



# Woman in sports and business life

Research summary

2021

■ ■ ■  
The better the question. The better the answer.  
The better the world works.



# Project goal and research methodology

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**The goal of the project** is to assess the opinion of women in senior and middle management in Hungary about the role of sports in women's careers path and leadership.



## Research methodology:

### Quantitative research:

Online survey - 232 respondents

### Qualitative research:

Semi-structured interviews - 20 participants



## Target group:

Domestic and international -, SMEs and large companies, female middle and senior executives.



## Institutions involved in the research:

Equaliser Foundation  
University of Physical Education

EY



An aerial photograph showing a large group of triathletes in black wetsuits and white swim caps swimming in turquoise water. A single kayaker in a pink kayak is positioned in the center of the group. A large yellow trapezoidal shape is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the section header.

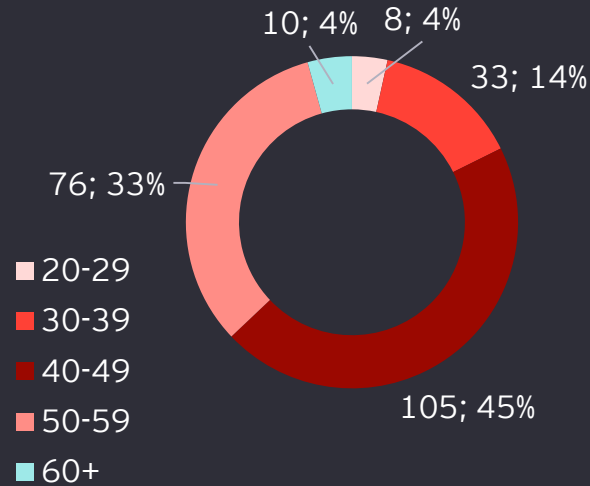
