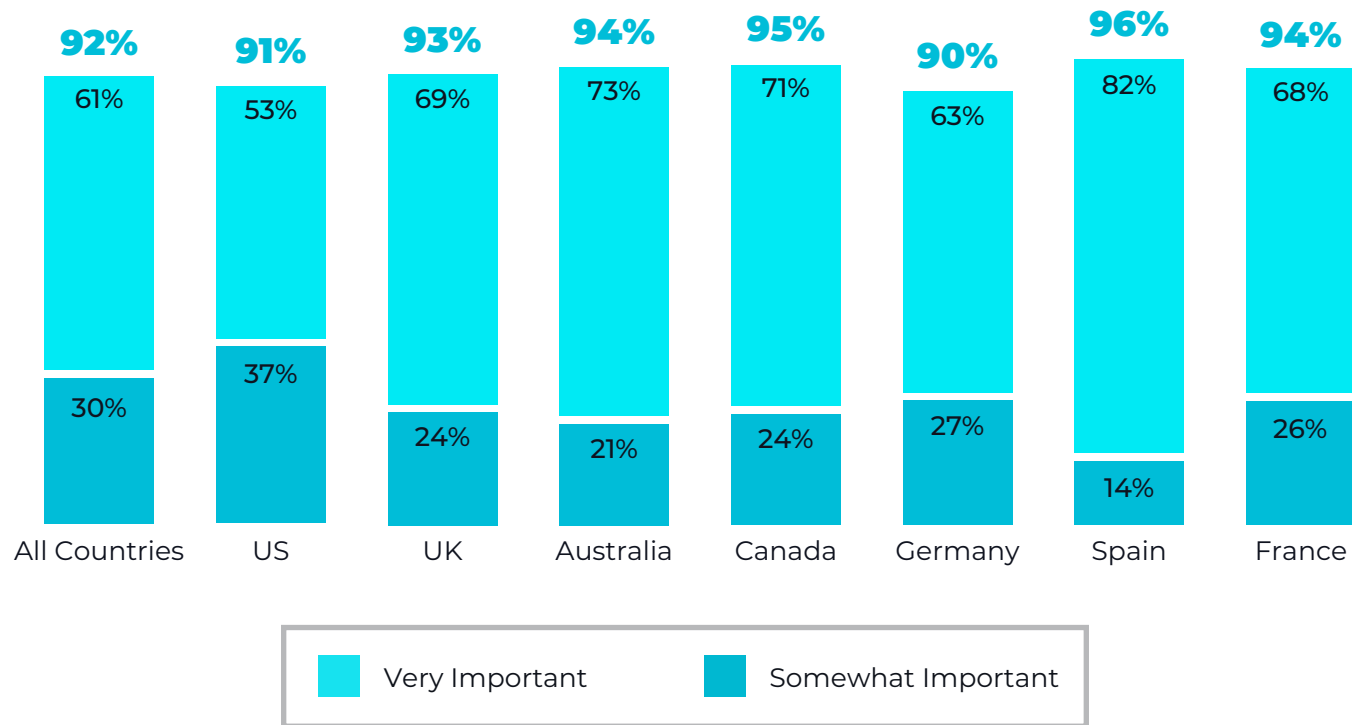
DATA DEEP DIVE



PROFESSIONAL SPORTS: A VITAL, BUT UNEVEN, PLAYING FIELD FOR WOMEN

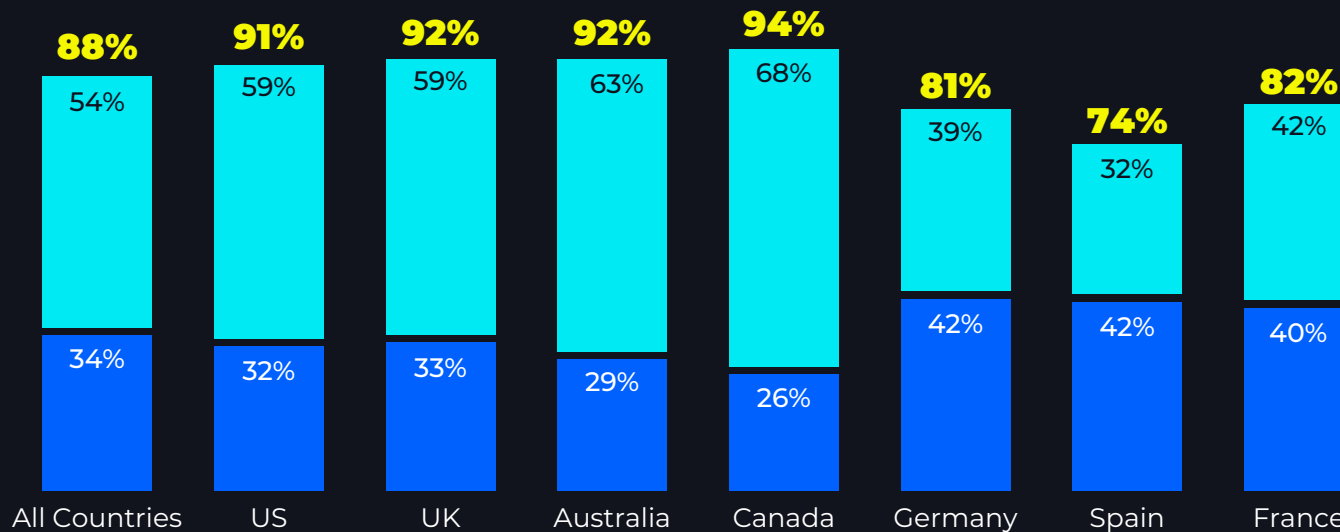
We began our survey by gauging general attitudes toward women's participation in sports. 92% agree it's important for girls to play sports growing up, with 61% deeming it 'very important.' Spaniards are the most emphatic in their response, with 82% considering it 'very important' for girls to play sports growing up. The benefits are well documented: prior research by Ernst & Young and ESPNw shows that 94% of female C-suite executives played sports when they were younger⁴ and Women's Sports Foundation research reinforces the fact that playing sports boosts girls' and women's confidence and self-esteem⁵.

How important do you think it is for girls to play sports growing up?



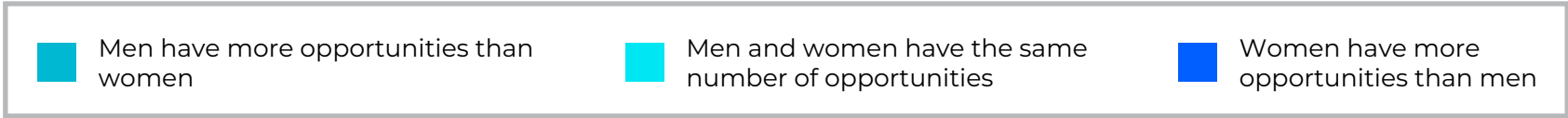
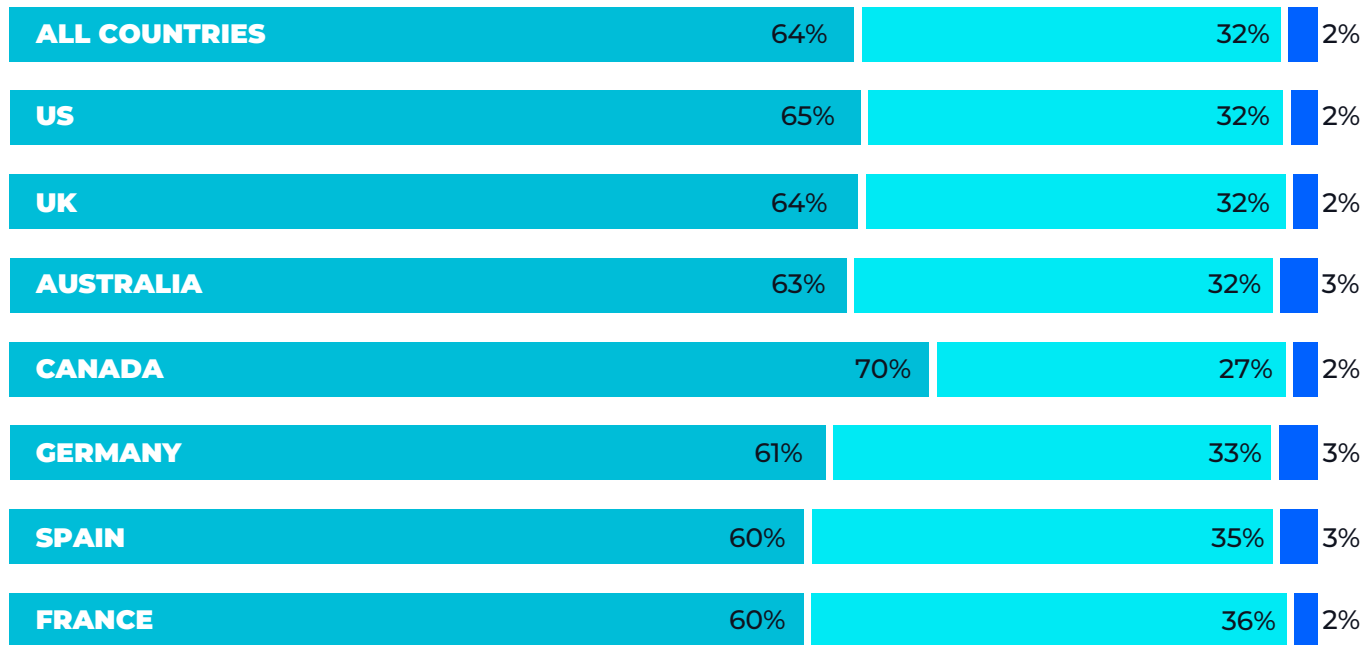
Meanwhile, women athletes are generally held in high regard across all of the countries where we surveyed. 88% said that women athletes are 'highly' or 'somewhat' impactful as role models for young women, with over half (54%) seeing them as 'highly impactful.'

How impactful do you think professional women athletes are as role models for young women?

