

# Sports Industry: On track for growth?

**PwC's Global Sports Survey**  
8th edition, July 2024





# Foreword

I'm delighted to introduce the eighth edition of our Global Sports Survey. This year we received 411 responses from senior sports executives from across 46 countries. Thanks to all who took the time to share their views on the current state and future direction of the sports industry.

Since its inception in 2016, our Global Sports Survey has tracked the pulse of the sports industry by analysing leaders' perceptions of market growth, challenges and opportunities.

This year's findings reflect the broadly positive outlook of sports executives. More optimistic than last year, they reveal a growing yet cautious confidence in the global sports markets.

We explore the current market forces and threats, and dive into six themes we believe will shape the future of the sport industry. Each section provides detailed insights to start conversations about how the world of sports will transform in the coming years.

From the shifting media landscape, to the positive momentum surrounding women's sports, and from changing fan behaviours to the potential of Generative AI, the industry is constantly evolving. Yet these opportunities also need to be considered in light of the increasing economic uncertainty which could affect consumer spending and investor risk appetite.

A special thanks to the interviewees Danny Townsend, Nick McQuire, Martina Pavlová, Kit McConnell, Matthias Remund, Yoshiyuki Mano, Alastair Seaman, Daniel Kirschner, Shelley Watts and Nick Rusling who have all enriched this report further with their expert insights. Thank you also to collaborators IRIS and Starcount who have provided additional data and insight to bring some deep dives to life.

I hope you enjoy reading this report and find the insights thought-provoking.



**Shin Szedlak**  
Sports Advisory Switzerland

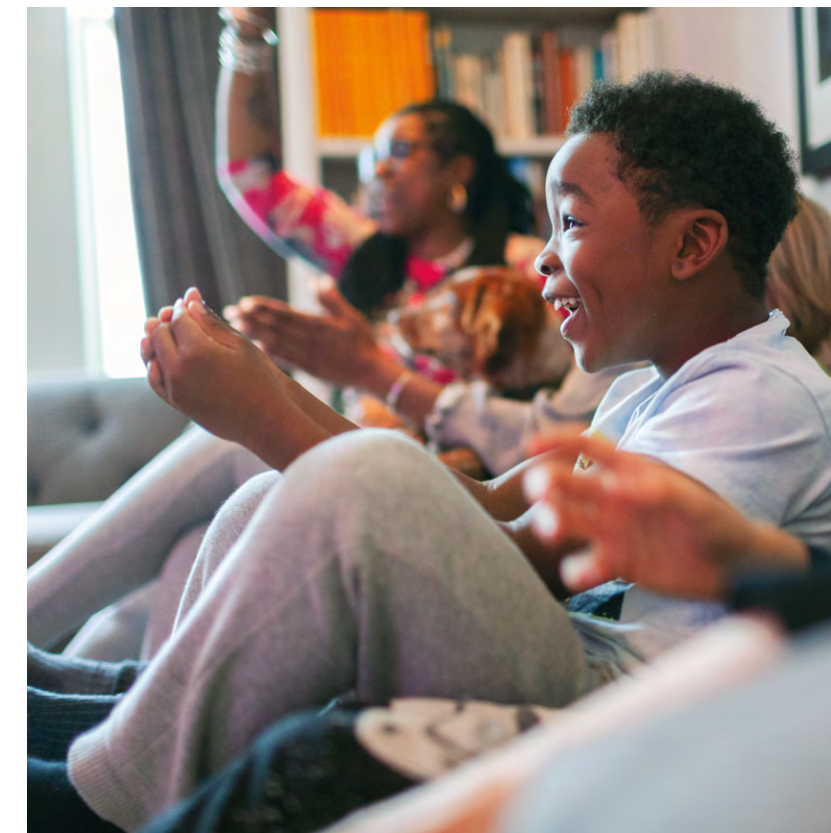
# View from the top



Market growth

7.3%

market growth (up from 6.6% last year) for the next 3-5 years



GenAI use cases

38%

of respondents see content creation and distribution as a key use case for GenAI in sports



Sports investment

68%

of respondents expect investors to focus on premium sports assets



New commercial models

83%

of executives feel that new commercial models will be required to attract institutional investment



GenAI Strategy

59%

of organisations surveyed do not (yet) have a GenAI strategy



Women's sport

85%

of experts forecast double-digit growth for women's sports revenues in the next 3 to 5 years



Global fan data reveals

39%

annual growth in following of women's sports properties on social media



Major events

44%

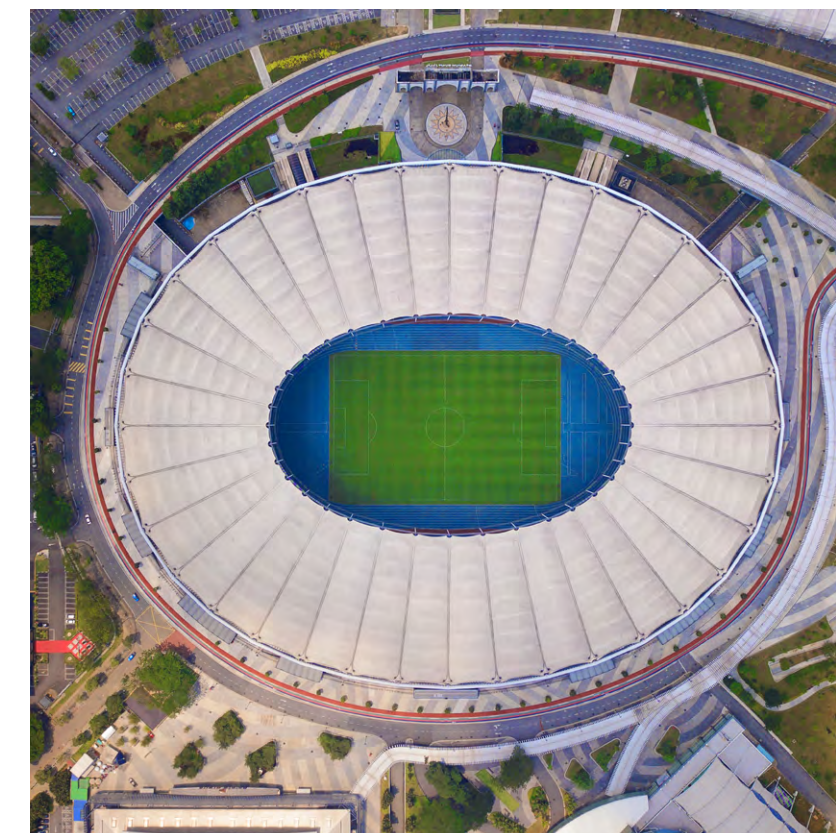
of participants believe financial concerns are the main barrier to hosting major sporting events



Co-hosting models

85%

of participants expect a shift to co-hosting models to deliver major sporting events in multiple locations



Government

25%

of respondents feel that their government's sports vision, strategy, and goals are well-thought-out



# Contents

01 State of the sports industry

02 The sports consumer

03 Sports investment

04 GenAI in sports

05 Women's sport

06 Future of major events

07 Government in sports

# 01 State of the sports industry

There is a growing – if cautious – confidence in the market’s potential this year, with sports executives predicting overall growth for the next 3-5 years to be 7.3% (up from 6.6% in last year’s survey). This comes despite challenging economic and geopolitical circumstances and is a positivity shared across every region.

This year’s market forces and threats remain almost identical to last. Ongoing changes in the media landscape and the positive momentum surrounding women’s sports, coupled with the potential of Generative AI (GenAI), are compelling the industry to evolve and look for innovative ways to drive growth. Yet concerns remain around how the increasing cost of living and economic slowdown could affect consumer spending and investor risk appetite.

Despite this, agencies, brands, sponsors, investment companies, teams and leagues are all optimistic about the sectors’ outlook. The public sector and sports federations may be a little more conservative, foreseeing lower growth, but much of this is due to anticipated transformations (downsizing and decentralising) in major sports events. Media rights is the only revenue stream expected to grow at a slower rate compared to last year. However, even here, there will be clear geographical differences and divergence between premium and non-premium sports properties.

Overall, the broad picture is one of a growing sports market where the foundational elements remain robust. While pockets of growth and opportunity will differ across the industry, those that are most likely to find success this year are premium properties or those who are willing to innovate.