# 1. Analysis of Demographics



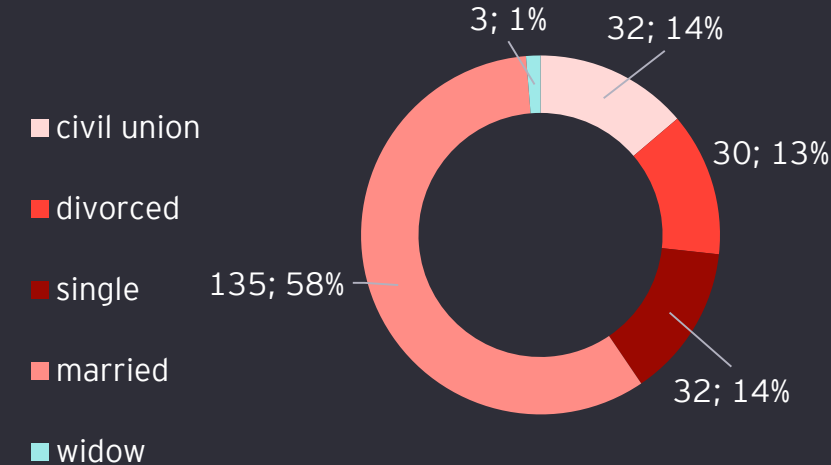
# Demographics

## Online survey results:

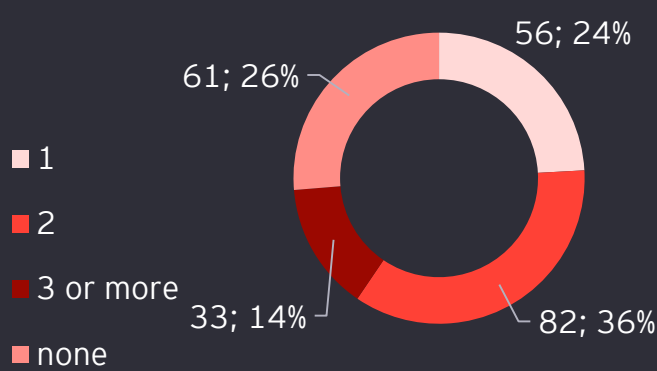
### 1. Age



### 2. Marital status



### 3. Number of children





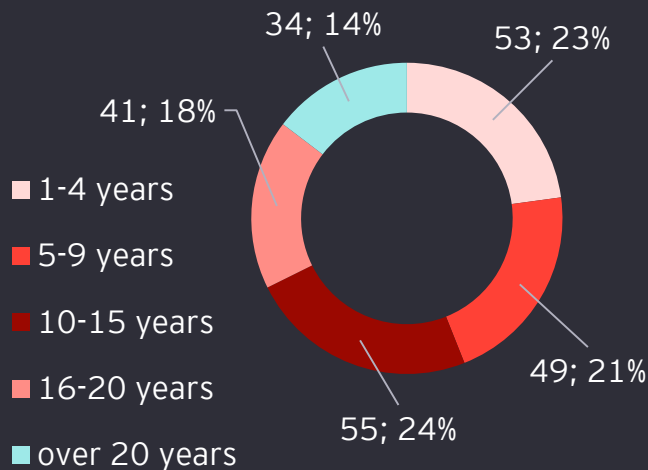


## 2. Analysis of questions for corporate leaders

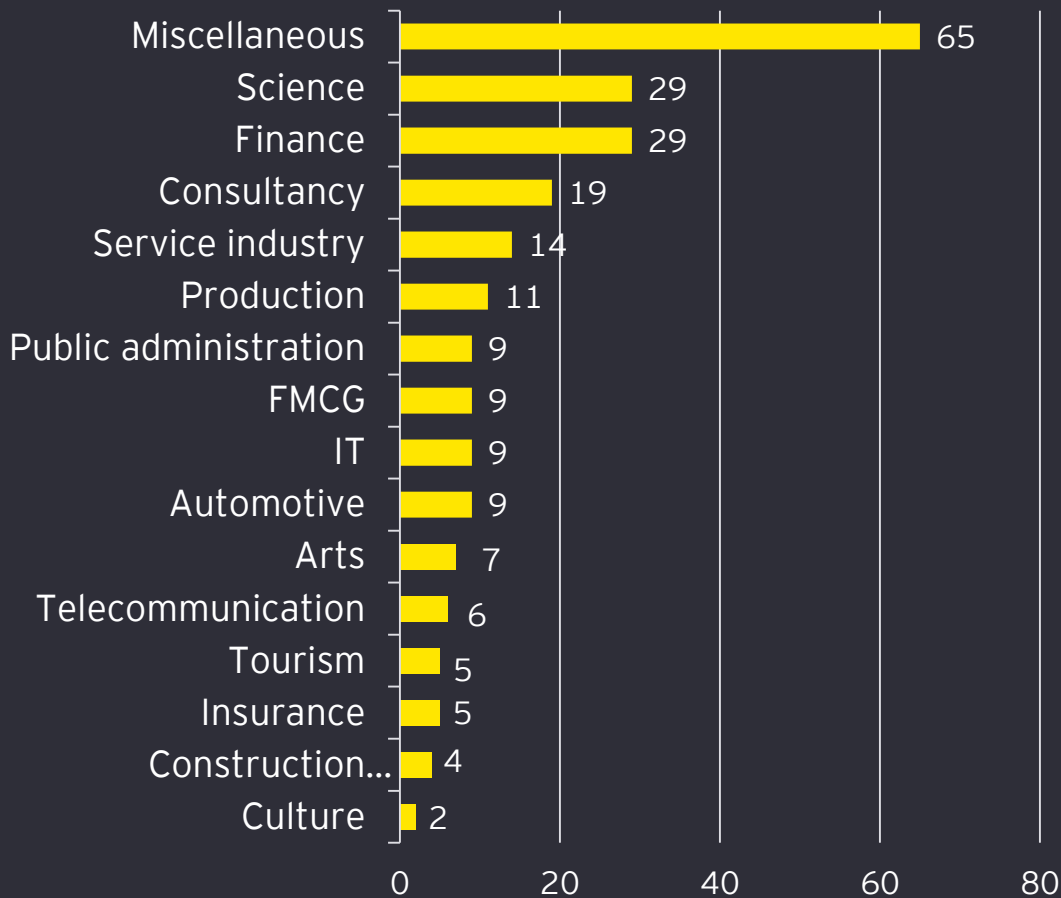


## 2. Analysis of questions for corporate leaders (Question 4, 5)

### 4. Years spent in a leadership position



### 5. Sector

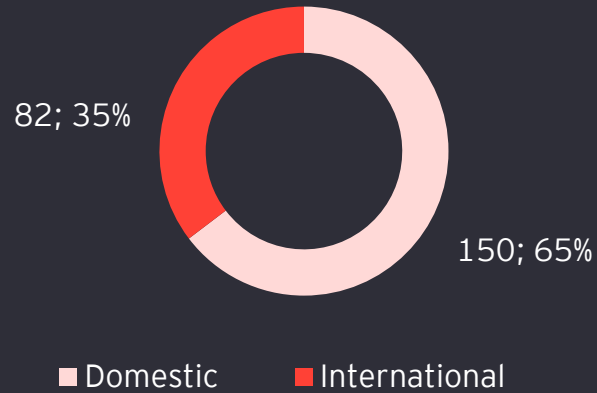


### Other sectors indicated

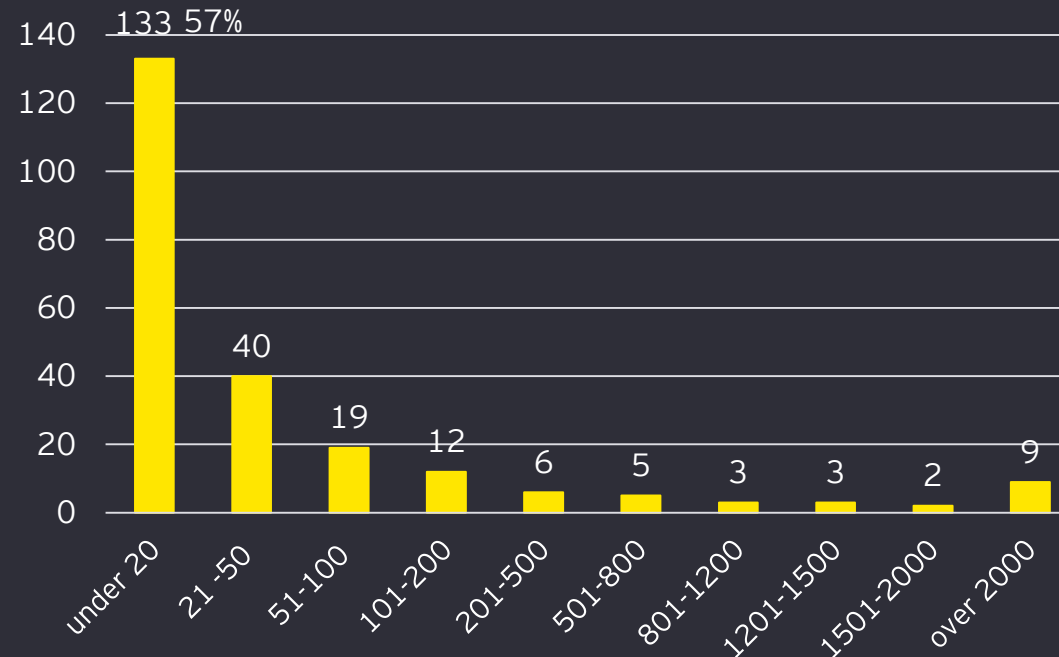
Energy  
Media  
Education  
Commerce  
Marketing/communications  
Pharma, Property management  
Chemical industry  
Sports  
Space exploration, Entertainment business

## 2. Questions for corporate leaders (Question 6, 7)

### 6. Location



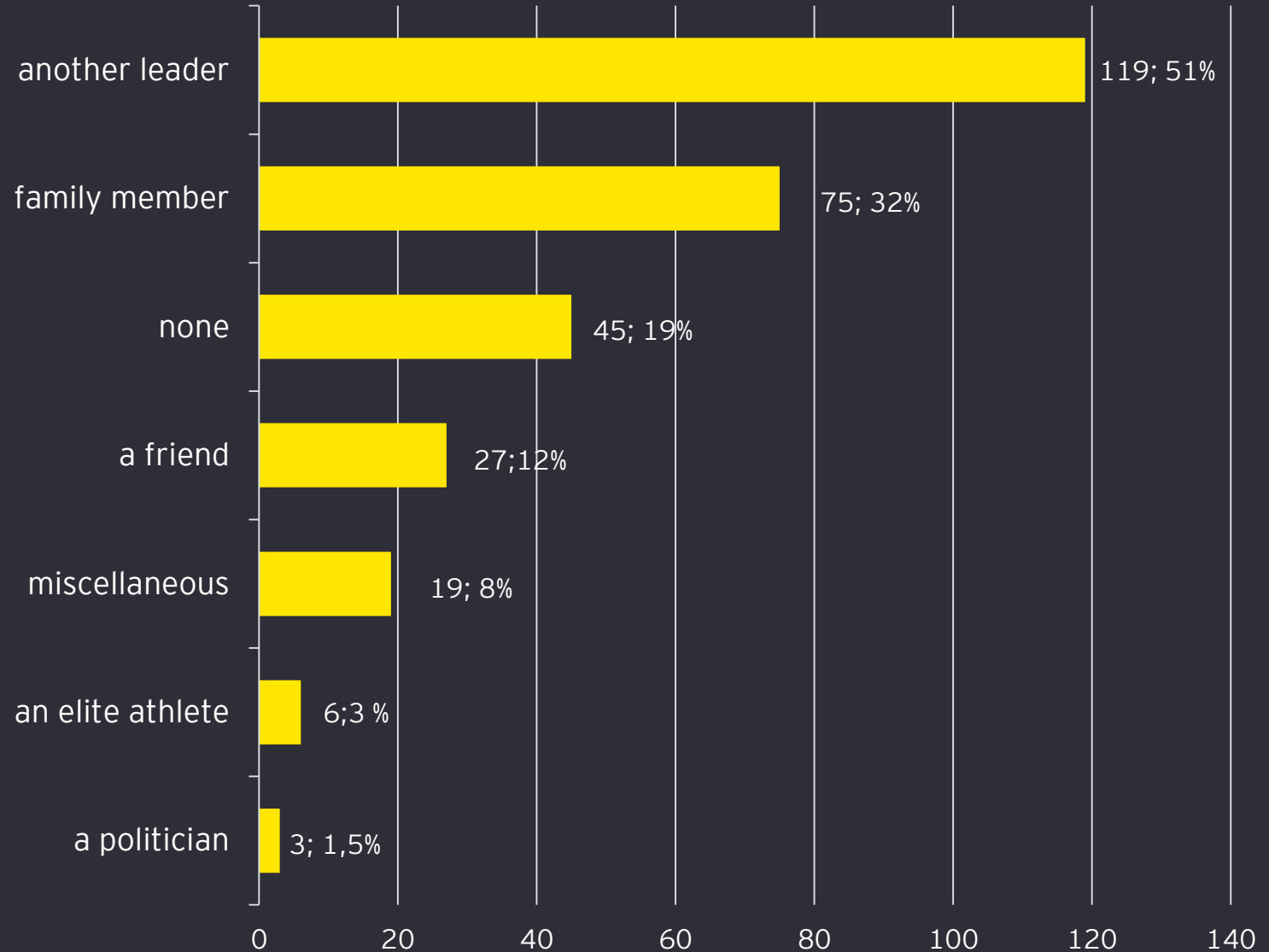
### 7. Number of employees



## 2. Questions for corporate leaders (Question 8)

### 8. Who inspired you to become a leader?

\*A multiple-choice question and considered the 232 respondents as the basis of comparison for each answer