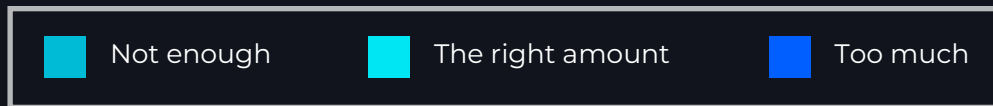
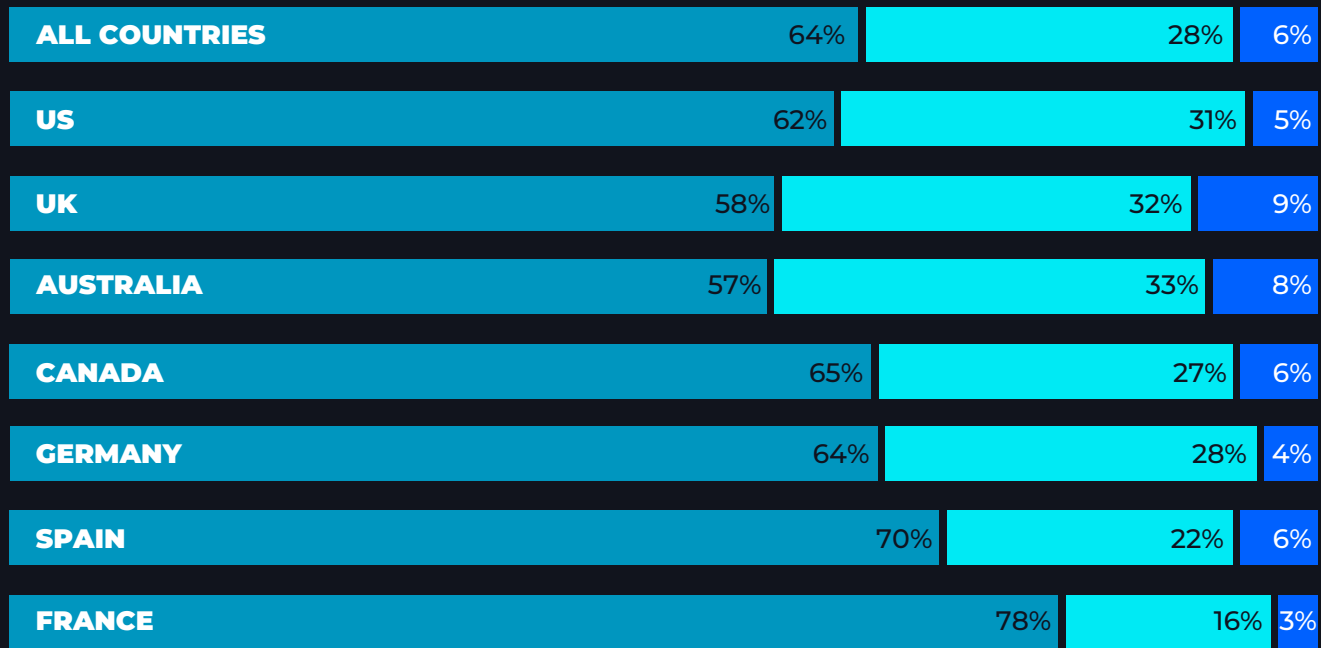


Despite the positivity and influence of women in sports, most people say opportunities and media coverage are lacking. 64% across all countries say men have more opportunities than women in professional sports, and the same percentage say that women's sports don't get enough media coverage. When we look at responses to media coverage by gender we see significant variance across countries, with 75% of French men believing there's a dearth of coverage for women's sports. By contrast, only 47% of British blokes feel the same. Attitudes by gender differ most in Canada, where we see a 22 percentage point delta between women (77%) and men (55%), and second most in the UK where the percentage point difference is 21% (with 68% of women saying there's not enough media coverage).

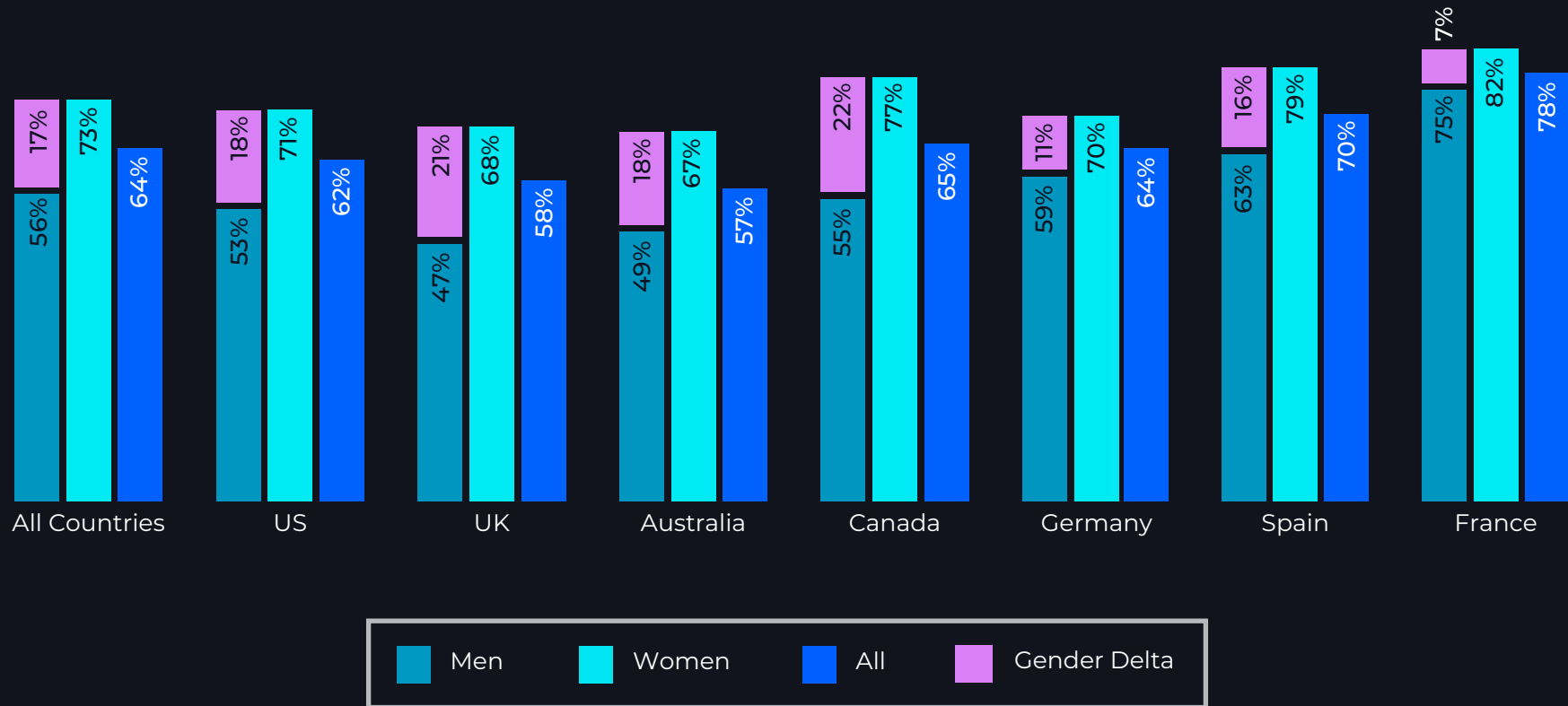
Who has more opportunities in professional sports: men or women?



Do you think women's professional sports are given too much coverage, not enough coverage, or the right amount of coverage by the media?



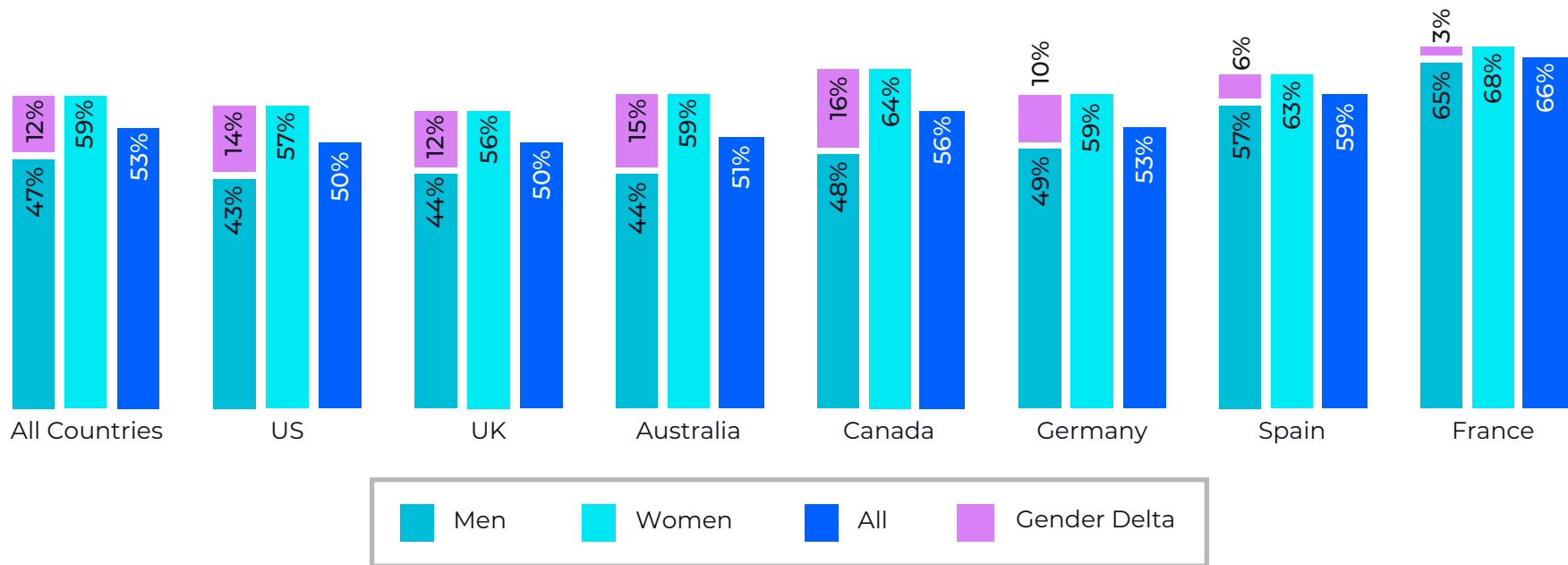
Percentage who say professional women's sports don't get enough media coverage



We also asked for opinions on the level of brand investment in women’s sports compared to men’s sports. **50% or more in every country believe that brands are not spending enough in women’s sports**, led by the French (66%) on the eve of the Paris Olympics and Paralympics. We saw some differences by gender, with 59% of women and 47% of men saying brands do not spend enough today. The difference by gender is the largest in Canada (16 percentage point delta), Australia (15 percentage points) and the US (14 percentage points) and narrowest in France (only 3 percentage points) and Spain (6 percentage points).