## Insight 01

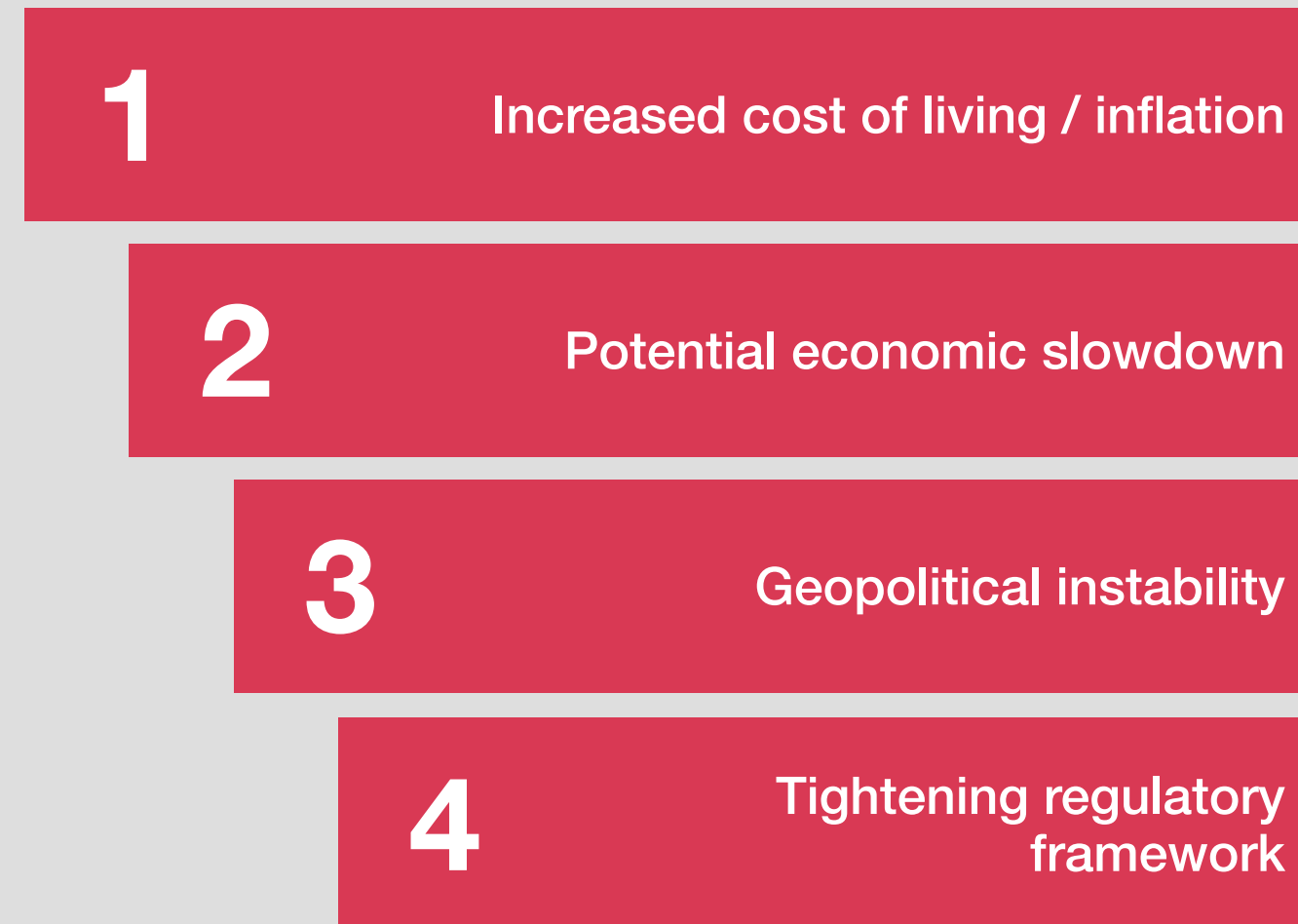
# Market forces and threats remain consistent

We asked sports executives to prioritise market forces and threats over the next 3-5 years.

- Key market forces remain remarkably consistent from last year, signalling strong enduring influences on the industry. For the third year running, a transforming media landscape, women's sport and fans are perceived to be the ones most likely to shape the industry.
- Media rights continue to be a key revenue driver for sports organisations and survey respondents identified the transforming landscape as the primary market force. But some market headwinds and accelerating divergence between premium and non-premium content suggests that there could be some disruption to business models ahead and there is a greater need for revenue diversification.
- GenAI ranks surprisingly low as a market force, suggesting leaders are yet to recognise – or realise – its transformative impact or potential to drive growth.

THREATS

### Ranking of key market threats



### Ranking of key market forces



FORCES

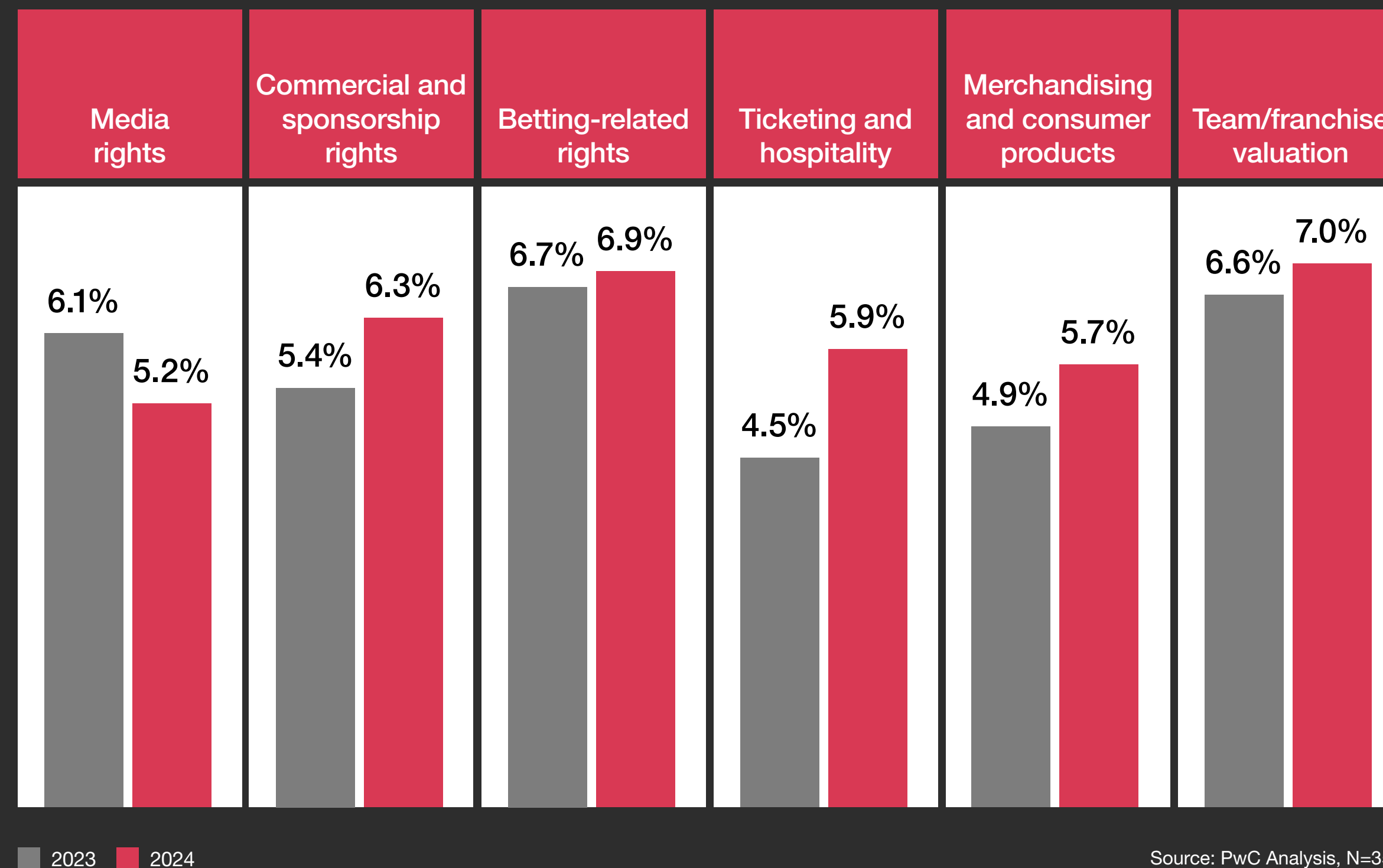
**Insight 02**

# Higher growth expected across all revenue streams, except media rights

Sports executives expect higher growth vs last year's survey across most key revenue streams.

- Media rights is the only revenue stream expected to grow at a slower rate compared to last year. However, there will be clear geographical differences, as well as divergence between premium and non-premium sports properties.
- The growth of betting-related rights is supported by the legalisation of sports betting in the US (currently 38 states), continued regulatory changes and product innovation across all markets.
- Ticketing and hospitality will be buoyed by a strong return of attendances at live events and numerous major events scheduled.
- Strong demand for ownership in professional sports, coupled with a limited supply of desirable, premium assets is expected to drive up sports team / franchise valuations.

**Expected annual growth rate by revenue stream**  
Percentage annual growth estimates over a 3- to 5-year period



Source: PwC Analysis, N=353





# 02 The sports consumer

Sports executives acknowledge that changing fan preferences and behaviours are one of the key market forces that will shape the industry over the coming years.

The traditional way fans engage and interact with sporting organisations has evolved. And as these preferences continue to change, they bring with them a chance to get a deeper understanding of fan behaviours, wants and expectations, and use this information to steer decisions and actions that enhance engagement and drive revenue growth.

For sports properties to effectively monetise their consumer base they need to process and analyse the right data. That shouldn't be limited to online sales or stadium purchases, but should rather focus on a holistic understanding and deeper insights from all interactions (e.g. social media...).

Recognising the potential of this opportunity, we created a 'deep dive' that explores the steps sports organisations should consider to aggregate these data points. Doing so will uncover powerful insights to find the opportunities for commercialisation – direct monetisation, personalised content and products, broadcast revenue, sponsorships and merchandising, and more.