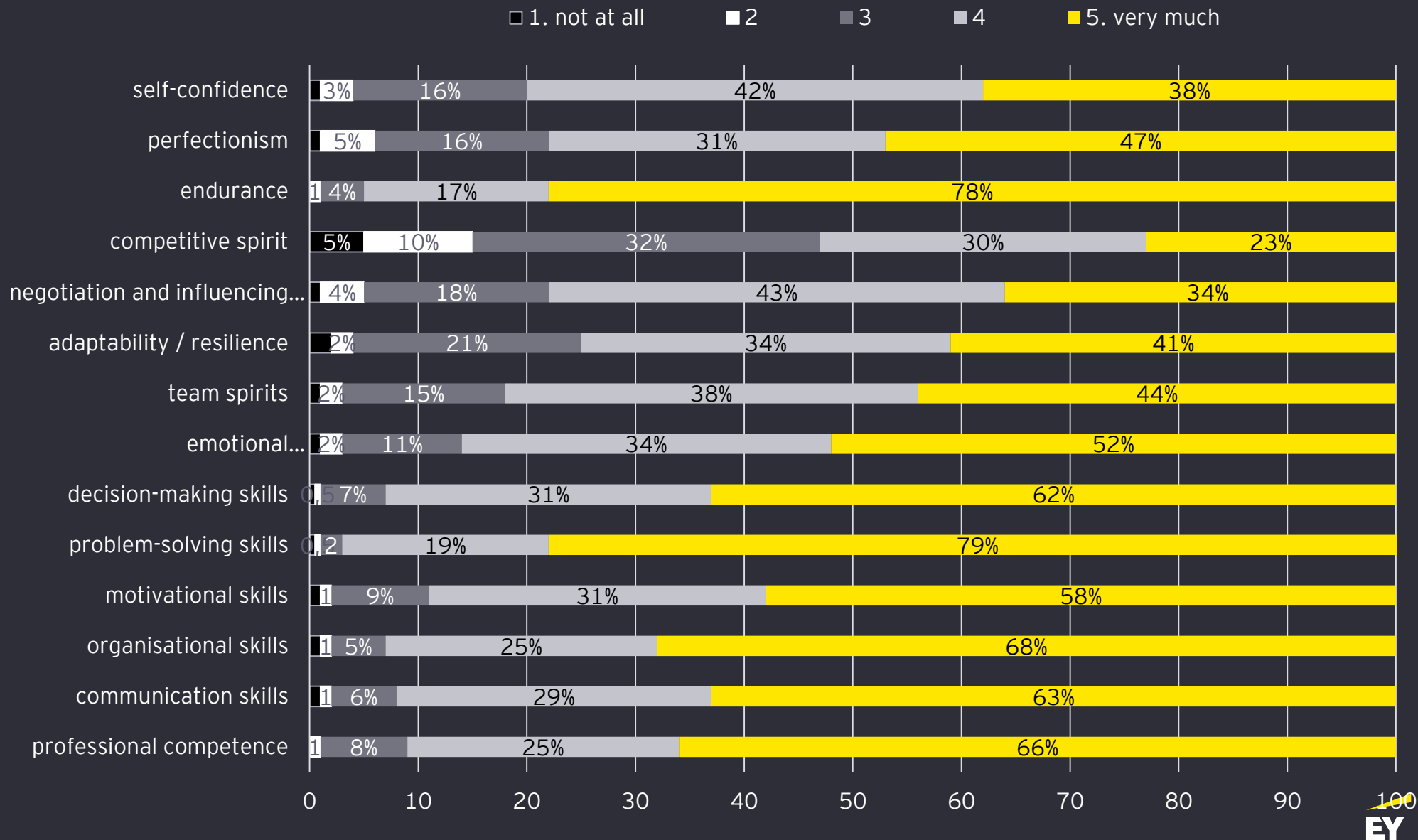




## 2. Questions for corporate leaders (9)

9. To which extent did the below-listed competencies and skills play a role in your becoming a successful leader?

5-level Likert scale  
1= not at all  
5= very much





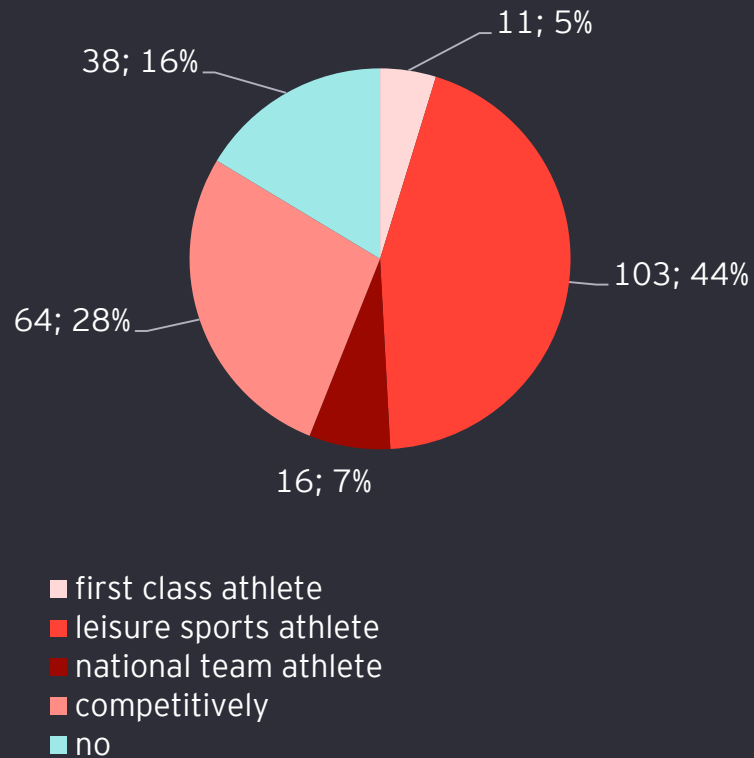
An aerial photograph showing a large group of triathletes in black wetsuits and white swim caps swimming in turquoise water. A single kayaker in a bright pink kayak is positioned in the center of the group. A yellow rectangular box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the section header.

### 3. Sport participation in general

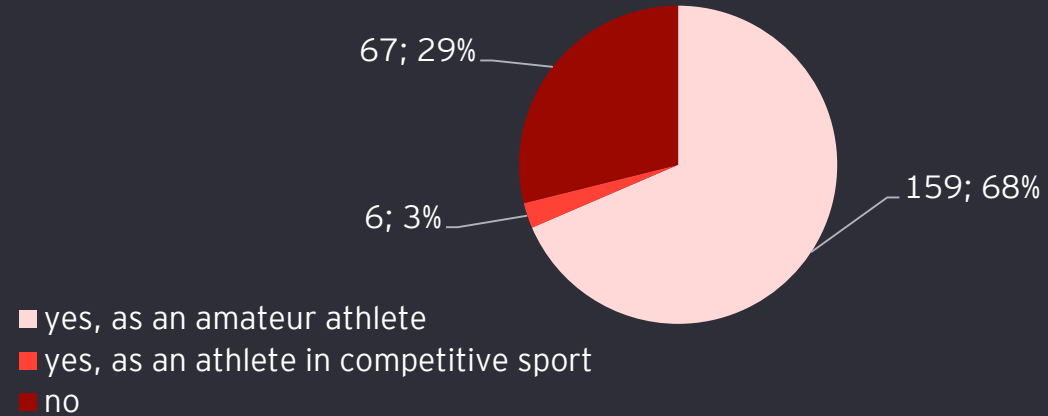


### 3. Sport participation in general

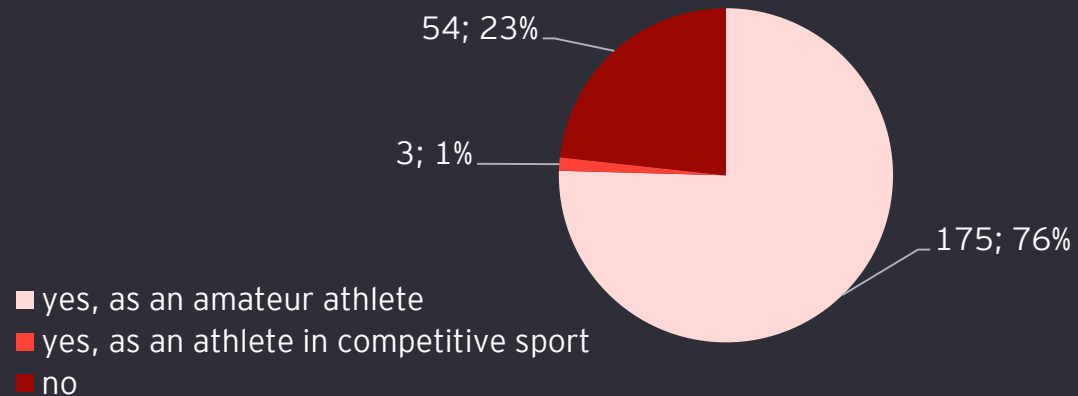
10. At what levels have you played sport in your youth?