Our survey respondents do have a point. 2023 Deloitte Research⁶ projected that professional women’s sports will generate \$1.28B in revenue in 2024, up ‘at least’ 300% compared to Deloitte’s study three years ago. That said, the global sports industry market is currently sized at \$159B by Two Circles⁷, meaning that **pro women’s sports account for less than 1% of all revenue**. Given the single largest contributor in the Deloitte study is commercial sponsorship, now is the time for brands to step up.

Percentage who say brands are not investing enough in women’s sports compared to men’s sports



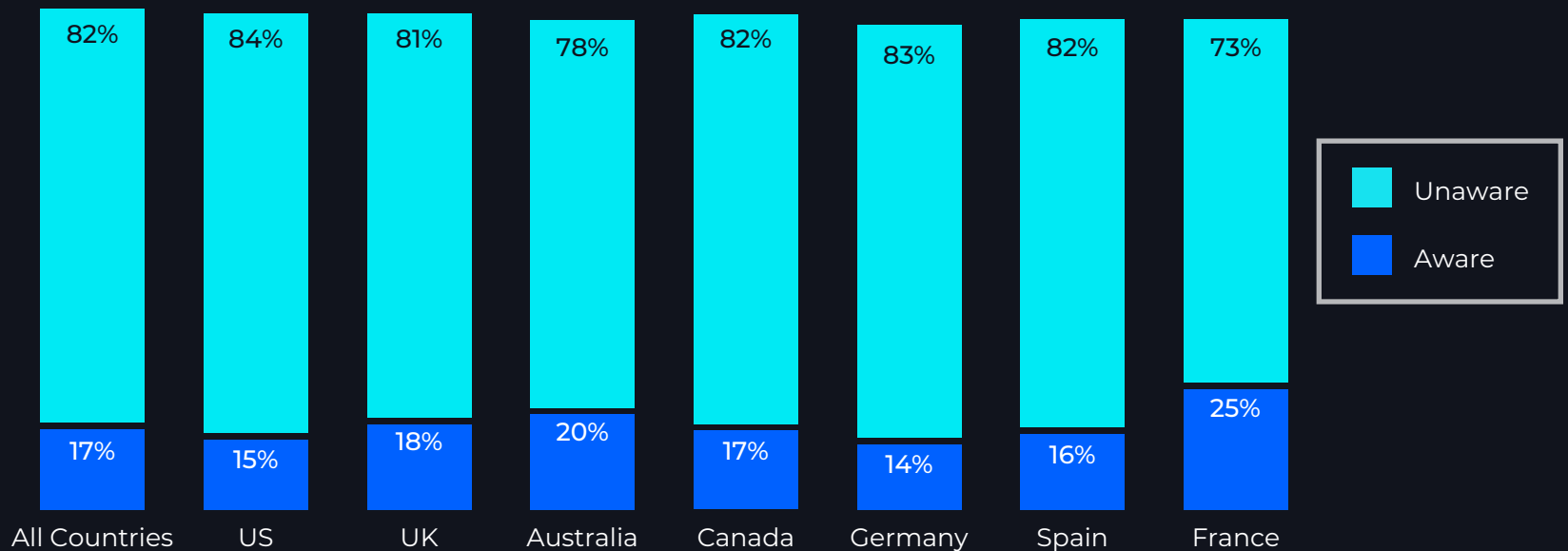
THE PARIS SUMMER OLYMPICS' BEST-KEPT SECRET? GENDER PARITY.

The Paris Summer Olympics are set to make history by achieving full gender parity on the field of play for the first time, with equal numbers of women and men athletes competing. In a year where women's sports fans are showing up in record numbers (both in person and through media viewership), this has the potential to delight sports fans everywhere – if only they knew.

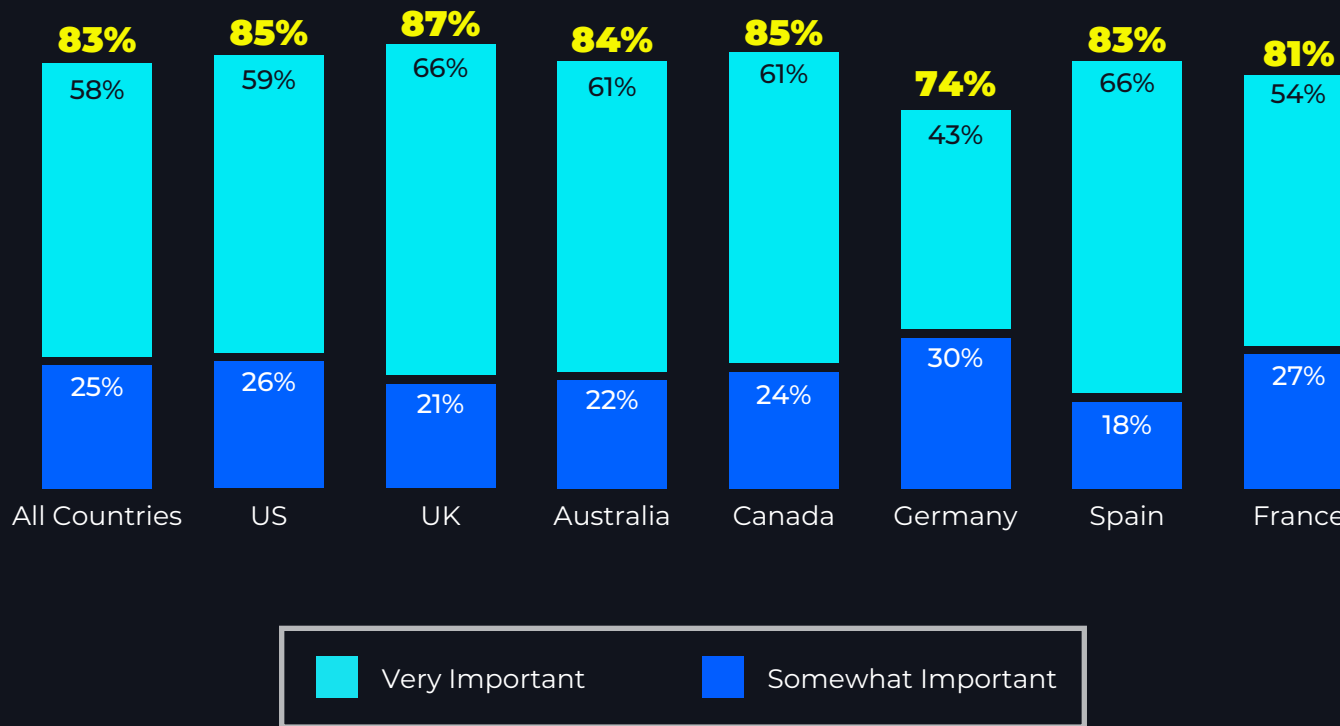
In fact, only 17% across all seven countries say that prior to our survey, they were aware that Paris is set to be the first-ever gender-equal Olympics.

Scores range from a high of 25% in host nation France to a lowly 14% in neighboring Germany. Meanwhile, 83% say equal gender representation is important at the Olympic and Paralympic Games, spiking at 87% in the UK and 85% in the US and Canada. With the games a matter of weeks away, the PR race is on.

Before today, were you aware that the upcoming 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris will be the first games to feature the same number of male and female athletes?



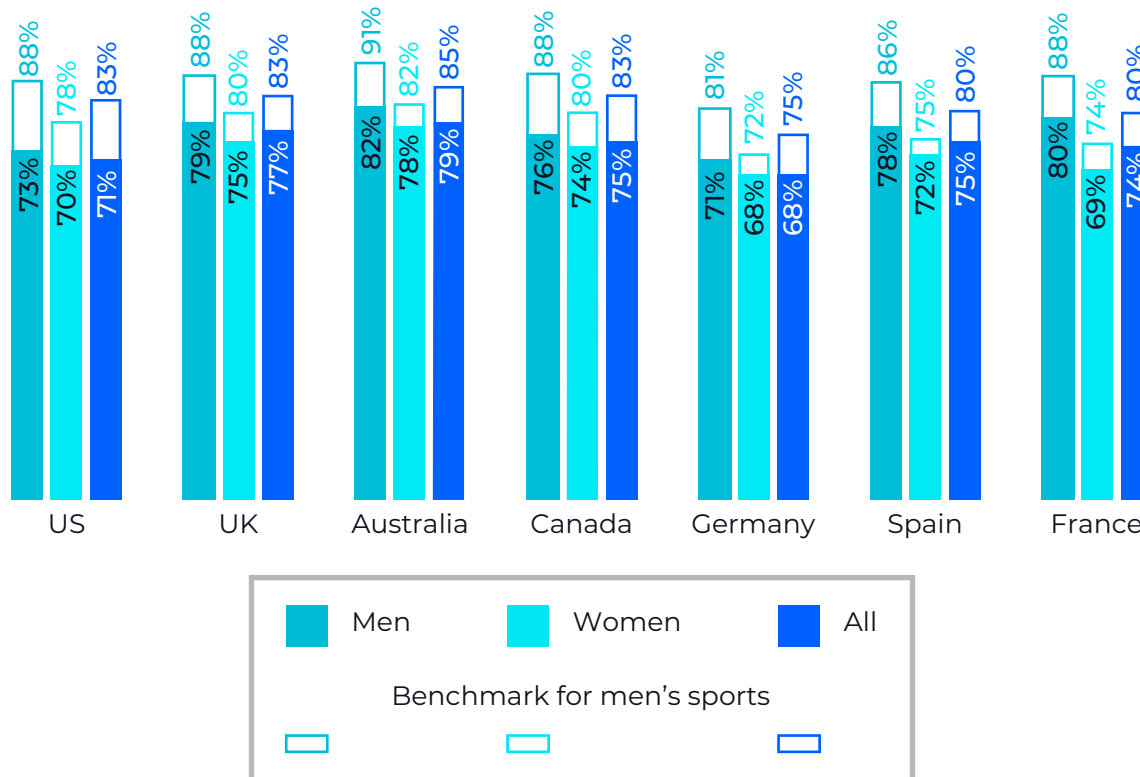
How important is it for male and female athletes to have equal representation at the Olympics and Paralympics?