**Insight 03** Sports consumer preferences and behaviours

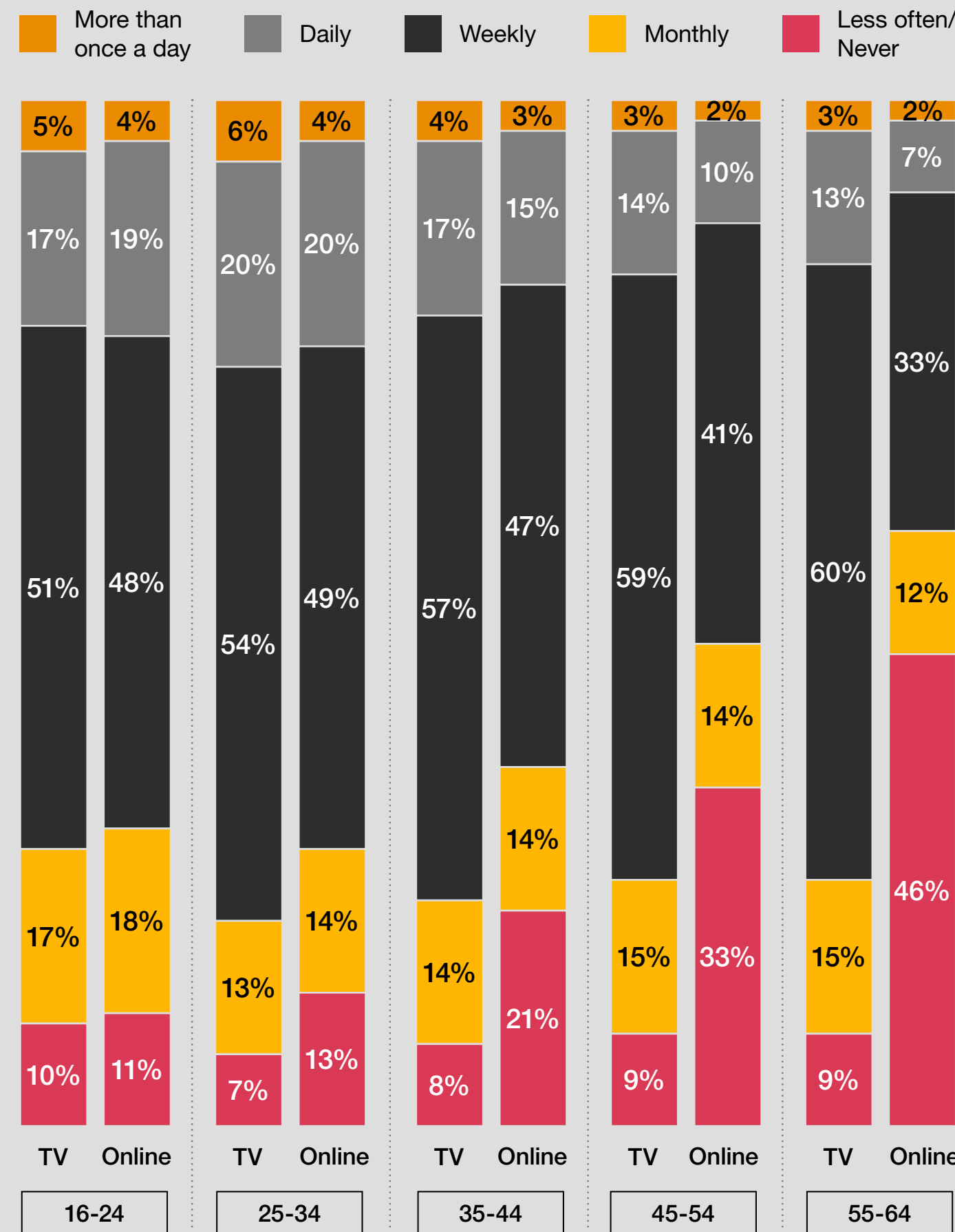
# Changing consumer preferences shaping the future of the industry

- For the second consecutive year, executives have identified changing fan preferences and behaviours as one of the top three trends shaping the industry. These dynamics are altering how we watch, how we pay for sports content and how we play:
- **How we watch:** Younger audiences are increasingly opting to consume sport via data rich online platforms. Comparatively, nearly 50% of 55–64-year-olds never use online and instead prioritise traditional linear TV.
- **How we pay:** Surprisingly, IRIS data shows that younger sports consumers are more willing to pay to access sports content than older generations. These audiences are also likely to have more paid subscriptions, reflecting the growing fragmentation of the media landscape for must-see sports content.

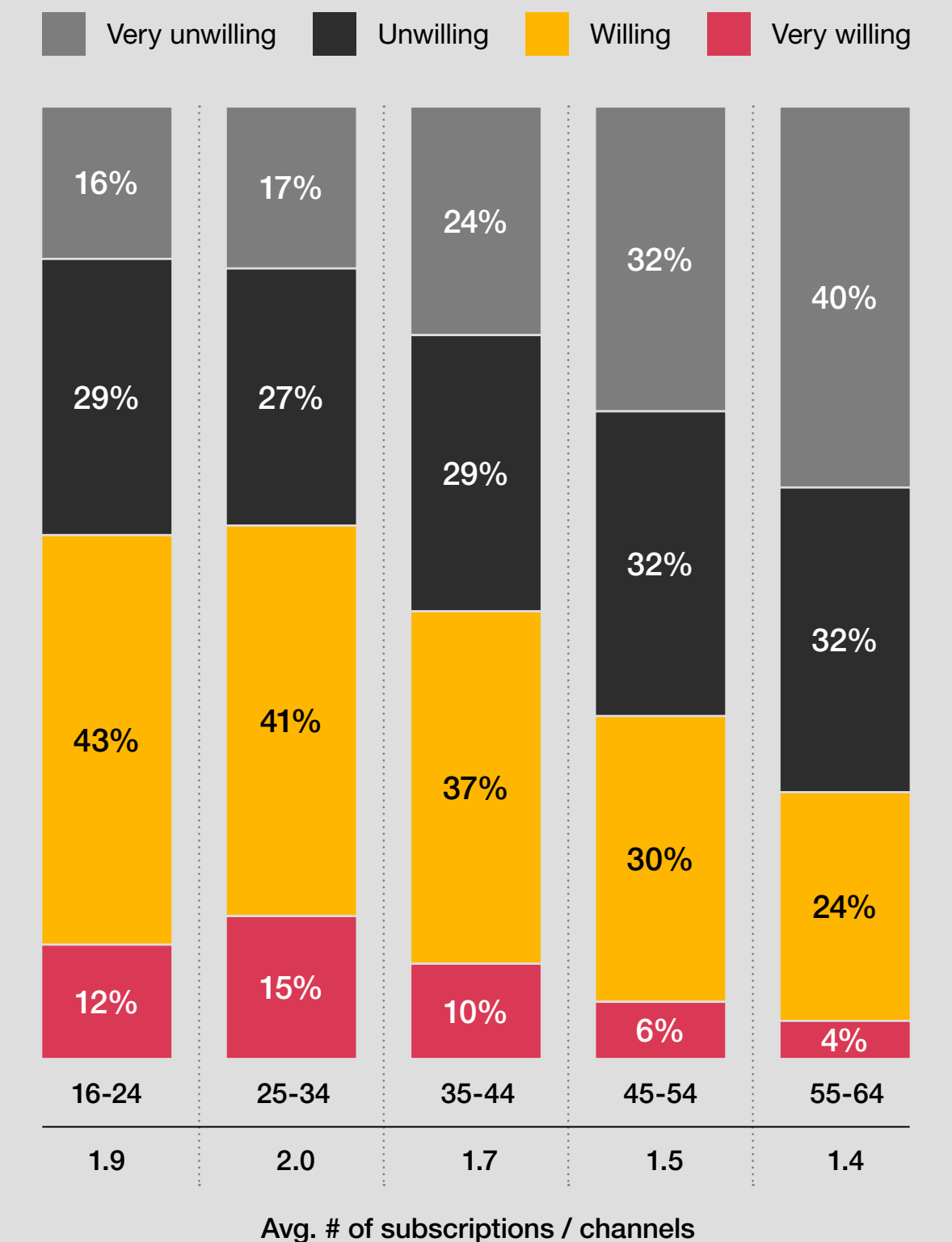
“Participation is the biggest driver in sports fandom arising, accounting for 22% of all originations in the last 20 years. Participants are also spending 2.7x more to watch and follow sport, than those that don’t.”

Nick Rusling (CEO, Collaborate+)

**Frequency of watching sports content**  
Percentage of respondents



**Willingness to pay for access to sports content**  
Percentage of respondents



Data provided by Intelligent Research in Sponsoring (IRIS)

## Insight 04 The complete fan view

# Sports properties are increasingly looking beyond traditional data sources to better understand fandom

- Whether in the stadium or online, sports fans love to watch their teams live. For most sporting organisations, though, this is as far as interaction (and data collection) goes. Yet this is beginning to change as leading sports teams invest in enhancing data collection, storage and processing capabilities.
- However, there is still a long way to go. With most brands still generating over 80% of their insights from 20% of their customers. Many are yet to collect the right levels or types of data, while others have more than they know what to do with.
- Aggregation is key in this respect – bringing together multiple datasets (from ticketing and membership, to activities within the stadium, merchandise and more) sports teams can unify fan touchpoints, uncover new journeys and segments based on shared behaviours, preferences and interactions.
- When used correctly, the insights will create better tailored experiences and personalised marketing that drives significant growth. Personalised rewards, for example, can drive 4-7 times more revenue than non-personalised interactions, while emotionally relevant content is also 5 times more effective at driving decisions and engagement.



Data provided by **STARCOUNT**



**Insight 05** The complete fan view

# Richer social media data key to unlock 360 view of sports consumers

- Social media data allows sports organisations to better understand their consumers beyond 1st party data. Social media can provide a rich view on consumer behaviours, as well as their interests and the brands they interact with outside of their favourite team or club.
- Many sports properties lack insights on non-attending matchday fans, particularly those based overseas. By leveraging social media data, sports organisation can still develop meaningful relationships with these groups by understanding who they are, what matters to them, their nuances and interests.
- Moreover, social media data is allowing properties to reshape marketing campaigns to resonate with the different motivations of their fanbase, understand new geographies of fans globally and enhance sponsorships deals with brands that their fans truly care about.
- It can also reveal where new pockets of growth might appear. Data science agency Starcount, for example, has used a global fan database of 1.3 billion people and the accounts they follow on social media to reveal the growth in popularity of emerging sporting trends globally.

Data provided by **STARCOUNT**

**72%** Annual growth in consumers following MMA brands

**37%** Annual growth in following of KSA football teams

**39%** Annual growth in following women's sports properties

**36%** Annual growth in following of esports properties

# Data brought to life – how women's football fans differ

Having access to the right data gives richer and more accurate insight that can help inform strategic decisions as well as improve fan experience.