11. Did you regularly play sports when you became a business leader?



12. Did you regularly play sports until the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic?



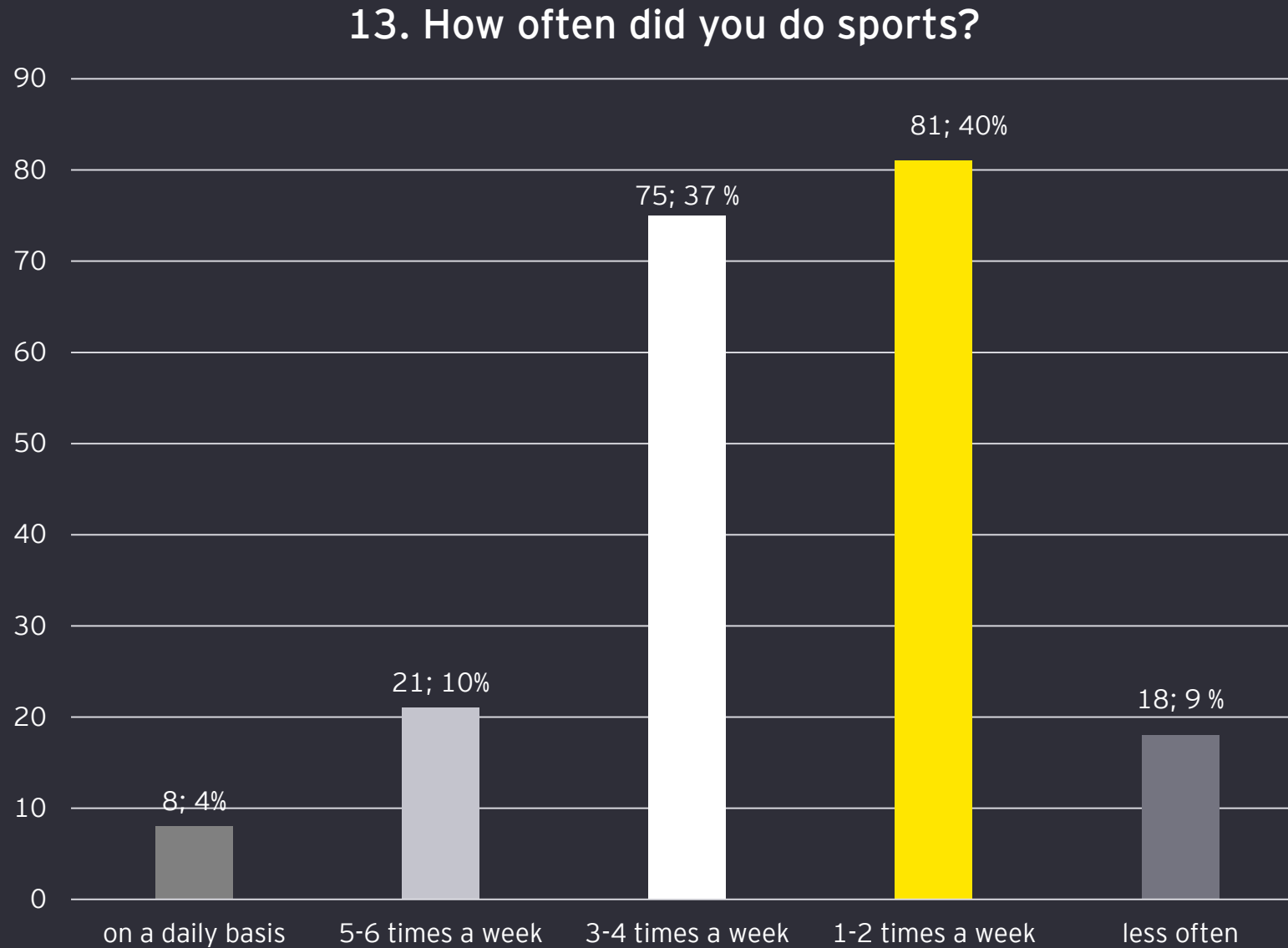


An aerial photograph showing a large group of triathletes in black wetsuits and white swim caps swimming in turquoise water. A single kayaker in a bright pink kayak is positioned in the center of the group. A large yellow rectangular box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the section header.

## 4. Sporting habits (pre-COVID period)

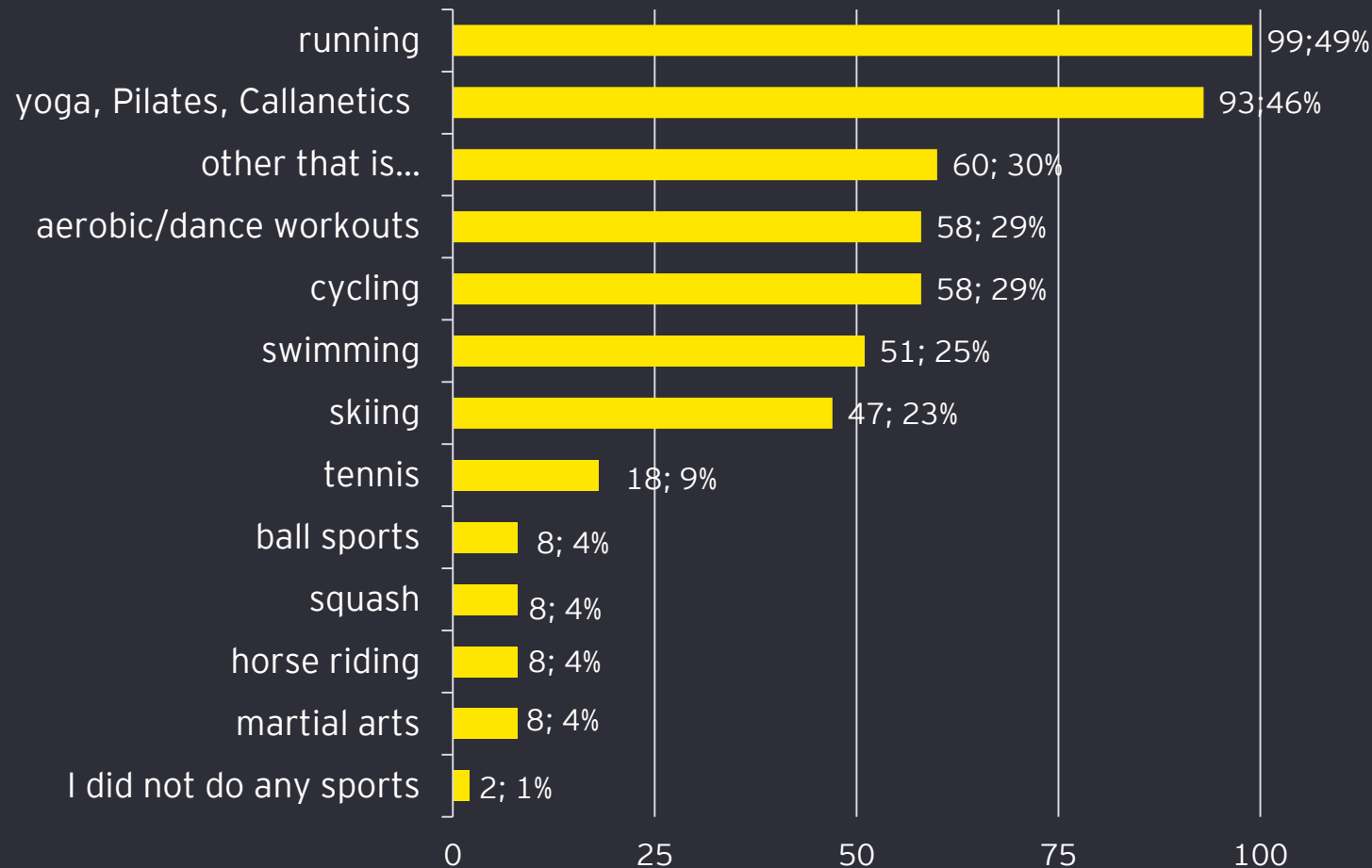


## 4. Sporting habits (pre-Covid period)



## 4. Sporting habits (pre-Covid period)

### 14. In what sports/fitness activities have you participated in the past five years?



### 14/b What other kind of sports did you do on a regular basis in the past five years? - further responses

- Outdoor walking
- Trekking, hiking
- Crossfit
- Golf
- Gym workout (in a group/with a personal trainer)
- kayaking/canoeing



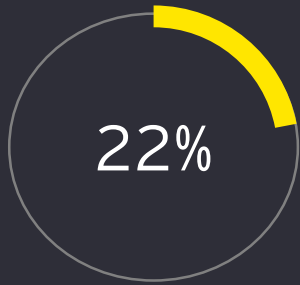
An aerial photograph showing a large group of triathletes in black wetsuits and white swim caps swimming in turquoise water. A kayaker in a pink kayak is also visible among the swimmers.