ALMOST EVERYONE WATCHES WOMEN'S SPORTS - ESPECIALLY MEN

In the United States, media company TOGETHXR has popularized apparel emblazoned with the slogan, "Everyone watches women's sports" - and our survey showed they're largely right. In our survey of over 14,000 respondents across 7 countries, almost 11,000 or 73% say they watch women's sports at least a few times a year, compared to the 81% who say they watch men's sports at least a few times a year. While there's no doubt that people on average watch men's sports more frequently, the numerical gap isn't as big as we thought it might be.

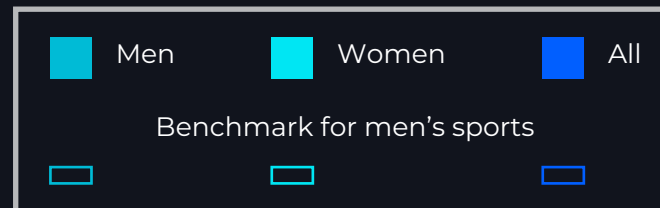
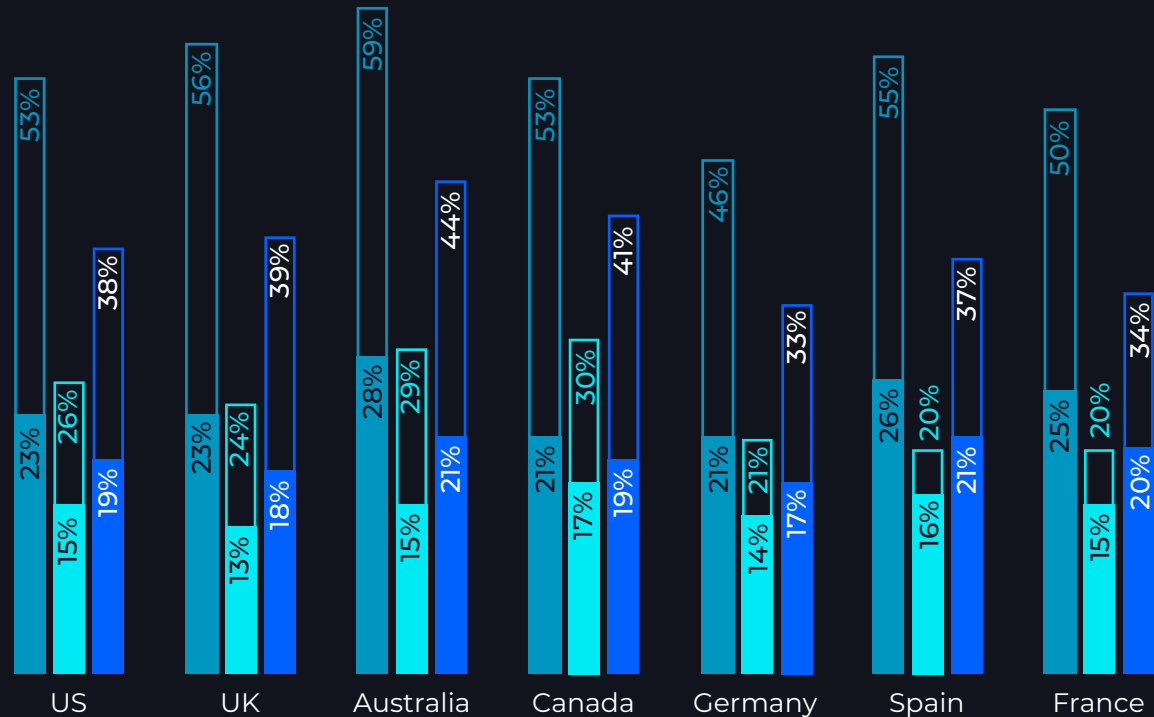
Percentage of people who watch women's sports at least a few times a year



Percentage who watch women's sports at least weekly

When we zero in on those who watch women's sports most frequently, we see more men than women in the audience in every single country. Across all countries, 23% of men say they watch women's sports daily or weekly, while only 15% of women say the same. And Australian men are in pole position with 82% watching women's sports at least a few times a year and 28% watching women's sports at least weekly. So if you're reading this report and had been thinking the main audience for women's sports is women... think again.

We also note that the highest percentage of Americans - 17% - say they watch two or more hours of women's sports per week, followed by 13% of Canadians and 12% of Australians.



IN FOCUS: FANS OF WOMEN'S SPORTS

The remainder of this report zeros in on the 10,746 respondents across seven countries who said they watch women's sports at least a few times a year. We describe these people as "women's sports fans" or "fans of women's sports."

WOMEN'S SPORTS: WHAT WE'RE WATCHING

As a sports marketing and sponsorship platform focused squarely on professional women athletes, the Parity team is quite familiar with the full range of professional women's sports. The 1,000+ athletes in our network span over 80 different events, from archery to weightlifting and everything in between. We asked fans of women's sports which sports they watch or follow, and while soccer/ football and tennis dominate in all countries except the US, we see notable regional variance.

- Basketball dominates as the most popular women's sport to watch in the United States, but it's only third at best in all other countries. All the excitement around **US women's college basketball is undoubtedly spilling over into the professional leagues**, which should make 2024 the most-watched WNBA season yet.
- **Australians rank women's cricket third on their list and are the only country to include netball** (somewhat surprising) and Australian Rules Football (not at all surprising) in their top 10.
- **Volleyball makes the top six in all seven countries**, ranking highest (#2) in the United States.
- **France is the only country whose top 5 includes handball**, although it does receive an honorable mention in Germany.
- The Canadians include ice hockey in their top five, **cementing the success of the PWHL's inaugural season in North America**. Curling receives an honorable mention in Canada.
- The **French include rugby in their top six**, but it's just out of contention in the UK and Australia.
- **Athletics/ Track & Field charts in both Germany and Spain**, and it's a close contender in both France and the UK.
- **Germans are the only population to proactively mention biathlon** as a women's sport they watch or follow.



Most commonly watched women's sports by country

	US	UK	Australia	Canada	Germany	Spain	France
#1	Basketball	Soccer/ Football	Soccer/ Football	Tennis	Soccer/ Football	Soccer/ Football	Soccer/ Football
#2	Volleyball	Tennis	Tennis	Soccer/ Football	Tennis	Tennis	Tennis
#3	Tennis	Cricket	Cricket	Volleyball	Volleyball	Basketball	Volleyball
#4	Soccer/ Football	Golf	Basketball	Basketball	Basketball	Volleyball	Basketball
#5	Softball/ Baseball	Volleyball	Golf	Ice Hockey	Athletics/ T&F	Golf	Handball
#6	Golf	Basketball	Volleyball	Golf	Golf	Athletics/ T&F	Rugby
Honorable Mentions	Gymnastics	Rugby Softball/Baseball Athletics/T&F	Netball Australian rules football Rugby	Softball/ Baseball Curling Cricket	Handball Biathlon	Gymnastics	Golf Swimming Athletics/T&F

One caveat: in the survey we listed out only seven sports (soccer/ football, basketball, tennis, golf, softball/ baseball, cricket, and volleyball) with an 'other' category, so any other sport outside of those seven that made the rankings did so without the aid of being mentioned. That likely means a number of these lesser-ranked, regionally popular sports would have scored higher if we'd listed them. Lesson learned for our next study.