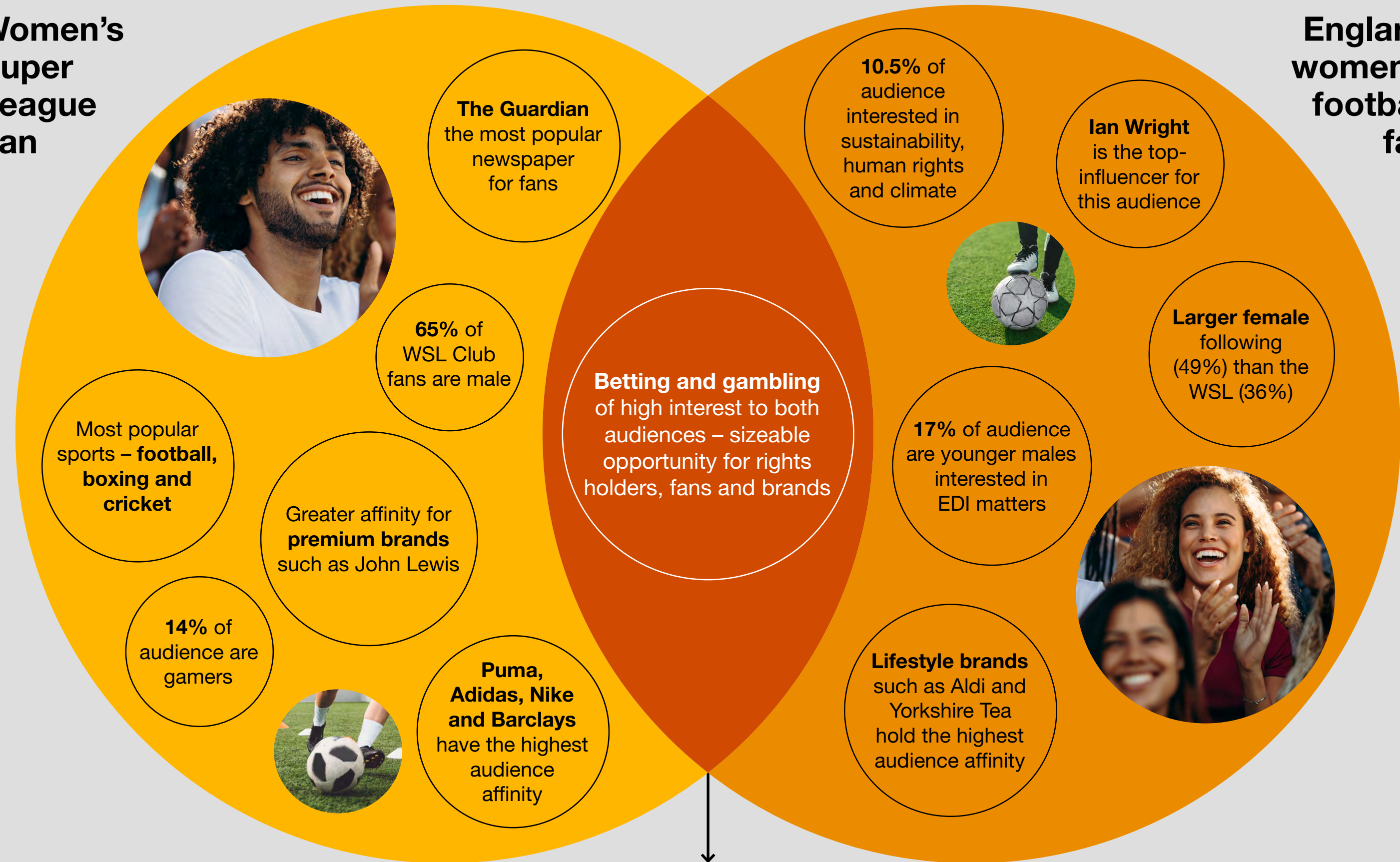
To gain a clearer understanding of the 'typical' women's football fan, we can examine the English market, where women's football has experienced a significant rise in popularity over recent years. We conducted a behavioural study which revealed some surprising differences between those who follow Women's Super League (WSL) clubs and the England women's team. Understanding these differences and what that means for the way you interact with that fan base can be crucial for future engagement and success.



Starcount is a data science & insights agency who specialise in consumer behaviour. Starcount uniquely blends social media and spend data to not only reveal what consumers do but why they do it so that clients can understand the emotional drivers of decision making.

Women's Super League Fan

England women's football fan



Several opportunities for the WSL to **enhance engagement with fans and partner brands** based on growth segments (i.e. male audiences, gamers, middle-class consumers etc.)

**So what?**

Fans of the Lionesses connect with philanthropic topics such as sustainability, human rights and climate. They build stronger connections with lifestyle brands that are affiliated with these topics.

# 03

## Sports investment

Industry leaders remain broadly positive about the outlook and priorities for institutional investors, particularly against a backdrop of pockets of growth in the sports market. However, with growth not guaranteed across the board, certain investor profiles are likely to be more active and best-positioned to capitalise on opportunities in a rapidly developing landscape.

Our insights suggest that sports properties and organisations increasingly prefer active investors who provide not only capital, but also offer access to capabilities and relationships. And that means we're likely to see new and different investor strategies, with a shift of focus towards emerging leagues, women's sports and areas that will benefit from growth capital. Investors will prioritise premium assets, with the key asset classes being teams and leagues, as well as adjacencies such as sports tech and service providers. An increase in joint ventures and minority investment strategies should also be expected, reflective of the rise of different investor profiles (e.g. sports-focused private equity firms, athlete-backed funds and individual investors) and a desire to share risk as asset valuations continue to rise.

“

Many sports will need to reinvent themselves and deployment of capital will be key to that.”



**Danny Townsend**  
CEO of SURJ Sports  
Investment  
[Read the interview](#)



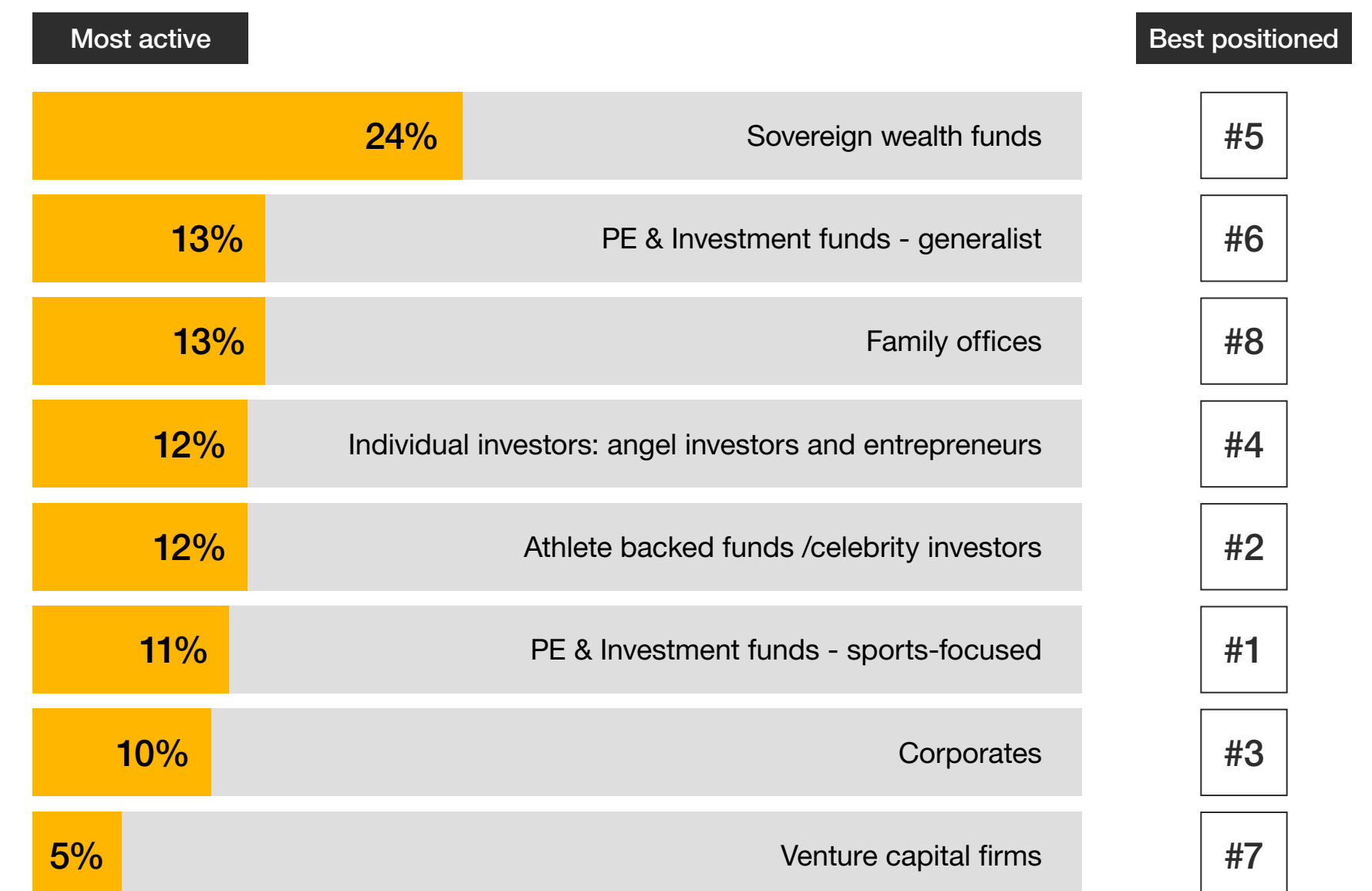


**Insight 06**

# New and more diverse funding options set to drive investment and growth

- Improved profitability and increased opportunity for attractive media rights and sponsorship deals has seen sport emerge as a highly sought after asset class. When combined with more relaxed ownership regulations and the potential for investment returns, it is attracting a more diverse set of investors.
- Investors are now offering a mix of capital and capabilities to sports teams, leagues, media rights and other related businesses.
- Dedicated sports investment funds (e.g. Arctos Partners, Otro Capital) are joining forces with operators to unlock value within a sport and seek synergies across a portfolio of assets.
- Athlete-backed funds (e.g. Apex Capital, Players Fund) are gaining prominence, particularly with an athlete’s ability to bring increased audiences, credibility and capital to the venture.