## 5. The link between sport participation and leadership

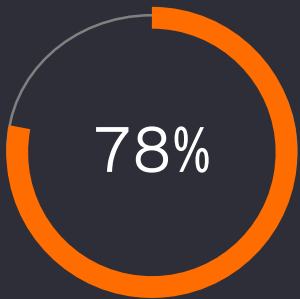


## 4. Sporting habits in a general period

15. Do you regularly participate in sports competitions/events organised for amateur athletes?

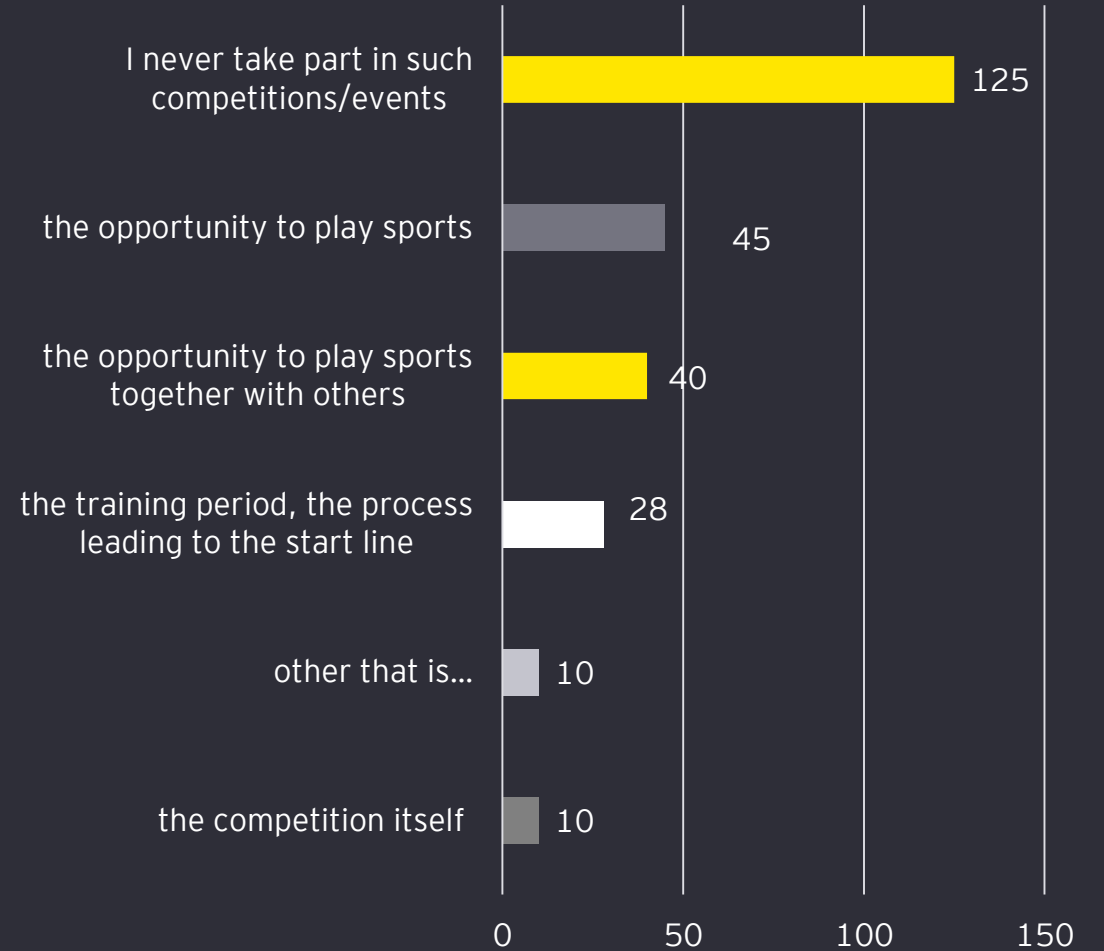


22 per cent of respondents do regularly participate in sports competitions/events organized for amateur athletes.



78 per cent of respondents do not participate in sports competitions/events organized for amateur athletes.

16. What motivates you best in such competitions? (Multiple choices) ?



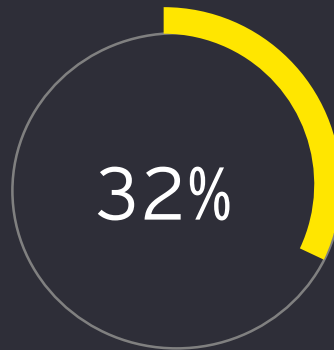
## 5. Link between sport participation and leadership

17. Does your current employer financially support employees' sport participation?



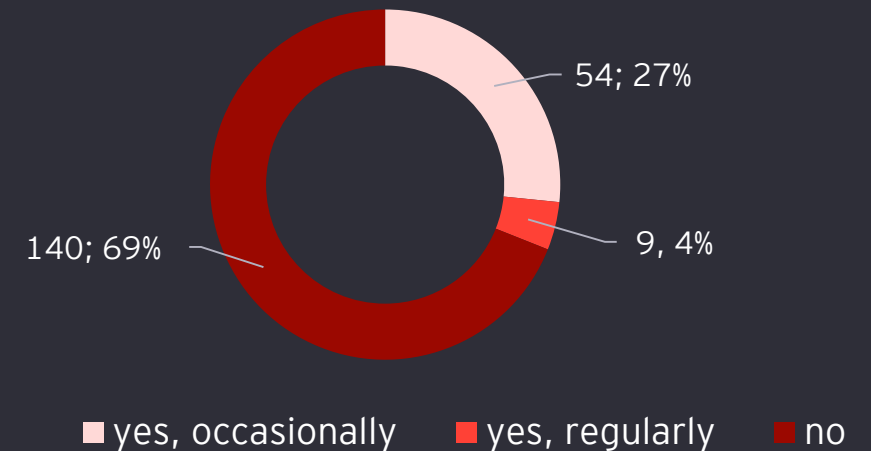
35 per cent of respondents answered yes

18. Does your company regularly organize (offline or online) team sports events for the employees ?



32 per cent of respondents answered yes.

19. Do you occasionally or regularly play sports with fellow leaders?





## 5. Link between sport participation and leadership

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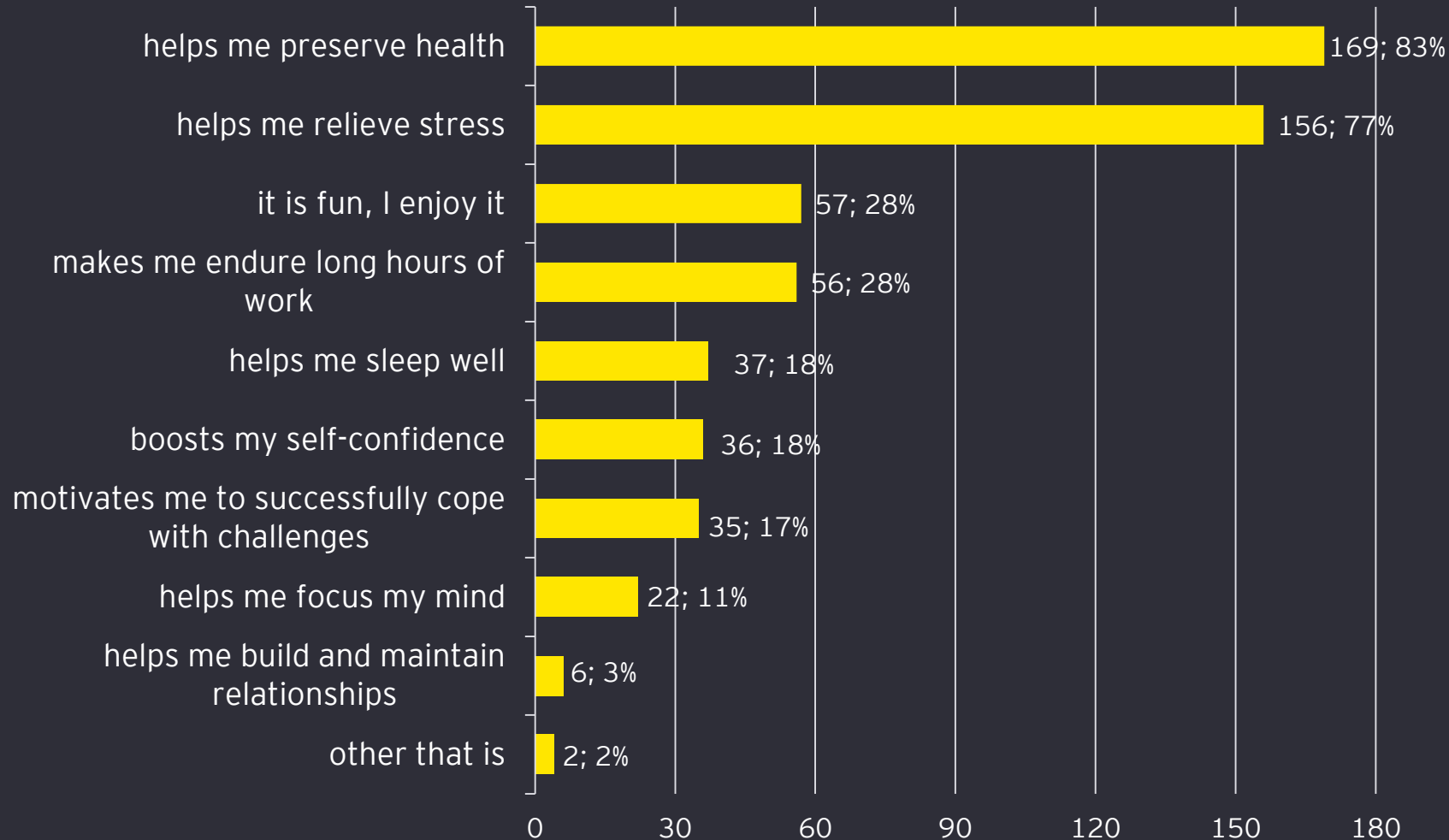
**21. Please, list 3 sport branches/physical activities that are the best in your opinion for networking purposes among corporate leaders.** (spontaneous answers, a maximum of three sport branches to be indicated)