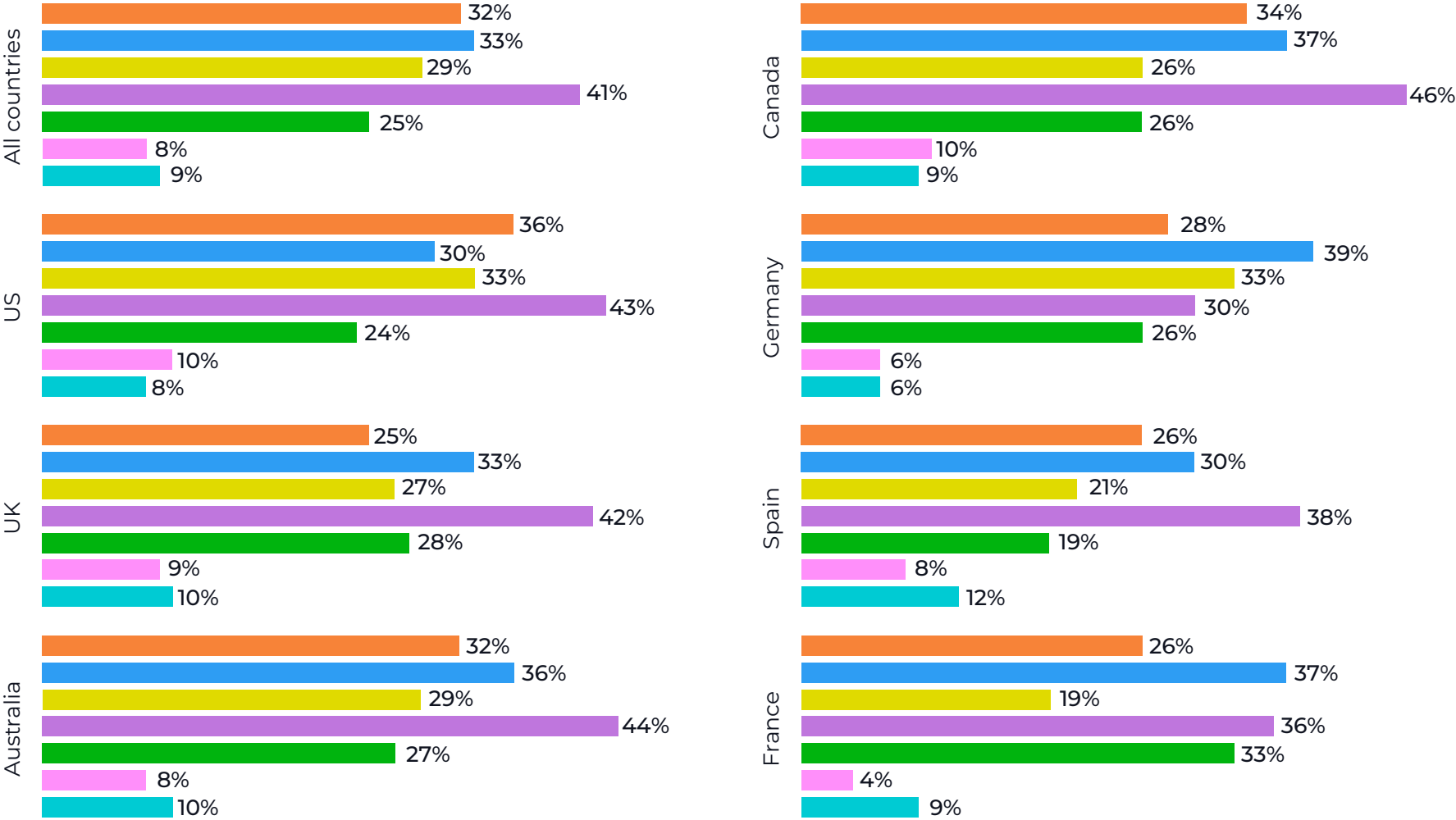
WOMEN'S SPORTS: WHY WE'RE WATCHING

Across our **almost 11,000 fans of women's sports**, the number one reason for watching women's sports is a desire to support women (41%), followed by the quality of play (33%) and an interest in following individual athletes (32%). We noted the following regional variance:

- North Americans (36% of US and 34% of Canadian fans of women's sports) are most likely to watch women's sports to follow individual athletes.
- Fans of women's sports in Germany (39%), France (37%), and Canada (37%) are likeliest to cite the quality of play as a reason why they tune in.
- German and American fans of women's sports are likeliest to say they watch because it's exciting (33% each).
- 33% of French fans of women's sports say they watch because of differences in how the sport is played compared with men's sports - which is five percentage points higher than the next country, the UK.



What makes you want to watch women's sports, specifically? Select all that apply.



Interest in individual athletes	Find women's sports exciting	Differences in how the sport is played compared with men's sports	Other
Quality of play	Want to support women	Have more in common with other women's sports fans	



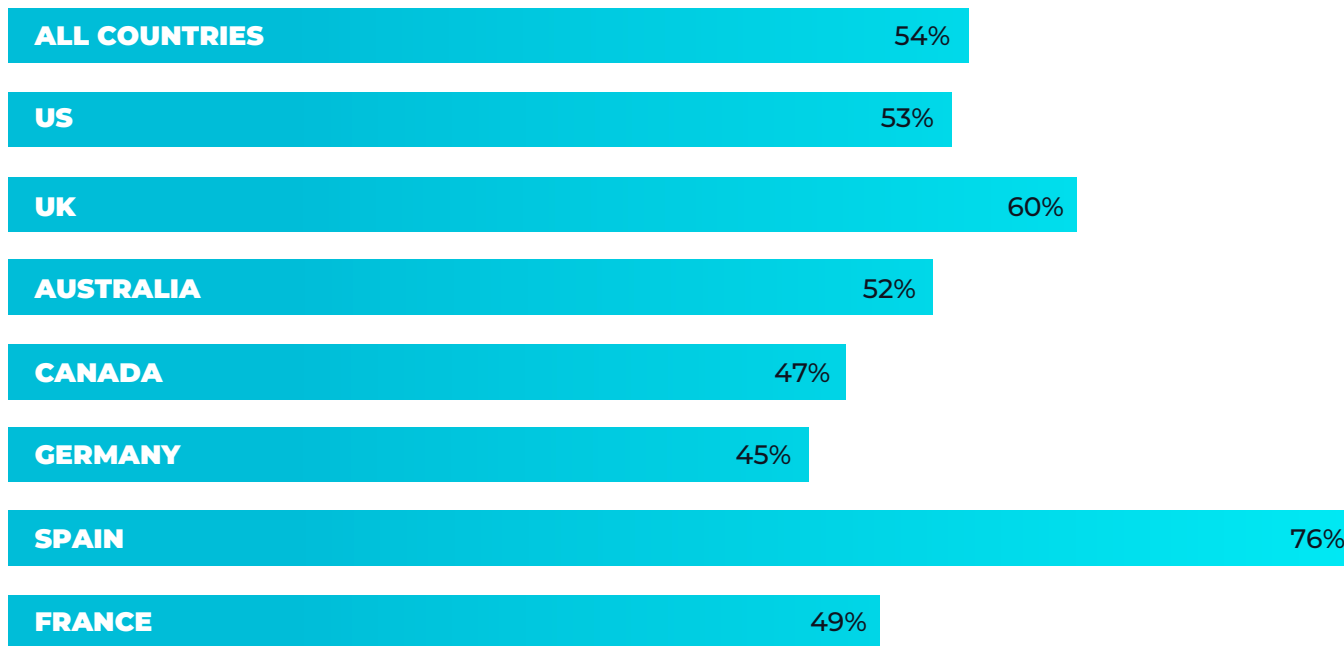
UP AND TO THE RIGHT

If you feel like women's sports are experiencing a surge in popularity, you're onto something.

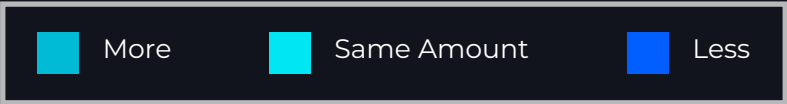
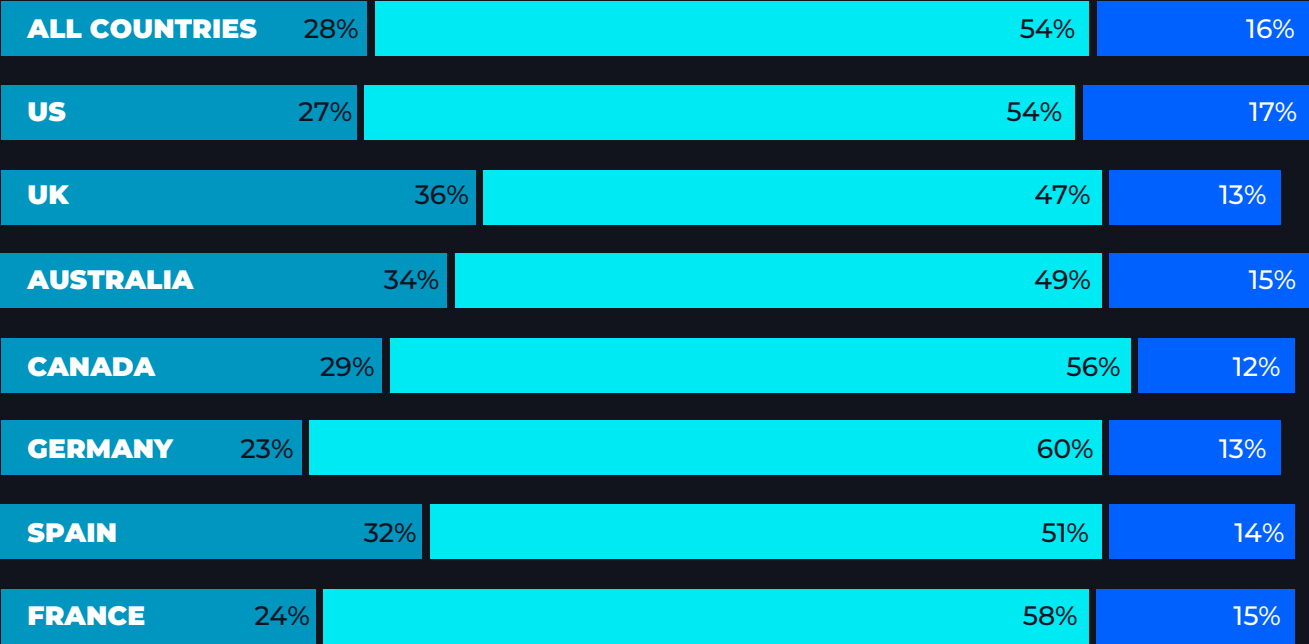
Fully 28% of the fans of women's sports we surveyed say they're watching more women's sports this year than last year, with the UK (36%) and Australia (34%) charting well above the average.

In general, a relatively high percentage of women's sports fans (54%) have only begun watching within the last three years, putting them early in their voyage of discovery - which bodes well for future growth of women's sports fandom. This proportion spikes in Spain, where roughly three-quarters (76%) said they've been watching or following for three years or less, and the UK ranked second with 60% being relatively new to women's sports. One might credit the 2023 Women's FIFA World Cup Finals, which saw Spain triumph over England in a closely contested battle, with being the catalyst for at least some of that lift - especially since football/ soccer is by far the most popular women's sport in those two markets.

Percentage of women's sports fans who have watched or followed for 3 years or less



How much women's sports are you watching compared to last year?