**Most active and best positioned investors in the sports industry in the next 3-5 years**  
Percentage of respondents



Source: PwC Analysis, N=359



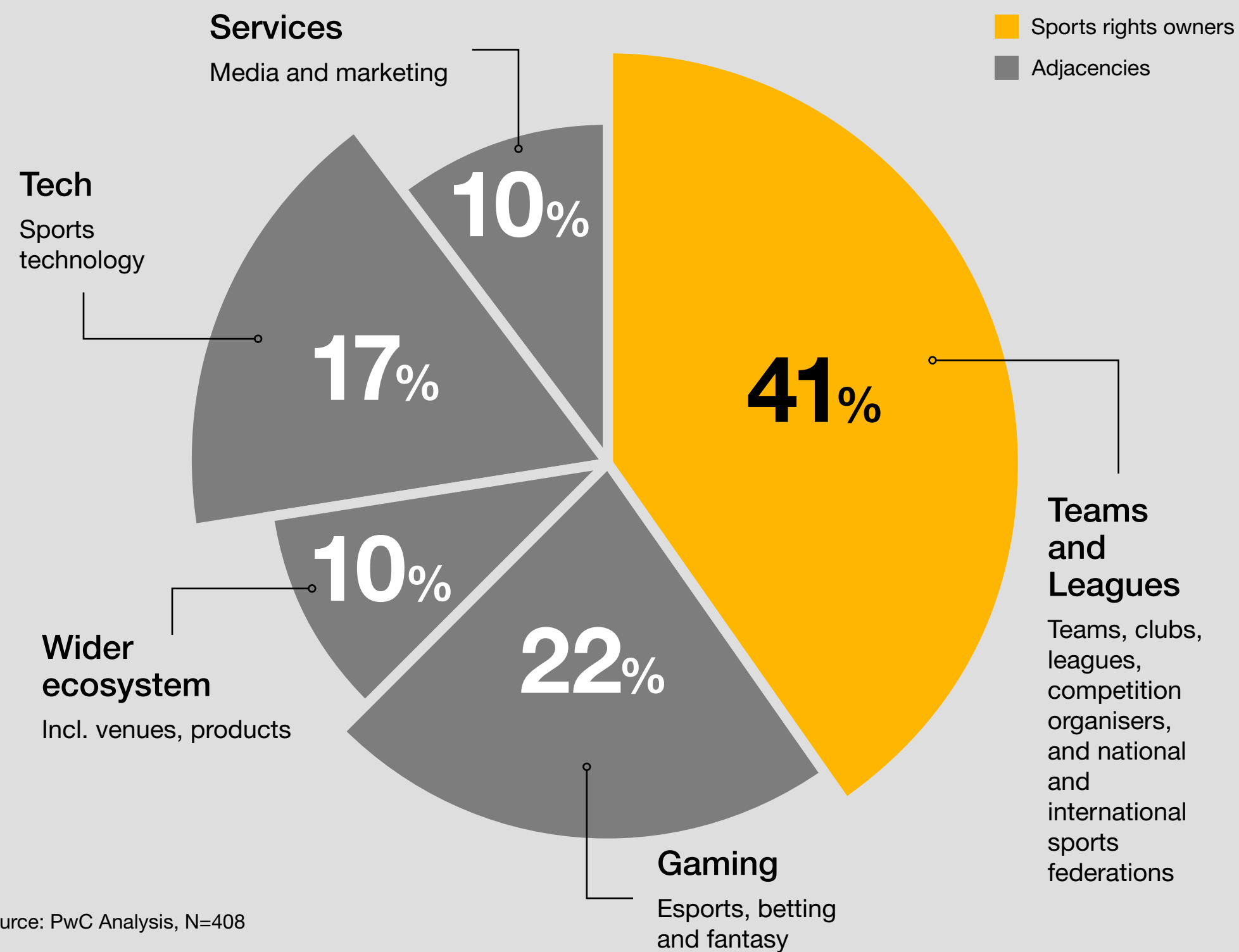
Sports organisations are increasingly prioritising investors with dedicated sports expertise, capabilities to support their growth ambitions, and a global perspective across leagues.”

**Alastair Seaman**  
Managing Director, Arctos Partners

**Insight 07**

# Rights owners continue to attract the most attention from investors

**Most interesting opportunities for institutional investment in the next 3-5 years**  
Percentage of respondents



Source: PwC Analysis, N=408

- Scarcity of assets, lucrative media rights deals, and diversity and resilience of revenue streams has seen institutional investors historically drawn to established sports teams and leagues. That trend is expected to continue over the next 3 to 5 years. However, within this category, we expect to see a shift of focus towards emerging leagues and women’s sports in particular, which will benefit from growth capital.
- Investors are also expected to turn to adjacencies within the wider sports ecosystem, which possess attractive business fundamentals and are well-positioned to benefit from market tailwinds. Gamification and sports tech are becoming increasingly popular investment categories (especially among athlete-backed funds and venture capital) as business models become more digitally focused.
- Recent M&A activity shows increased investor interest in the sports services segment. Agencies, content creation, events and hospitality, and more, are viewed as safer entry points into the industry. Investment in the wider value chain may help to amplify investments in teams and leagues and vice-versa.





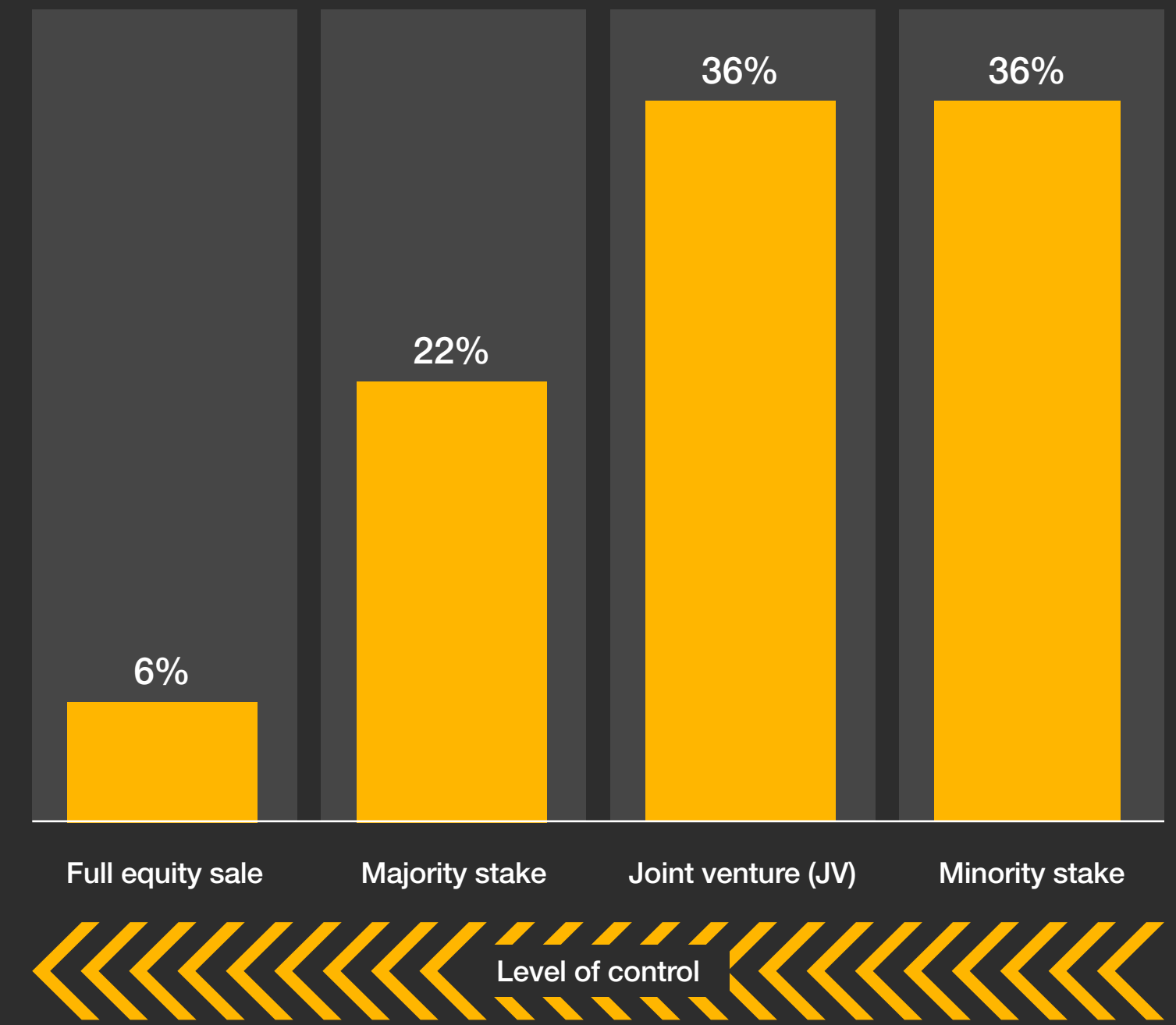


### Insight 08

# Minority investment and joint venture opportunities set to increase

- Demand for sports assets has increased in recent years as investor interest has grown. However, the limited number of investable sports assets has contributed to increased valuations in recent transactions, leading to shifting investment strategies and structures.
- We expect an increase in joint ventures and minority investments on the back of changing regulations (e.g. NFL and NBA opening up to minority deals from institutional investors), an increase in valuations, and the rise of sports-focused private equity firms, athlete-backed funds and individual investors that favour co-investment. Co-investment allows for new and diverse capabilities and experiences to join ownership, which should add value to the organisation.
- Minority investment deals help sports organisations secure growth capital and onboard fresh perspectives and expertise, while still maintaining control over strategic direction and governance aspects. However, as these non-controlling structures can result in board level complexities, effective communication and a shared vision is crucial to success.

**Most common investment strategies in the sports industry in the next 3-5 years**  
Percentage of respondents



Source: PwC Analysis, N=373

Insight 09

# Investor focus on premium assets and new commercial models

It is evident that investing in ‘business as usual’ is not a future-proof strategy.

- Sports organisations are turning to institutional investors to provide capital to finance growth projects such as stadium renovations, transitions to direct-to-consumer business models and international expansion.
- Sports organisations may not want to relinquish control, but there is an increasing preference for active investors that provide capital alongside new capabilities, knowledge and experience to support in transformational change.
- While premium properties are still in highest demand, emerging sports with significant growth potential are attracting interest. Investors want sports with the potential to attract large, global, young and engaged audiences that require support to execute an exciting growth plan.