- Doing sports is not aimed at networking
- Team sports: ice hockey, volleyball, Dual sports: badminton, tennis, squash, table tennis, and also trekking/hiking, golf, extreme motorsports - practically, any kind of sports...
- Sailing, team sports, themed and strategic team building car races (e.g. task-oriented rally)
- Any kind of team sports, group workouts
- Team sports, yoga, tennis
- Feeling good is the most important
- Ball sports
- Excursions, outdoor trekking, tennis
- Any kind of team sports (mainly ball sports), tennis
- Tennis, workout for women in a constant group, sailing
- I don't know, because sport means privacy, i.e. „me time“ to me and I do not want to mix it with work
- Tennis, golf
- Team sports, where co-operation is needed / running, where people are close to each other
- Sports games, dance workout to music, trail obstacle runs

## 5. Link between sport participation and leadership

### 22. What are the main benefits that playing sport has brought to your professional life?

22/b spontaneous answers:



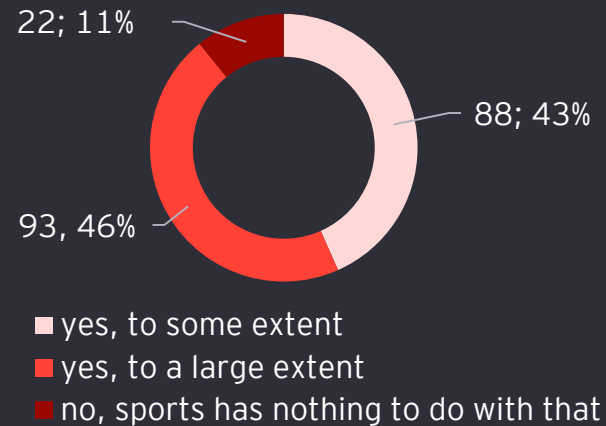
- Helps develop goal orientation
- Charity, good example
- Helps me think (I contemplate and resolve complex problems while running)
- Makes me feel better both physically and mentally

\*a maximum of 3 choices

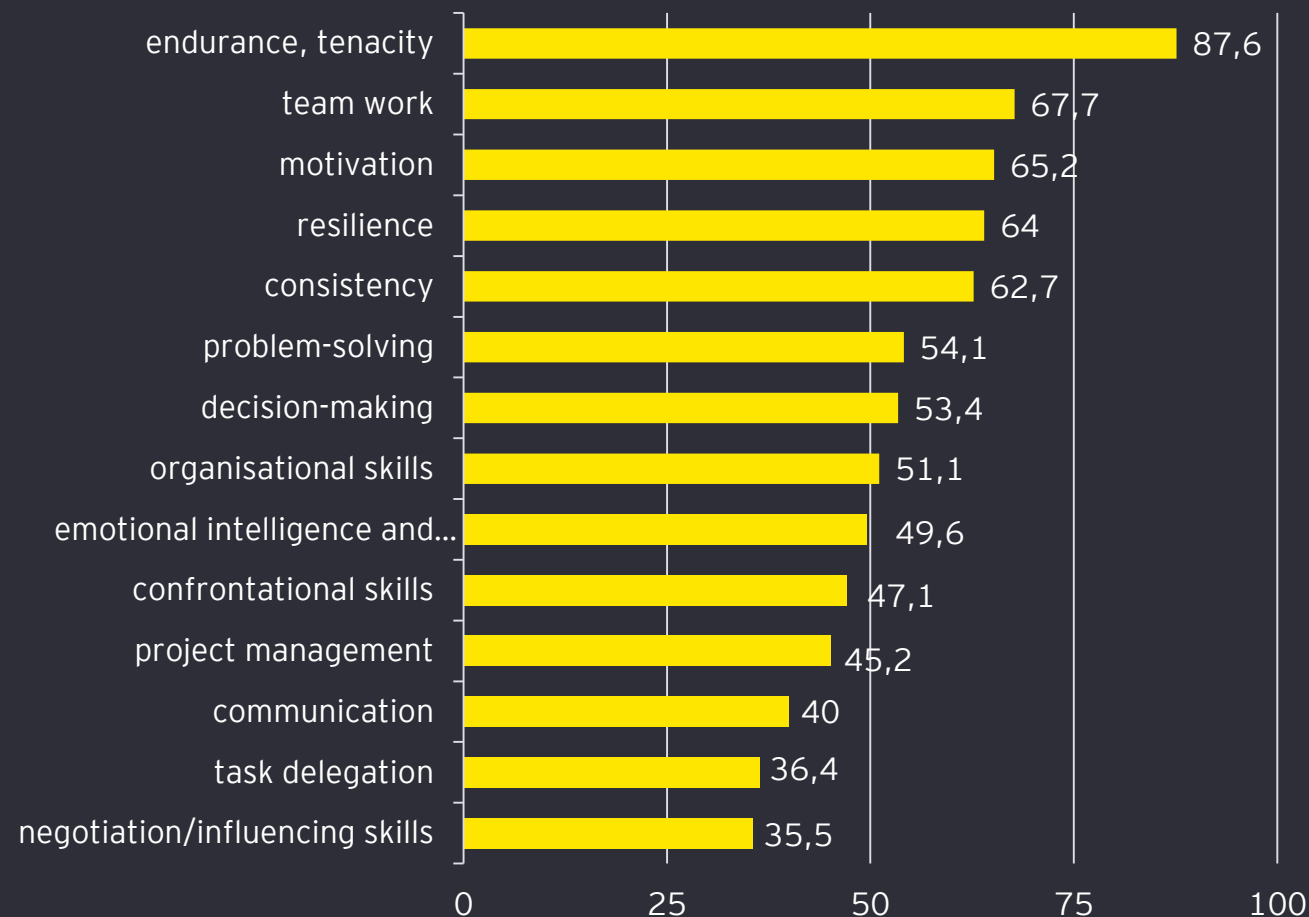


# 5. Link between sport participation and leadership

23. Do you think that sport participation (currently or in the past) may help women become successful leaders?

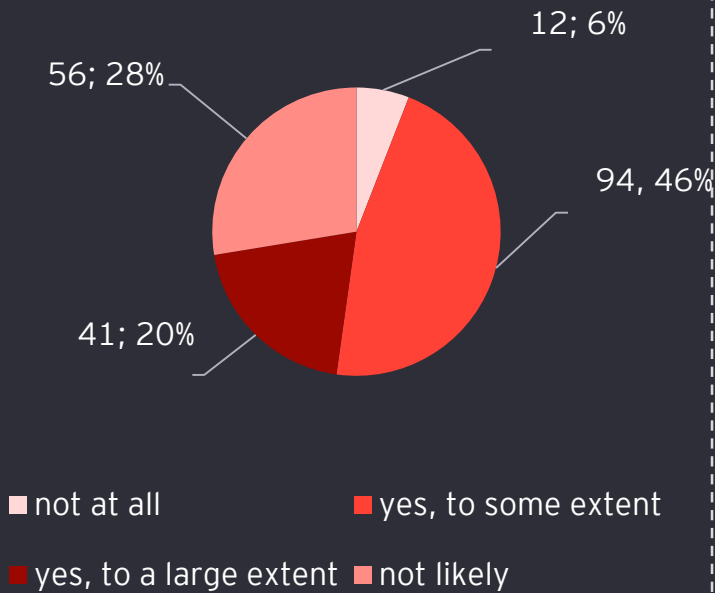


24. How much do you think sport participation is a factor enhancing the following leadership skills/competencies? (please, give a percentage weight to each skill/competency)