WHAT'S FUELING THE RISE IN WOMEN'S SPORTS FANDOM?

As for why people say they've been watching more women's sports, personal interest (44%) and quality and enjoyment (38%) are the biggest drivers, but the amount of media coverage (37%) and ease of finding women's sports (32%) are close behind. Personal interest is the biggest factor in the US (50% of women's sports fans), Canada (47%), Australia (45%), and Germany (40%), while increased media coverage is mentioned most frequently by women's sports fans in Spain (48%), France (40%), and the UK (38%).

Indeed, recent reports suggest that thanks to the proliferation of streaming and social channels easing the 'broadcast bottleneck', women's sports share of media coverage has shot up from only 4% to 15%⁸. That's significantly off from a position of equity; still, the increasing accessibility of women's sports serves as a catalyst for a new wave of women's sports fans.

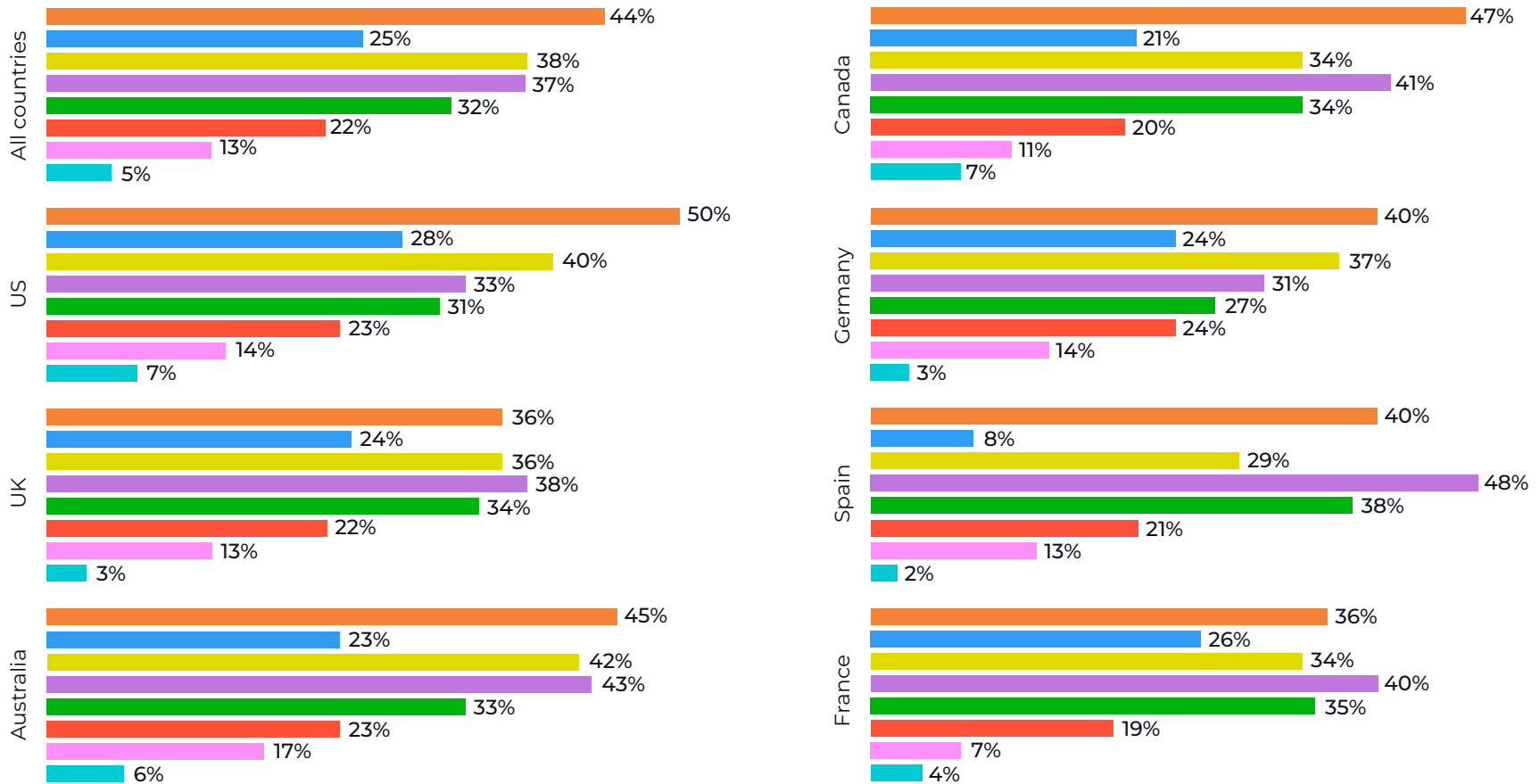
Media proliferation and fragmentation have meant more capacity but have also created a hurdle for women's sports fans everywhere: figuring out where to watch. A noteworthy 46% of all women's sports fans and 50% of US women's sports fans say they most commonly find women's sports by channel surfing.

Among the 16% of women's sports fans who say they're watching less this year than last, the biggest factor cited is time (41%), followed by personal interest (27%), and amount of media coverage (19%).

Interestingly, a large percentage of fans of women's sports - 55% - say they would watch more women's sports if they could watch with others, whether in person, at a bar, or with friends. All of this points to the role of community in sports and bodes well for Alexis Ohanian's 776 Foundation, which recently invested in the popular women's sports-focused The Sports Bra⁹, paving the way for expansion via franchise.



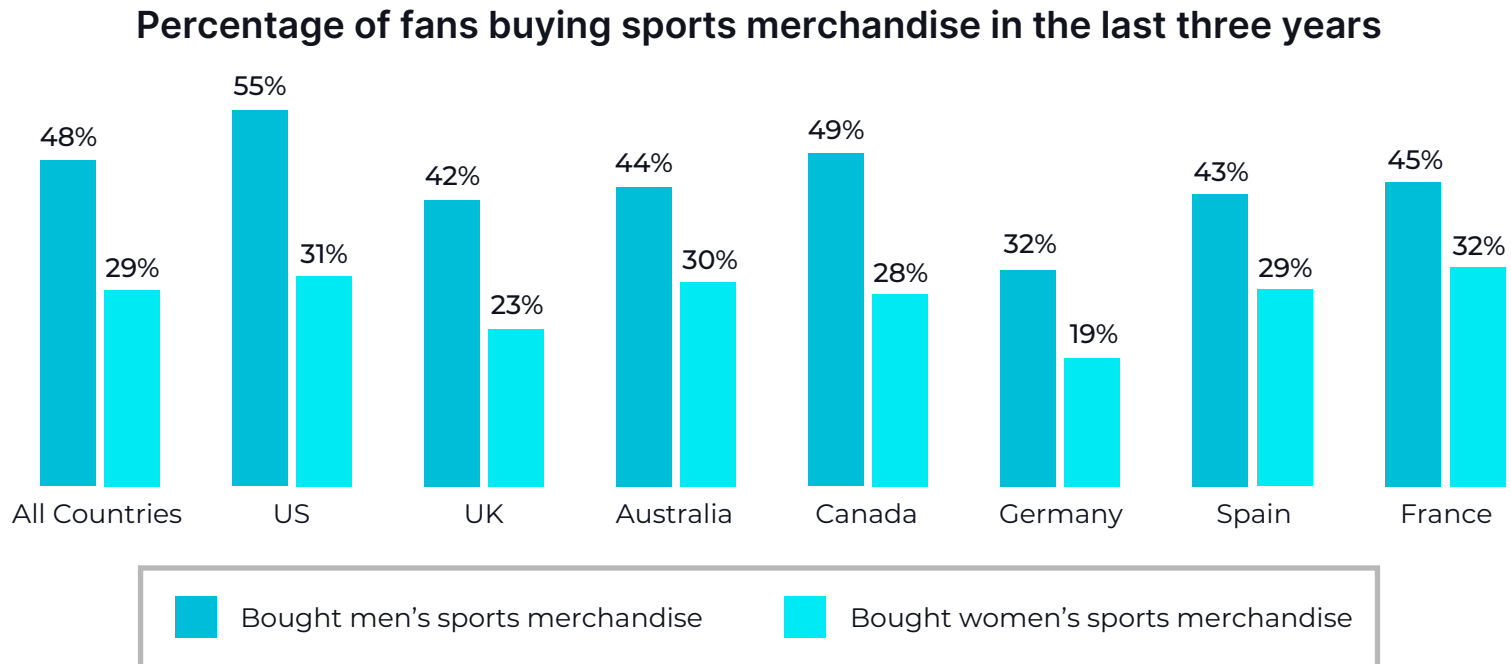
What are your main reasons for currently watching more women's sports compared to last year? Select all that apply.



STILL PLAYING CATCH-UP: WOMEN'S SPORTS MERCHANDISE

As mentioned, the majority of fans of women's sports began watching in the last three years, and the merchandise market appears to be in its infancy as well. 29% of fans of women's sports say they've purchased women's sports merch in those three years, compared with the 48% of fans of men's sports who say they've bought men's sports merchandise. The US shows the healthiest purchasing habits of women's sports gear (31%) - but also the biggest gap relative to men's sports fans who purchased men's sports gear (55%) - suggesting American sports fans are generally more likely to invest in merchandise. Meanwhile, fans in the UK (23%) and Germany (19%) are least likely to have purchased women's sports merch. If only Mary Earps' goalkeeper jersey had been released during the height of the Lionesses' World Cup fever, we might be looking at a different story.

Given the record-breaking momentum behind WNBA rookie Caitlin Clark's Indiana Fever jersey, it's safe to bet that these numbers will be moving significantly north in the US in particular.