## How will institutional investment impact the sports sector? Percentage of respondents

Sports properties need to create **new commercial models** to attract investment

**Traditional sports models** will continue to attract investments



N = 404

Major sports leagues around the world will continue to **loosen regulations**, allowing institutional investors to invest

There will be **increased regulation** to limit institutional investment in sports franchises



N = 385

Sports properties and organisations prefer **passive investors** providing capital versus expertise

Sports properties and organisations prefer **active investors** who provide both capital and capabilities



N = 403

Institutional investors will continue to focus their investments on **premium leagues / teams / media rights**

Institutional investors will shift their focus to **non-premium properties and assets** in the broader sports ecosystem



N = 401

ESG considerations will be a key criteria for sports investments in the future

Sports investments will continue to be made, irrespective of the ESG status of assets and organisations



N = 368

An executive point of view

with **Danny Townsend** CEO  
of SURJ Sports Investment

# Navigating the future of sports investment

Institutional investors will play a major role in shaping the sports sector in the near term. It's clear that the next 5 to 10 years are going to be challenging for the industry, as business models shift from the analogue past to a digital future. This transition is going to be costly, and how sports raise and deploy capital will ultimately determine whether they succeed or fail.

Several factors are needed to deliver a successful outcome for both sports and investors as part of this transition. Firstly, sports need to organise themselves to be investable. Federated models are often not set up to receive capital; governance structures need to evolve to support investment and digital innovation. From an investor perspective, success is really about the balance of control. Having enough influence on the business you're investing in is important to ensure capital is deployed to meet the needs of the sport and deliver a commercial return.

Understanding the complexity of stakeholder engagement that comes with deals in sport is also key. We often see PE and Sovereign Wealth struggle with this dynamic. The relationships between players, teams, leagues, federations, events, fans, and media are completely unique to the sector. Having in-house knowledge of this landscape is an important ingredient in being a successful investor in sport.

At SURJ, we believe capital should primarily be used to deliver innovation. If capital is being used to prop up a flawed business model, it's a failed play. But if capital is being deployed to transform the sport, whether that's the product itself, what's delivered to the consumer, or the way it's delivered, that's interesting to us as an investor. That also includes the ability to be an active investor in growing the asset, whether that's through our capital or the other things we bring to the table. Ultimately, we want to be involved in driving the change.

Given this, we have some fundamental principles guiding where we invest: we like sports with significant participation bases and relevancy in the world's biggest economies; we want products that we can evolve and enhance; and we like digital nascency, where a sport hasn't yet captured the direct-to-consumer opportunity. Finally, we look at assets that are transportable, that we can bring to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to drive our objectives of building a vibrant sport economy within the MENA region.

Overall, I think it's an exciting time to be investing in the industry, as sports contemplate and navigate this tricky period of transformation. I've said it before: transformation takes time, sophistication and money. Many sports will need to reinvent themselves and deployment of capital will be key to that.

Danny Townsend is the CEO of Saudi Arabia's SURJ Sports Investment. Appointed in 2023, he leads the strategic direction of SURJ as it invests in global sports, bringing international events to the Kingdom and elevating the sports ecosystem both within KSA and the wider MENA region. Prior to joining SURJ, Danny spent two years as CEO of the Australian Professional (Football) Leagues (APL), following four years as CEO of Sydney FC. In 2016, he was named one of the world's 40 most influential sports executives under the age of 40, and is listed in SportsPro's 2024 top ten influencers.



# 04 GenAI in sports

Generative AI (GenAI) and other innovative technologies offer sporting organisations a significant opportunity to reinvent what they do and find new ways to deliver growth. But its adoption and impact is inconsistent across the sports industry, with some more likely to benefit than others.

Our results reveal that sports tech and sports media companies will be the most likely beneficiaries of GenAI, as they focus on use cases around content creation, content distribution and wider fan engagement activities. Respondents also reported that performance data will become more predictive, with others looking to use data and AI to improve the fan experience, from new product offerings to responsive ticketing, and more.

Yet despite the identification of use cases, most sports executives do not appear to have a strategy for GenAI implementation, reporting barriers that they need to first overcome, such as access to funding, capabilities requirements and shifts to current ways of working. With many organisations adopting a 'wait and see' approach, early adopters have an opportunity to gain a competitive advantage over the rest.

“

As GenAI's capabilities expand, especially in handling multimodal data, its potential to transform industries and foster innovation will become increasingly apparent, making it an essential component of future business operations.”



**Nick McQuire**  
Microsoft  
[Read the interview](#)



**Insight 10**

# GenAI to (re-)define the sports experience

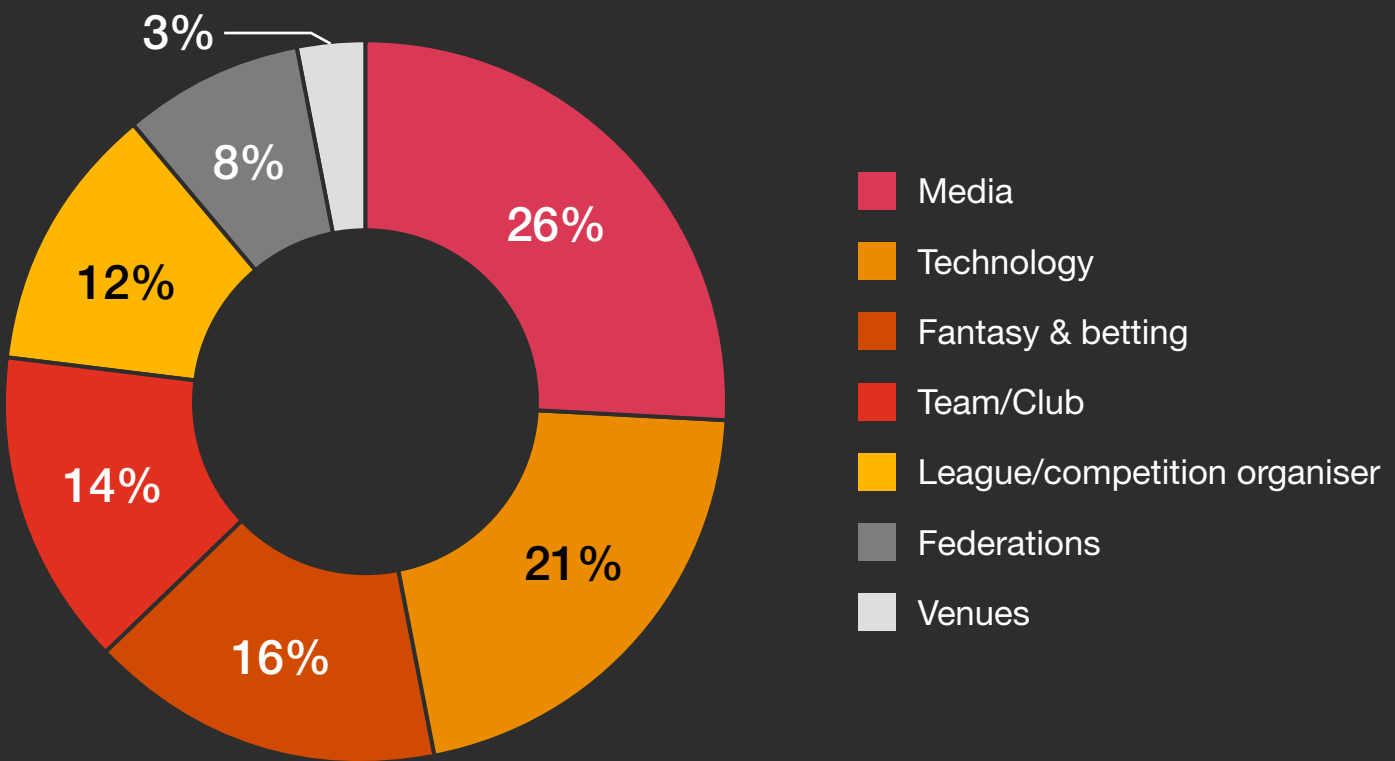
- Sports media and tech companies stand to benefit most from GenAI through an enhanced ability to create content more quickly, at lower cost, to unlock further commercial opportunities, driving opportunities for new pricing and fan engagement models.
- An ever-growing pool of performance data will allow sports organisations to use enhanced predictive analytics to guide high performance programmes, including athlete recruitment and development. Organisations will be able to quickly understand the implications of this data, combining disparate datasets for richer insights, e.g. medical history, training loads, nutrition, match performance, and more.
- Fans will be big beneficiaries of GenAI, with enhanced in-stadium experiences, higher-quality and more personalised content, and hyper-personalisation and insights in real-time, with fans able to customise purchases on everything from ticketing packages and more relevant, targeted offers.