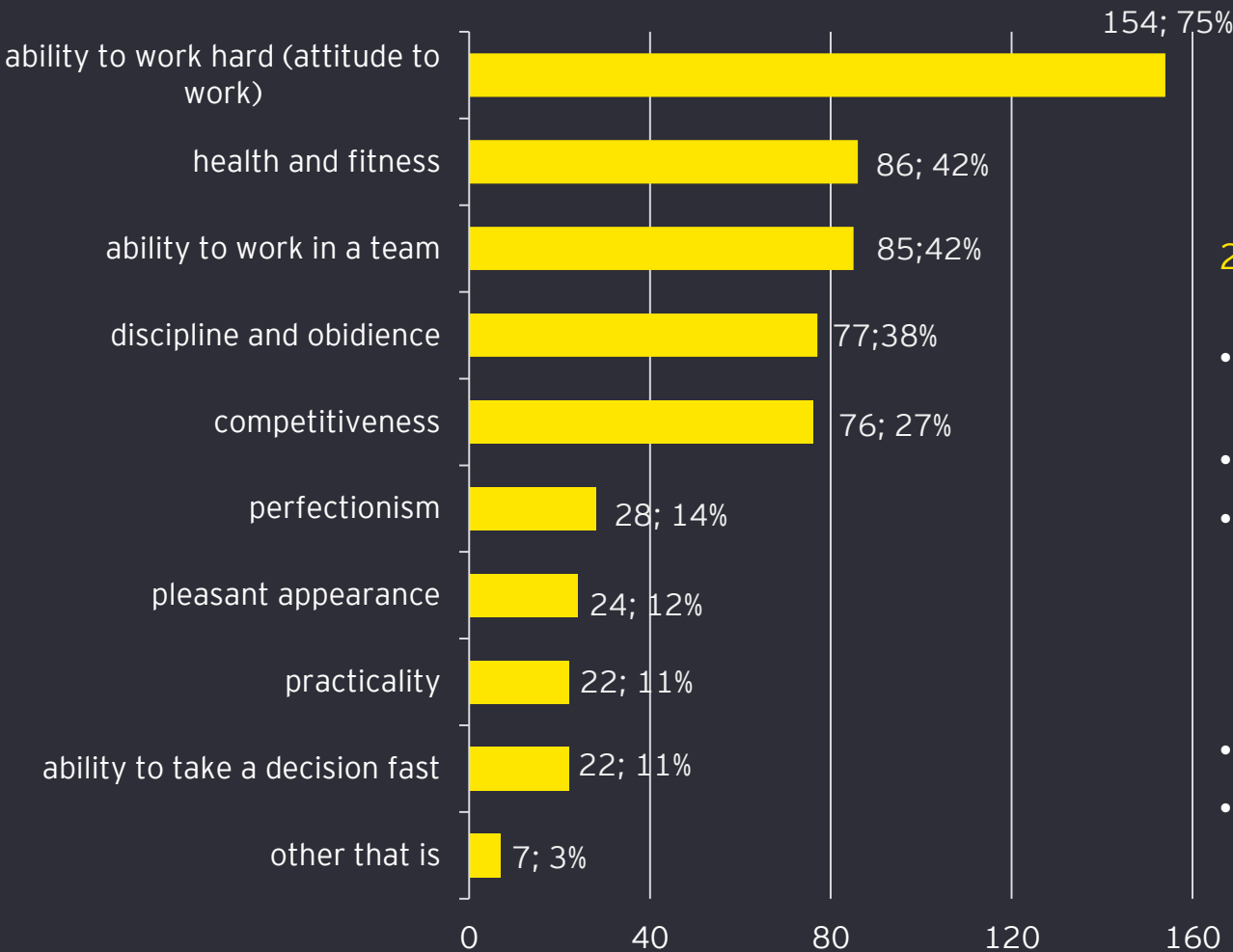


# 5. Link between sport participation and leadership

25. When applying for a job, do you think that a woman's former career as an elite athlete poses an advantage?



26. Which positive characteristics do you assume when you interview an applicant with an athletic background? Choose a maximum of three characters!



26/b Other responses:

- Efficiency, resilience
- Creativity
- It is not an aspect for me, but I consider it to be disadvantage if she played soccer
- Extensive network
- I do not really care about it



## 5. Link between sport participation and leadership (Question 27)

27. How much do you agree with the below statements?

Please, specify

(Likert-scale 1-5: 1 not at all, 5 absolutely)

1. not at all

2

3

4

5. absolutely

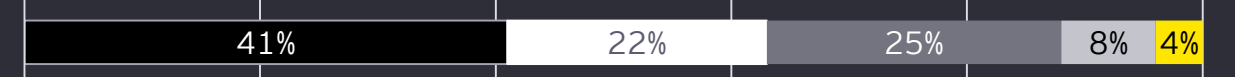
A former athletic career shall always be emphasized in a resume



A significant former athletic career is a respectable factor in the workplace



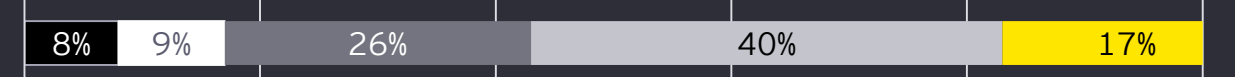
Sport participation establishes such masculine qualities in women that are advantageous in leadership positions



A former athletic career may directly propel a woman into a leadership position only in the sports sector



A female business leader with outstanding achievements in sports will be a role-model in her workplace



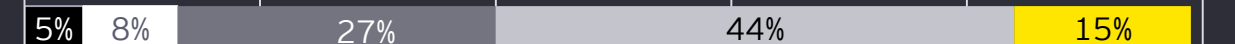
Female business leaders with athletic background must do more to prove their competencies in work



Women who formerly pursued sports on a regular basis will make good employees



Competitiveness of a woman decisively affects her leadership style

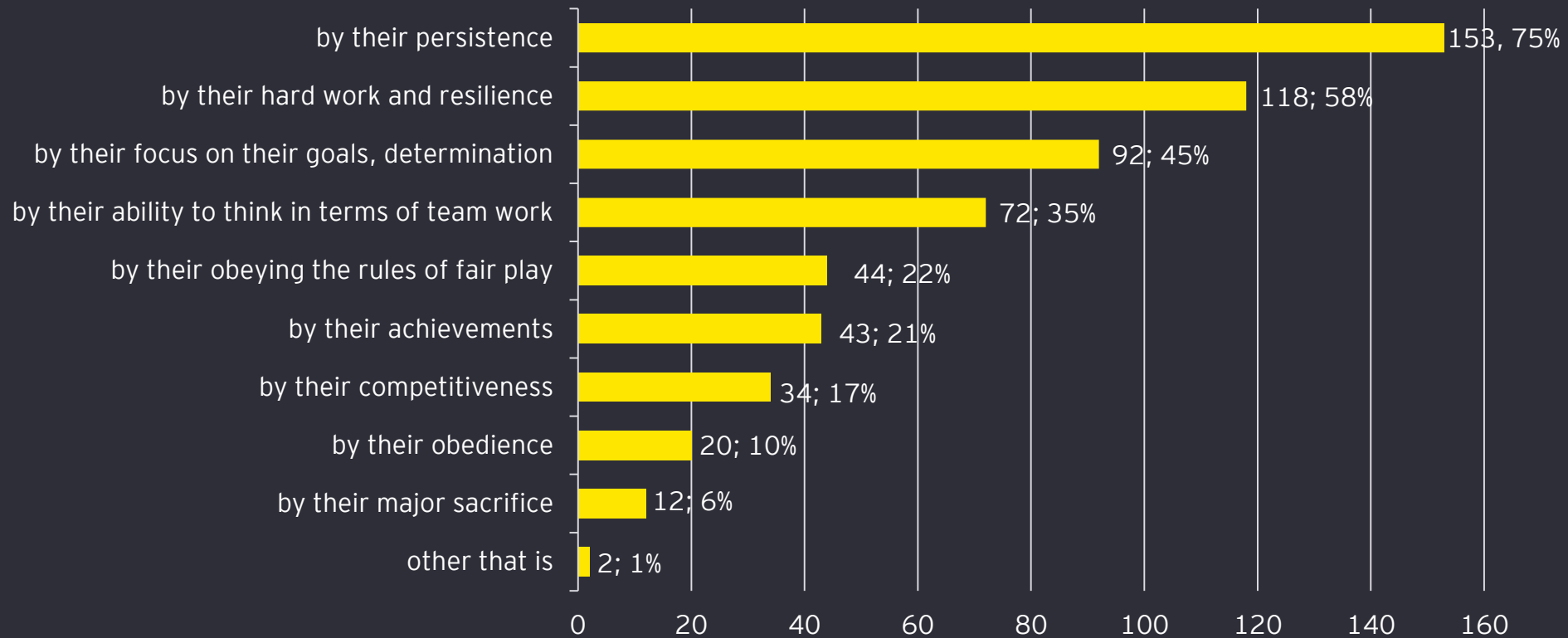


I think that a part of my career successes can be attributed to my sport participation / my athletic background



## 5. Link between sport participation and leadership (28)

28. How do you think an elite athlete may inspire employees and colleagues at work? Choose a maximum of three statements





## 5. Link between sport participation and leadership

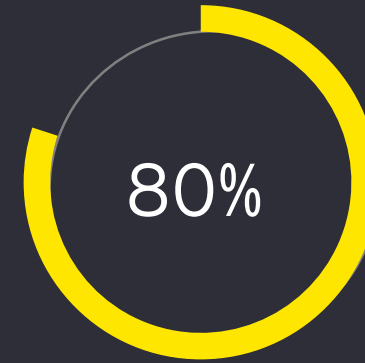
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29 Do you think that involving successful female athletes as presenters or instructors into female leadership trainings would be worthwhile?



80 per cent of respondents answered yes

30. Do you or would you motivate your kids to do sports on a regular basis, so that they benefit from the positive side effects thereof in the course of their later civil career?