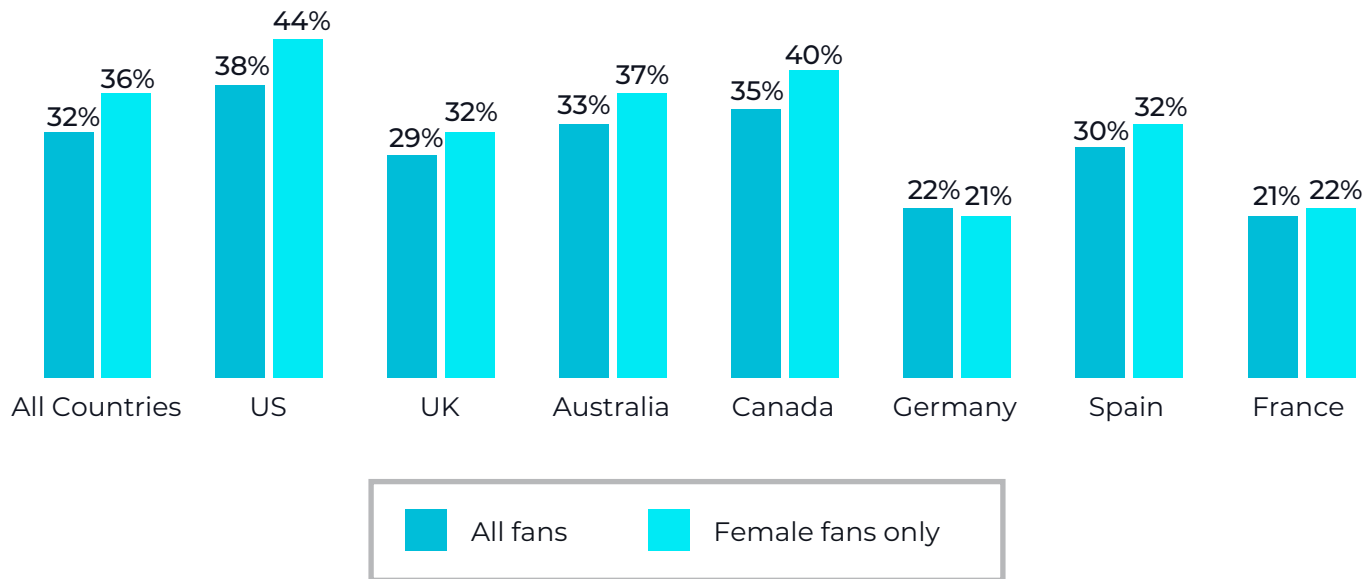


THE UNTAPPED BRAND OPPORTUNITY IN WOMEN'S SPORTS

Our survey provides fresh evidence of needle-moving opportunity and value for brands that invest in women's sports. Across all countries, 32% of fans of women's sports say they are more likely to purchase products when a brand supports women's sports or partners with female athletes. The number is highest in the US (38%) and Canada (35%).

When we focus on women who are fans of women's sports, the numbers move up further, with 36% across all countries and 44% of US female fans of women's sports saying they're likelier to buy from a brand that supports women athletes and/or women's sports.

Fans of women's sports who are more likely to purchase when a brand supports women's sports/athletes



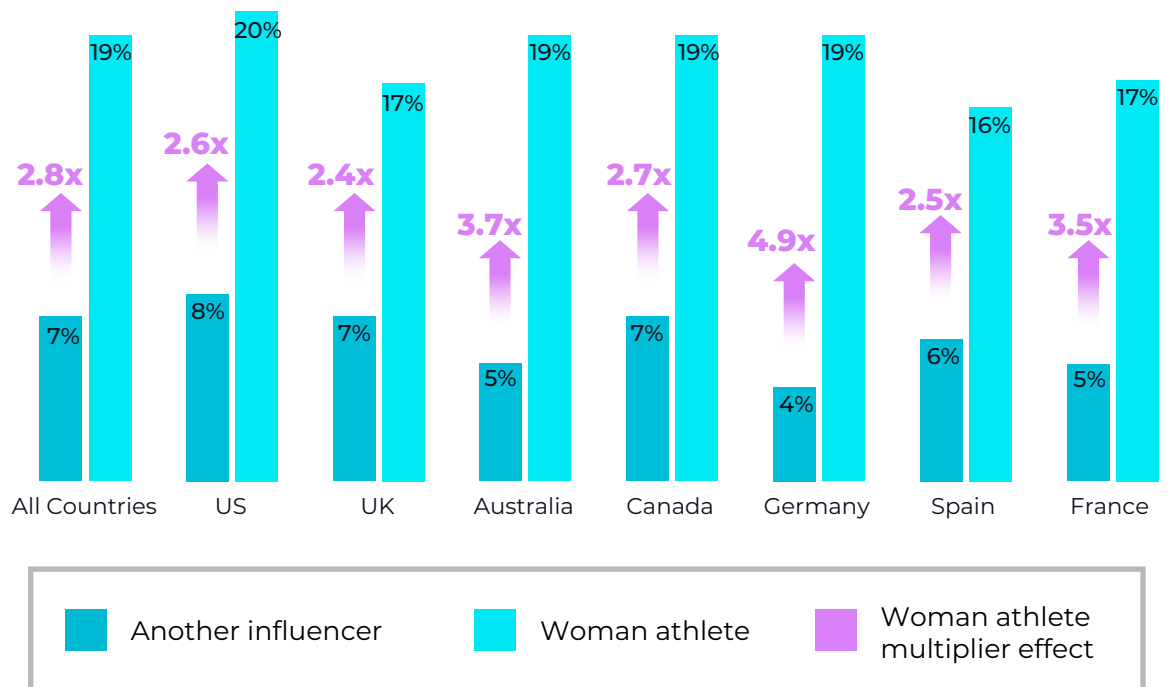
It turns out that women’s sports fans (who account for 73% of our entire respondent base) are also substantially more compelled to purchase the recommendation of a woman athlete than if another type of influencer is involved.

On average, women’s sports fans are 2.8 times more likely to purchase a product recommended by a woman athlete rather than by another type of influencer. And those who watch women’s sports daily or weekly are 3.5x more likely.

The highest percentage of American women’s sports fans (20%) say they’re more likely to purchase a product recommended by a woman athlete, but the results are relatively even across all countries. The woman athlete ‘multiplier effect’ is at its highest in Germany, where 19% of women’s sports fans say they’d be likelier to purchase a product promoted by a women athlete whereas only 4% say they’d be likelier to make a purchase based on promotion of a different kind of influencer - a multiplier effect of 4.9x.

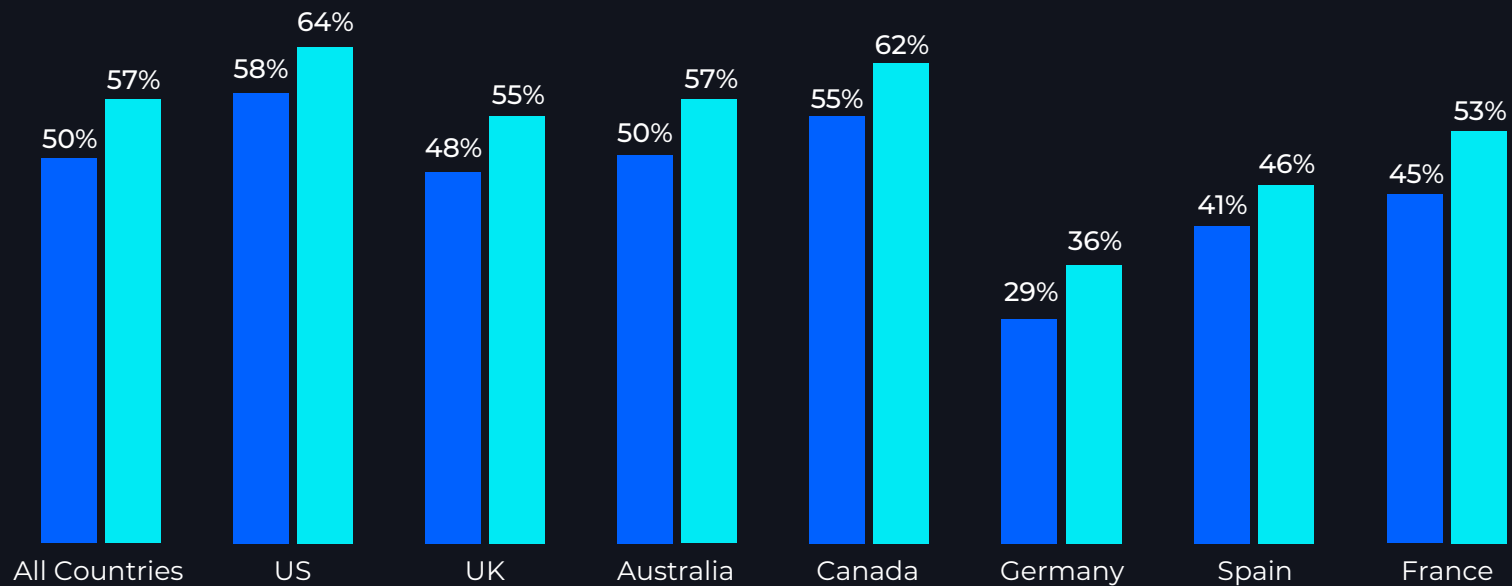
The effect is even more pronounced when we isolate fans of women’s sports who follow individual women athlete accounts on social media. 33% of that population say they’d be more likely to purchase based on a women athlete promoting a product, compared to only 7% who say they’re more likely to be swayed by another type of influencer. In this case, the multiplier effect rises to 4.8x.

Are you more likely to purchase a product promoted by a woman athlete or by another type of influencer?



These positive indicators align with relatively higher levels of trust in women athletes among all people, whether they are fans of women's sports or not. A brand working with female athletes rather than male athletes might expect to see a 5-8 percentage point 'believability boost' because people in every country say they have higher levels of trust in women athletes compared to male athletes. Trust levels are generally highest in North America and lowest in continental Europe.