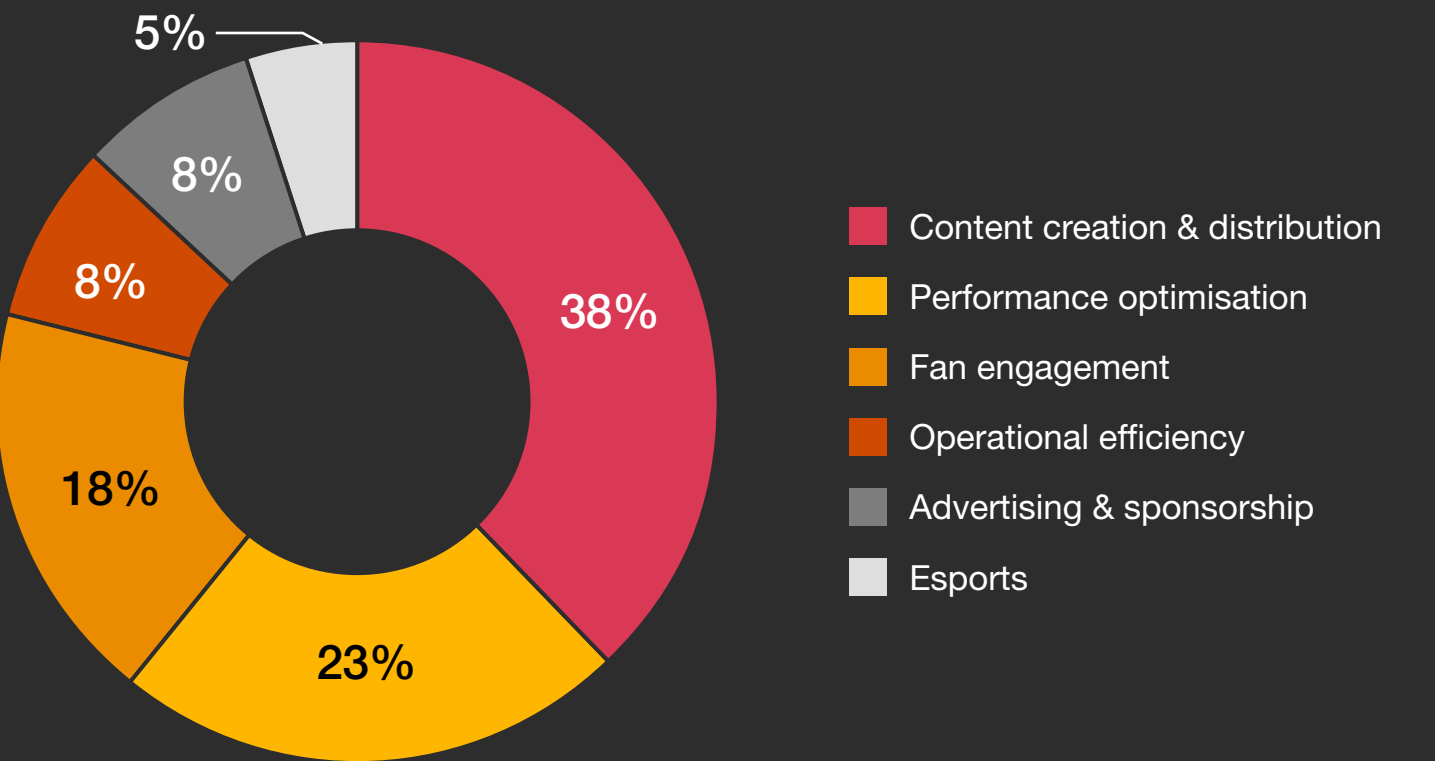
AI—including generative AI, but also a new generation of machine learning tools for comprehending and curating content—are revolutionising how rights holders can scale powerful and direct connections with fans, which in turn can deliver more value to sponsors and broadcast partners and drive incremental revenue.”

**Daniel Kirschner**  
CEO Greenfly

**Organisations which stand to benefit most from GenAI**  
Percentage of respondents



**Most important use case for GenAI in Sports**  
Percentage of respondents



Source: PwC Analysis, N=370

## Insight 11

# Early GenAI adopters can lead the pack

- With many GenAI use cases still emerging, sports organisations will likely adopt a ‘wait and see’ approach. As more come to market, organisations will have a greater opportunity to develop an implementation plan and overarching strategy.
- Localised implementation is more likely than an enterprise-wide approach, with specific use cases trialled by departments. A top-down push to research, trial and implementation will be critical.
- Organisations can use frameworks such as the value realisation flywheel to bring coherence to demand (use cases and patterns) and supply (tools, solutions, cost and carbon, deployment) decisions.

### Responsible AI approach

Based on a responsible AI strategy and trusted AI implementation



### Value hypothesis

Assessment of both the value and implementation risk/reward based on the organisation’s balance sheet and comparison to industry average

### Use case

Development of key use cases associated with the value hypothesis to ensure prioritisation of effort

### Patterns

Alignment of prioritised use cases (demand side) with common patterns for design/build (supply side)

### Tooling

Evaluation and development of appropriate tooling to avoid future stranded tech debt

### Solutions

Development of appropriate solutions and/or plug-ins to create maximised scaled benefit across patterns

### Cost and carbon

Evaluation of cost of development and deployment as well as the associated carbon impact

### Deploy and learn

Initial deployment and learning iteration within controlled processes as well as a re-evaluation of risk and governance

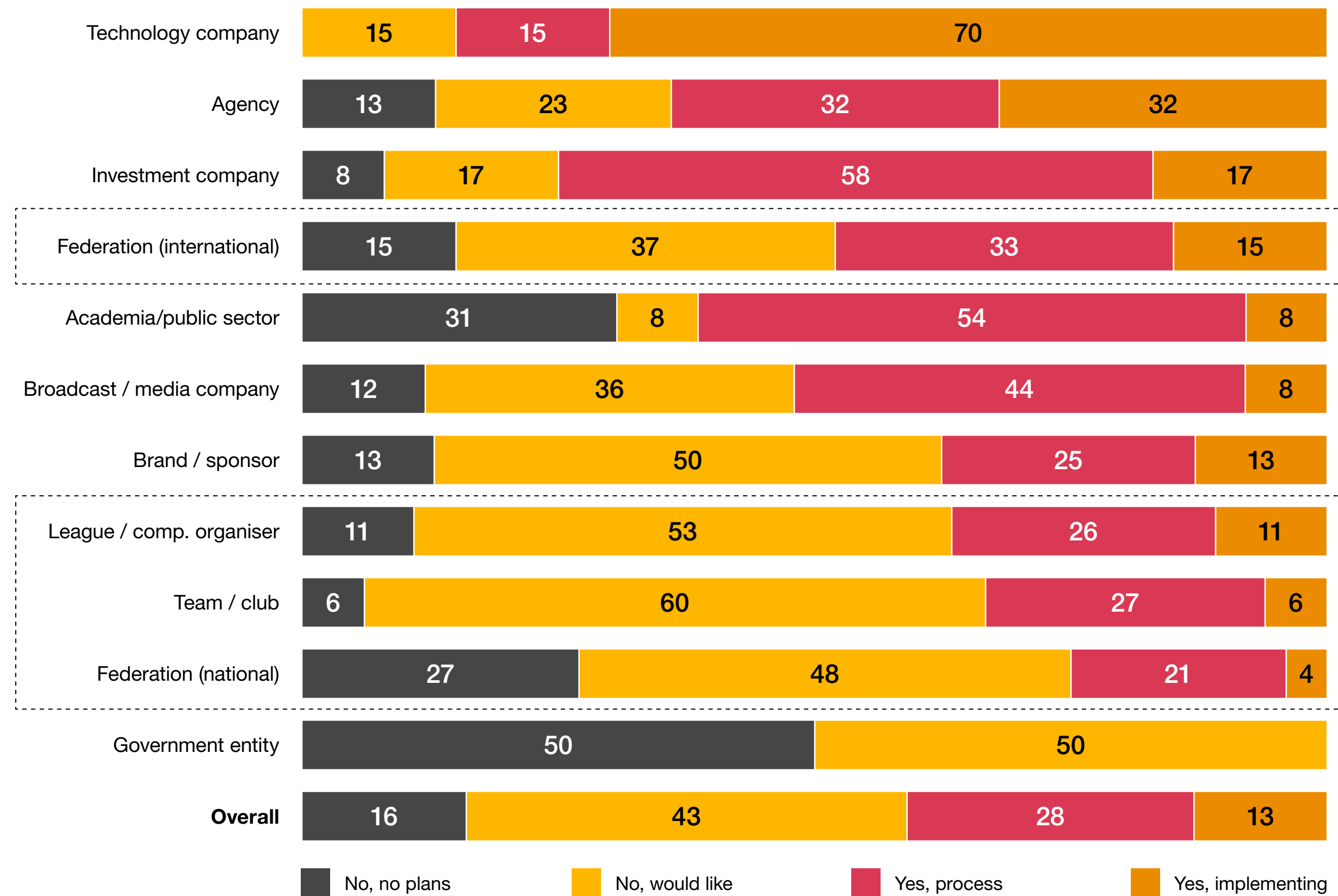
### Adjacent scale

Create scale and explore pattern adjacencies for lowest cost/effort deployment into other use cases to drive declining cost of scale

**Insight 12**

# Sports tech companies most prepared to adopt GenAI

**Preparedness for incorporating GenAI in business model**  
Split by organisation type, % of respondents



- Sports technology companies, sports agencies and investors are already developing or implementing strategies for using GenAI to improve experiences and drive growth. Amazon, for example, is integrating AI-enhanced features into NFL broadcasts to provide deeper-insights.
- Survey results suggest that teams, leagues and federations have been slower to embrace GenAI.
- Overall 59% of respondents do not yet have a plan for GenAI, while 16% do not see it as relevant for the business.



Source: PwC Analysis, N=385

## Insight 13

# Embracing GenAI requires new ways of working

GenAI offers wide and varied growth opportunities for sporting organisations, but to capitalise on any potential they may have to overcome certain barriers:

- **Process:** Changing ways of working will undoubtedly be necessary, which will require buy-in from senior leadership and a change in organisational culture – such changes are never easy and require careful consideration, and collaboration across the board.
- **People:** Sports organisations will need to recruit and develop GenAI capabilities to truly benefit from its potential. Upskilling the current workforce will be an important part of readying the organisation to implement GenAI solutions, as will partnering with third parties to plug skills gaps or bring in new capabilities.
- **Product:** While GenAI has been used in sport performance for many years, robust (new) use cases will need to be developed to overcome concerns and justify shifts away from current ways of working. Investment to support the development of ideas is essential but is often not readily available within sports organisations due to budget constraints.

### Main barriers to the adoption of GenAI in sports Percentage of respondents, mentions in top-3 initiatives

#### Process

47%

Shifting operations away from previous ways of working	19%
Ensuring sufficient allocation of funding to support GenAI development initiatives	14%
Changing the organisational culture	14%

#### People

27%

Access to the required capabilities to implement GenAI solutions	13%
Securing buy-in from senior leadership	9%
Aligning with key stakeholders on GenAI initiatives	5%

#### Product

26%

A lack of clarity over potential use cases and relevance	17%
Hesitancies related to nascency of GenAI-based solutions	9%

Source: PwC Analysis, N=366





An executive point of view

with **Nick McQuire**  
of Microsoft

# Generative AI transforms business and boosts productivity

Generative AI (GenAI) has seen a massive surge in interest, largely driven by rapid adoption of technologies like ChatGPT, which reached 100 million users in just three months. Swift uptake in the consumer space has pushed organisations to explore and integrate AI more urgently, reassessing their data strategies in line with digital transformation goals. Unlike a few years ago, when AI was narrowly focused, today's GenAI is a versatile tool applicable across multiple tasks and domains, making it relevant to a much broader range of businesses in a very short time.