80 per cent of respondents answered yes



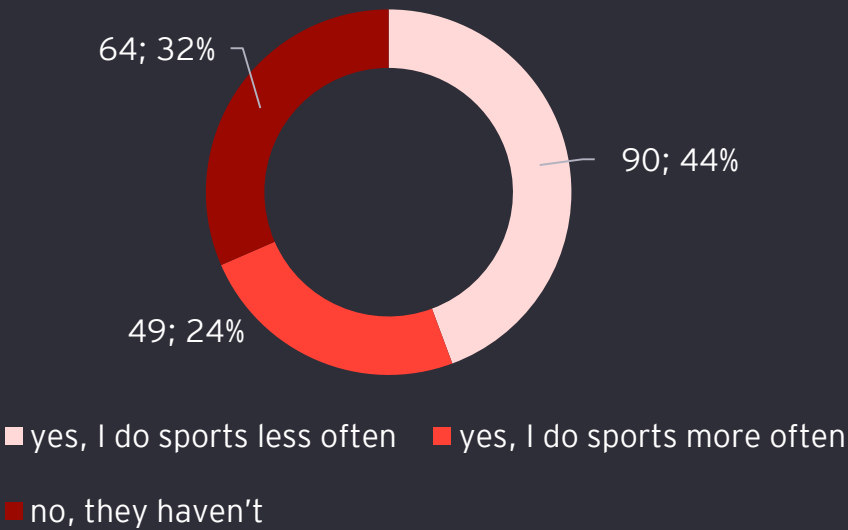
An aerial photograph showing a large group of triathletes in black wetsuits and white swim caps swimming in turquoise water. A single kayaker in a bright pink kayak is positioned in the center of the group. The water is splashing around the swimmers.

## 6. Questions exploring the effects of COVID-19

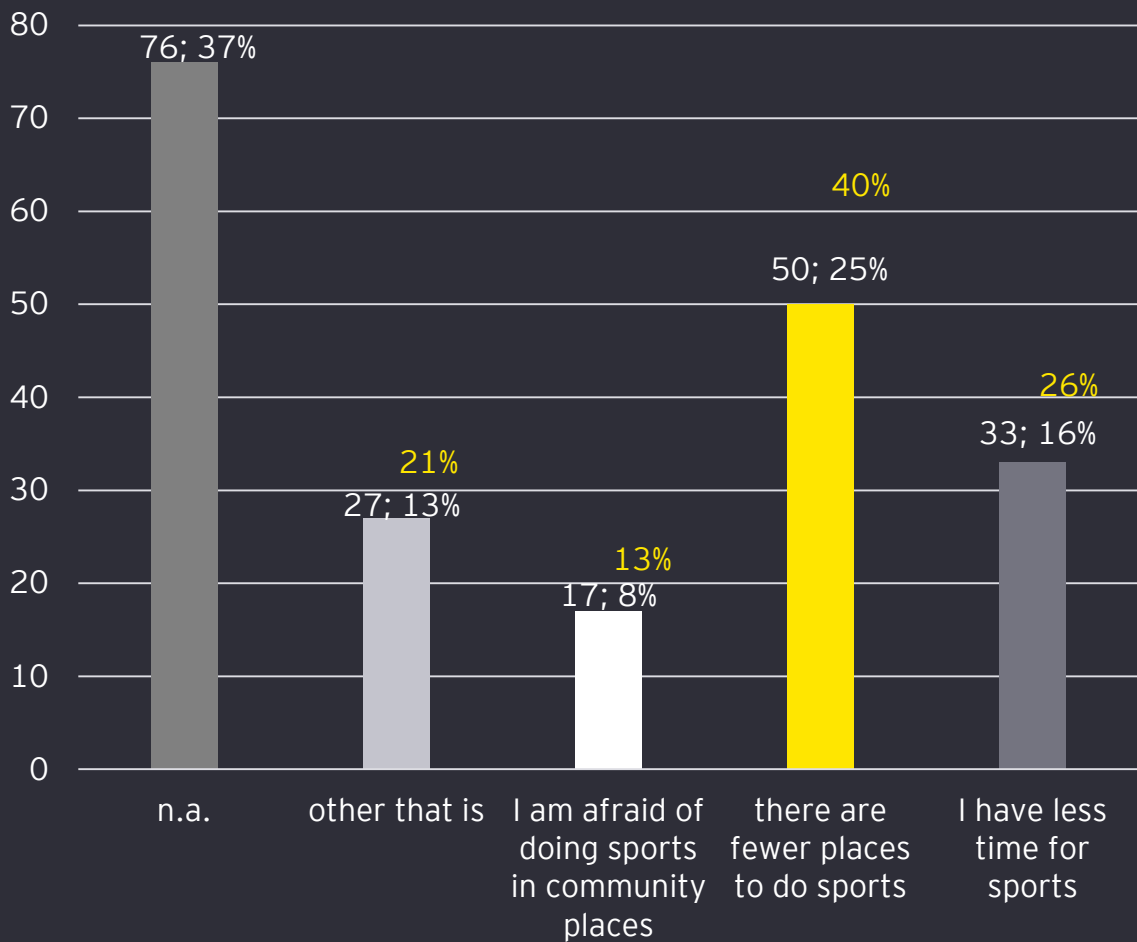


# 6. Questions exploring the effects of COVID-19

31. Have your sports habits changed because of the COVID-19 pandemic?



32. If you do sports less often, why is that?



\*No response was required from those, who responded to Question 31 that their sports habits have not changed. n=127 - the basis of comparison



# Key findings

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1. Two-thirds of respondents reckon that an athletic background may contribute to one's becoming a successful leader.
2. Over 50 per cent of respondents think that an athletic background may pose an advantage when applying for a job.
3. The same competencies are regarded as the most important in sports as in leadership: endurance/tenacity, teamwork, motivation.
4. According to the opinions of a major part of respondents, the positive effects of regular sport participation are preservation of health and stress-relief.
5. Respondents find team sports to be the most suitable for networking purposes.
6. The employers of one-third of respondents financially support employees' sport participation, and organize regular online and offline team sports events.

## Press appearances (in hungarian)

Date	Place	Title/link
2021.02.15	EY	<a href="#">Kiemelkedően fontos a sport szerepe a női vezetők üzleti sikereiben</a>
2021.02.15	index.hu	<a href="#">Előnyben a sportos nők</a>
2021.02.15	tozsdehirek.hu	<a href="#">Kiemelkedően fontos a sport szerepe a női vezetők üzleti sikereiben</a>
2021.02.16	figyelo.hu	<a href="#">Fontos a sport a női vezetők üzleti sikereiben</a>
2021.02.15	vg.hu	<a href="#">Fontos a sport a női vezetők üzleti sikereiben</a>
2021.02.15	168.hu	<a href="#">A női vezetők a sport miatt is sikeresek</a>
2021.02.15	webradio.hu	<a href="#">Kutatás: fontos a sport szerepe a női vezetők üzleti sikereiben</a>
2021.02.15	mmonline.hu	<a href="#">A sportolás a siker titka a női vezetők szerint</a>
2021.02.15	trademagazin.hu	<a href="#">Kiemelkedően fontos a sport szerepe a női vezetők üzleti sikereiben</a>
2021.02.16	runnersworld.hu	<a href="#">Kiemelkedően fontos a sport szerepe a női vezetők üzleti sikereiben</a>
2021.02.16	Trend FM	<a href="#">A nap vendége - Farkas Margit interjú</a>

## Press appearances (in hungarian)

Date	Place	Title/link
2021.02.17	portfolio.hu	<u>Vallottak a magyar cégvezetők: meglepően fontos a sport az üzleti sikerekben</u>
2021.02.17	hazipatika.com	<u>Sikeresebbek a munkában a sportos nők</u>
2021.02.17	behaviour.hu	<u>Sikeres nő lenne? - Mindenképpen sportoljon</u>
2021.02.19	Jazzy Rádió	<u>Millás Reggeli - Ép testben</u>
2021.02.21	piacesprofit.hu	<u>Meglepő, hogy mi játszik fontos szerepet a női vezetők sikerében</u>
2021.02.27	g7.hu	<u>A magyar női vezetők fele hetente legalább három alkalommal sportol</u>
2021.03.03	wmn.hu + FB	<u>Tud veszíteni, levonja a tanulságot és újra pályára lép - így válik sikeres....</u>
2021.03.03	Sport TV	<u>Womentor Talks podcast sorozat -Farkas Margit</u>
2021.03.05	Kossuth Rádió	<u>Napközben - Farkas Margit és Gál Andrea interjú</u>
2021.03.08	nlc.hu	<u>Sporttal a siker útján: ez a magyar női vezetők egyik titka</u>