How much do you trust the athletes believe in the products they promote? (all respondents)



Trust male athletes Trust female athletes



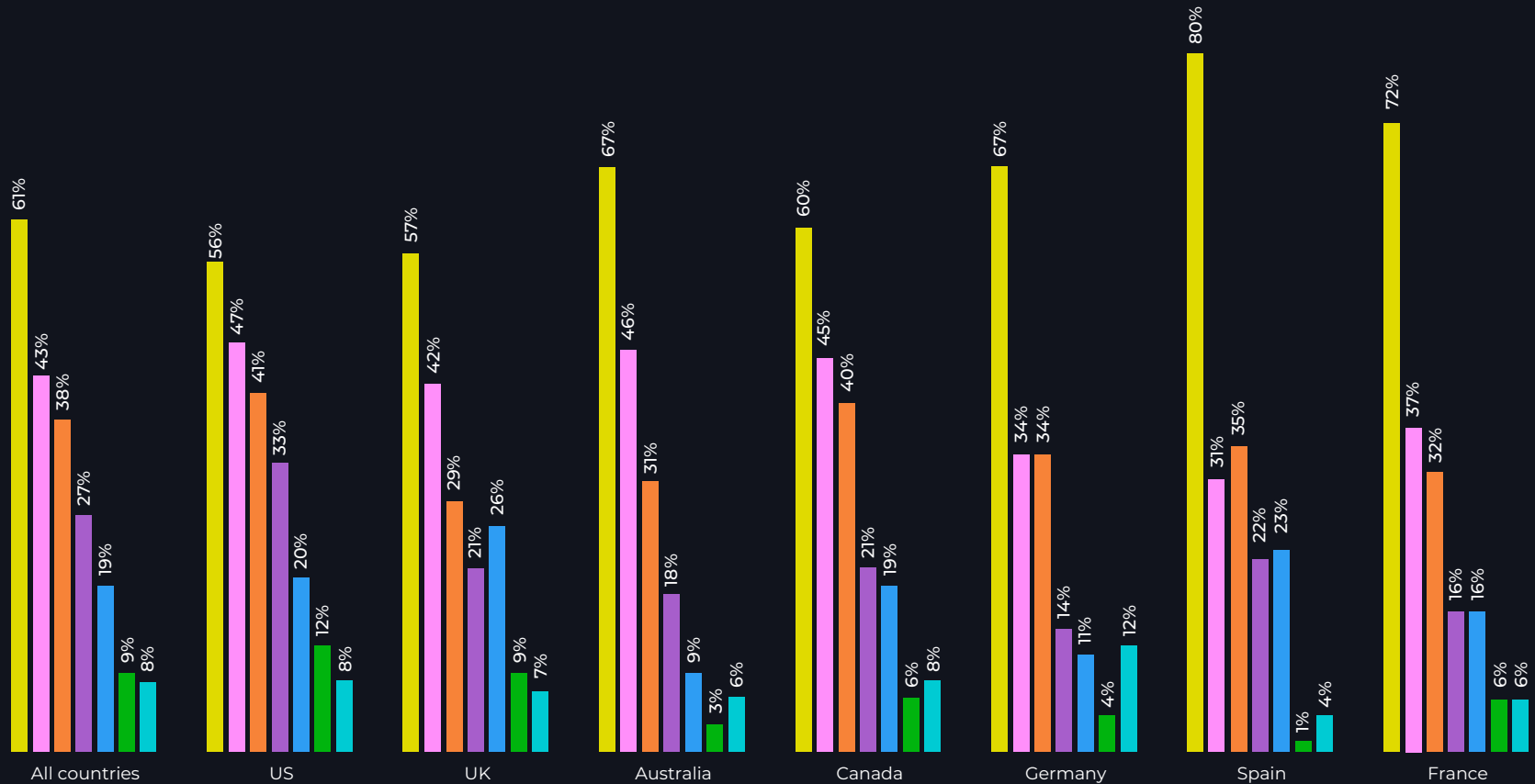
THE SOCIAL MEDIA OPPORTUNITY

So, where should all this product promotion be taking place? On social media platforms, where 36% of all people (not just sports fans) follow one or more women's sports social accounts. Individual women athlete accounts (20%) are the most popular, followed by women's sports team accounts (18%), women's sports league accounts (10%), women's sports media accounts (6%), and women's sports fan accounts (4%). Generally speaking, 49% of people who follow sports-focused social media accounts engage with them at least weekly - making sports on social media a key engagement opportunity for brands.



As for where they're engaging with individual women athlete accounts: Instagram is relatively dominant overall, followed by Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok. X (formerly Twitter) slightly outranks TikTok in the UK and Spain, and the two platforms are tied in France. As one might expect, we see different results by age bracket: the 18-34 crowd puts TikTok second behind Instagram, while those 65 and older turn to Facebook first. Note this study was conducted before President Biden signed a bill to potentially ban TikTok in the United States unless its parent company, Bytedance, divests ownership within a year - time will tell how that impacts overall social media usage as well as engagement in women's sports-focused content.

On which social media platforms do you follow individual women athletes? Select all that apply.



CONCLUSION

Women's sports have crossed the chasm.

Only 12 months ago, women's sports were said to be having a 'moment'. Noting the sustained momentum, observers of the space began to coin it a 'movement'. Today, with 73% of our broadly representative sample across multiple countries confirming that they watch women's sports at least a few times a year, we can say with confidence that **women's sports is part of mainstream cultural dialogue across every country in which we surveyed.**

It turns out that an investment in women's sports isn't just about targeting women; it provides the chance to connect with a large, passionate body of fans who are just as likely to be male, and who are flocking to women's sports for multiple reasons: out of a desire to support women; because they enjoy the quality; due to differences in the way the sports are played by women compared to men; and because they find women's sports exciting.

Momentum continues to build.

Our study suggests we are in the early stages of women's sports market development, with new fans still very much in their discovery phase. 54% of all women's sports fans have only begun tuning into women's sports in the last three years. 28% of them are watching more compared to last year. And only 29% have bought women's sports merchandise in the last three years, implying plenty of room for upside. **Men's sports have been mainstream for much longer, and despite the head start across all categories, we expect the gaps to narrow in the coming years.**



Brands that sponsor women's sports now can score a multi-layered win.

In an age where only 9% of sports media investment dollars are spent on women's sports¹⁰, **brands can create both economic upside and goodwill by committing more resources to women's sports.** Consider the facts:

- 53% of consumers across all countries say brands aren't investing enough in women's sports. In Parity-run campaigns we've seen first-hand how positively audiences respond to seeing brands and pro women athletes join forces in authentic, engaging ways.
- 57% of consumers across all countries trust that women athletes believe in the products they promote - 7 percentage points higher than their trust in male athletes.
- 32% of all women's sports fans (and 36% of women who watch women's sports) are more likely to purchase products when a brand supports women's sports and women athletes.
- Women's sports fans are 2.8 times more likely to purchase a product recommended by a woman athlete rather than by other types of influencers.

With myriad sponsorship possibilities to choose from, the world of women's sports is wide open for business.

We predict an era of heightened fun and creativity in sports marketing in which more **brands partner with more women athletes to build increasingly memorable, creative, emotionally compelling, and above all successful campaigns.** We can't wait to see what this new era of mainstream brings.



Methodology and Demographics

[This poll](#) was conducted via SurveyMonkey from March 28 - April 10, 2024 among a national sample of 5,408 U.S., 1,972 UK, 1,251 Australian, 1,743 Canadian, 1,290 German, 1,193 Spanish, and 1,517 French adults aged 18+. Respondents for this survey were selected from the more than 2 million people who take surveys on the SurveyMonkey platform each day. The modeled error estimate for this survey is plus or minus 2.0 percentage points in the U.S., 2.5 percentage points in the UK and Canada, 3.0 percentage points in Germany and France, and 3.5 percentage points in Australia and Spain. U.S. data were weighted for age, race, sex, education, and geography using the Census Bureau's American Community Survey to reflect the demographic composition of the United States. Data in the UK, Australia, Canada, Germany, Spain, and France were weighted for age and sex using data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to reflect the demographic composition of those countries.



References

- 1 [CNN Interview](#) with Serena Williams
- 2 ["The Rise of Women's Sports Isn't a Moment, It's a Movement,"](#) Yahoo Sports
- 3 Defined throughout the report as people who watch women's sports a few times per year or more frequently
- 4 ["Why Female Athletes Make Winning Entrepreneurs,"](#) EY & ESPNw
- 5 ["Thriving Through Sport: The Transformative Impact on Girls' Mental Health,"](#) Women's Sports Foundation
- 6 ["Breaking the billion-dollar barrier: Women's elite sports to generate more than \\$1 billion in revenue in 2024,"](#) Deloitte
- 7 ["Global Sports Industry Revenues to Reach \\$260 bn by 2033,"](#) Sportspro Media
- 8 ["New Study: Women's Sports Comprise 15% of Sports Media Coverage,"](#) Wasserman.
- 9 ["With New Investor, The Sports Bra Makes Plans to Franchise Womens' Sports Focused Bar,"](#) USA Today
- 10 ["Forget brand sponsorship: women's sports need brand intervention,"](#) Parity blog



About Parity

Minority-founded in 2020, Parity is a sports marketing and sponsorship platform dedicated to closing the gender income and opportunity gap in professional sports. By developing high-impact collaborations between brands, professional women athletes and their fans, Parity has proudly put millions of dollars in the pockets of women athletes, attracting dozens of brands to the movement in the process. The platform connects brands like Microsoft, Morgan Stanley, Superfeet, and AdventHealth to more than 1,000 women athletes from 75+ sports, including well over 250 Olympians and Paralympians. For more information on how to tap into the rapidly rising influence and popularity of women athletes, visit paritynow.co, request a [consultation](#), or follow us on [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

About SurveyMonkey

[SurveyMonkey](https://www.surveymonkey.com) is a global leader in online surveys and forms that empowers people with the insights they need to make decisions with speed and confidence. Our fast, intuitive feedback management platform connects millions of users worldwide with real-time AI-powered insights that drive meaningful decisions. We provide answers to more than 20 million questions every day so that people and organizations can attract new audiences, delight customers, create advocates, and extend their competitive advantage in the marketplace. Our vision is to raise the bar for human experiences by amplifying individual voices. Learn more at [SurveyMonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com).