The use cases for GenAI in businesses span four main pillars: employee experience, customer engagement, business processes, and innovation. For employees, AI enhances information retrieval, summarisation, and decision-making, promoting a shift from information-based to intelligence-based work models. For customers, AI offers always-on service through more intelligent agents or chatbots, enhancing satisfaction and efficiency. But across all four of these pillars, the underlying theme is productivity improvements - enabling businesses to operate smarter and faster.

However, the transition to widespread GenAI adoption does come with challenges, primarily around culture and governance. Companies need to foster a culture that embraces AI, beginning with leadership that encourages adoption and upskilling. Governance issues revolve around safely operationalising AI while managing security concerns,

like AI hallucinations, which amplify existing fears about the technology. Developing robust governance models will be crucial for responsible AI deployment and building trust in the technology.

For businesses looking to start on their GenAI journey, three key considerations are essential: defining the value proposition and tying it to core business priorities; determining the deployment model (i.e. whether to consume as a service or build internally); and establishing strong technology partnerships to support these efforts. Effective partnerships are vital in the rapidly evolving AI landscape to ensure scalability and strategic alignment with business goals. Ensuring the platform used is secure, cost-effective, and capable of customisation is also critical.

Looking forward, we expect GenAI to continue boosting productivity significantly, potentially achieving 40-60% gains depending on the business. Beyond workplace productivity, GenAI will also significantly impact scientific discovery and research and development based-disciplines as well, opening up significant advances in areas such as chemistry, material science and drug discovery. These advances will help us build solutions for some of our biggest societal challenges such as climate change, food insecurity and health. As GenAI's capabilities expand, especially in handling multimodal data, its potential to transform industries and foster innovation will become increasingly apparent, making it an essential component of future business operations.

Nick is a globally-recognised thought leader and AI influencer, with 20+ years advising on emerging tech and enterprise innovation. He was named among the Top 5 Most Admired and Transformational Business Leaders in 2023 by CIO Times. He currently serves as Executive Director of Incubation Management in Microsoft's Strategic Missions and Technologies Division.



# 05 Women's sport

Women's sport continues to see a surge in interest and shows significant growth potential as a key market driver, reinforced by record-breaking events over the last year, such as the FIFA Women's World Cup (Summer 2023) and NCAA women's basketball tournament (March 2024).

This year's survey results show that sports executives remain optimistic about the continued revenue growth potential of women's sport, which is unsurprising in light of the increasing attendances, viewership figures, investment activity and fan engagement we have witnessed amongst premium sports properties. Increased media coverage has been key to driving growth, with a continued focus from broadcasters and media outlets likely to be crucial for success going forward.

Women's sport has a chance to carve its own path to success. With greater creative freedom, there is an exciting opportunity to create unique experiences suited to new audiences. The primary focus must be around building visibility and reach, which will require not just greater – and consistent – exposure, but sporting organisations to better understand the makeup of current fans and potential fans to improve experiences and engagement. Those that can lean into the differences between men's and women's sport fans to create a distinct proposition and offering will be the most likely to see significant growth.

“

Women's football offers clubs a chance to attract and engage new audiences, such as families and younger fans, which in turn can help attract new sponsors and enhance the match-day experience.”



**Martina Pavlová**  
ECA Women's  
Vice Chair  
[Read the interview](#)

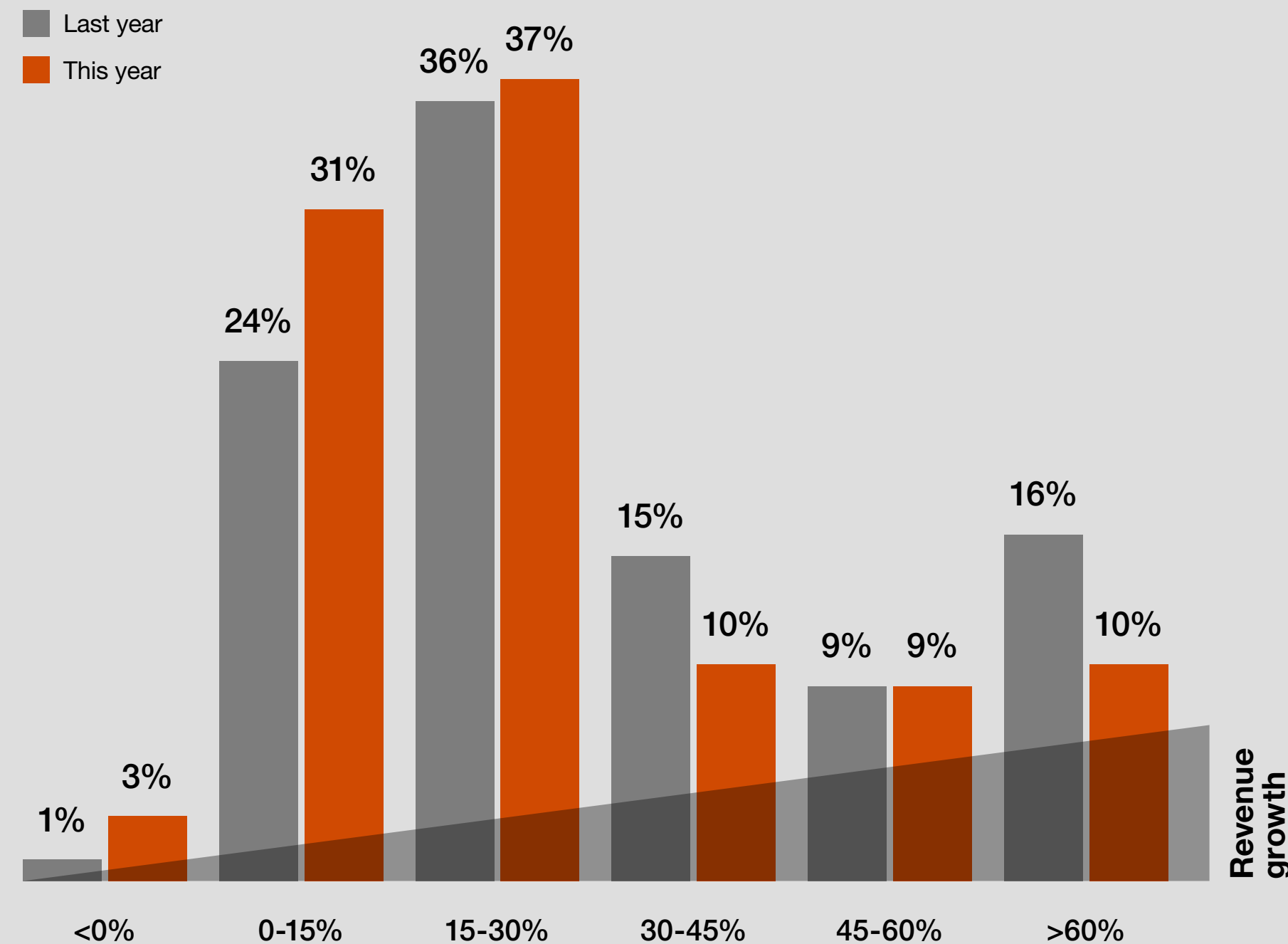


## Insight 14

# Continued and significant growth expected for women's sports

- An optimistic outlook for the revenue potential of women's sport shows over 85% of respondents forecasting double-digit growth over the next 3 to 5 years.
- With unprecedented attendance and viewership of women's events, 2023/24 was a record-breaking year that suggests a positive change in consciousness. Events such as the US Open women's tennis final and NCAA women's basketball tournament significantly outperformed the men's equivalents.
- There is still a skew toward sports such as football, rugby, and basketball which benefit from successful major events. Geographically, there is still a gap in interest, with North America clearly leading the pack. But that gap also presents growth opportunities.

**Expected revenue growth of women's sports in the next 3-5 years**  
Percentage of respondents



Source: PwC Analysis, N=402



Since competing between 2010-2016, I have seen 1st hand the rapid development and growth of women's sport. Our football team the Matildas have been a perfect example of how support is growing in Australia. Our country has now sold out 11 stadiums in a row, with 50,000 plus fans cheering for our women's team! We can't lose this momentum."

**Shelley Watts**  
Boxing Olympian and Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist

**Insight 15**

# Wider exposure will remain key to growing women's sports

**Most impactful initiatives contributing to the growth of women's sports**  
Percentage of respondents

	Last 3-5 years	Next 3-5 years		
	Rank	Change	Rank	%
Wider media coverage e.g., non-live, reporting, highlights	1	- →	1	15%
Increase in resources to develop female athletes	2	- →	2	13%
Increase in live coverage of women's sports competitions	3	- →	3	11%
Higher marketing and advertising spend	7	+3 ↗	4	11%
Greater monetisation opportunities e.g., media partner, sponsorship	8	+3 ↗	5	10%
Growth in female participants from grassroots to professionals	4	+2 ↗	6	9%
More major women's sports events	6	-1 ↘	7	7%
Increase in female athletes' salaries and compensation	10	-2 ↗	8	7%
More diverse workforce e.g., female leaders in sports, female coaches	5	+4 ↘	9	6%
Enhanced collaboration / resource sharing between men's & women's sports organisations	9	-1 ↘	10	4%

- Despite women making up approximately 40% of all participants in sports, only 15% of media coverage is dedicated to women's sports<sup>1</sup>. While this number has risen rapidly from 4% in 2018 - driven by the growth of streaming services and social media - there is still more to be done.
- Increasing media coverage will remain key to improving fanbases. But so will ensuring coverage is consistent and holistic (games, highlight reels, talk shows).
- Increased marketing and advertising and greater monetisation opportunities will support growth in the next 3 to 5 years. Away from broadcasters and media outlets, private equity and (angel) investors will need to input money and support to realise any growth potential.

Notes: 1) October 2023 study conducted by The Collective, Wasserman's women-focused practice  
Source: PwC Analysis, N=383



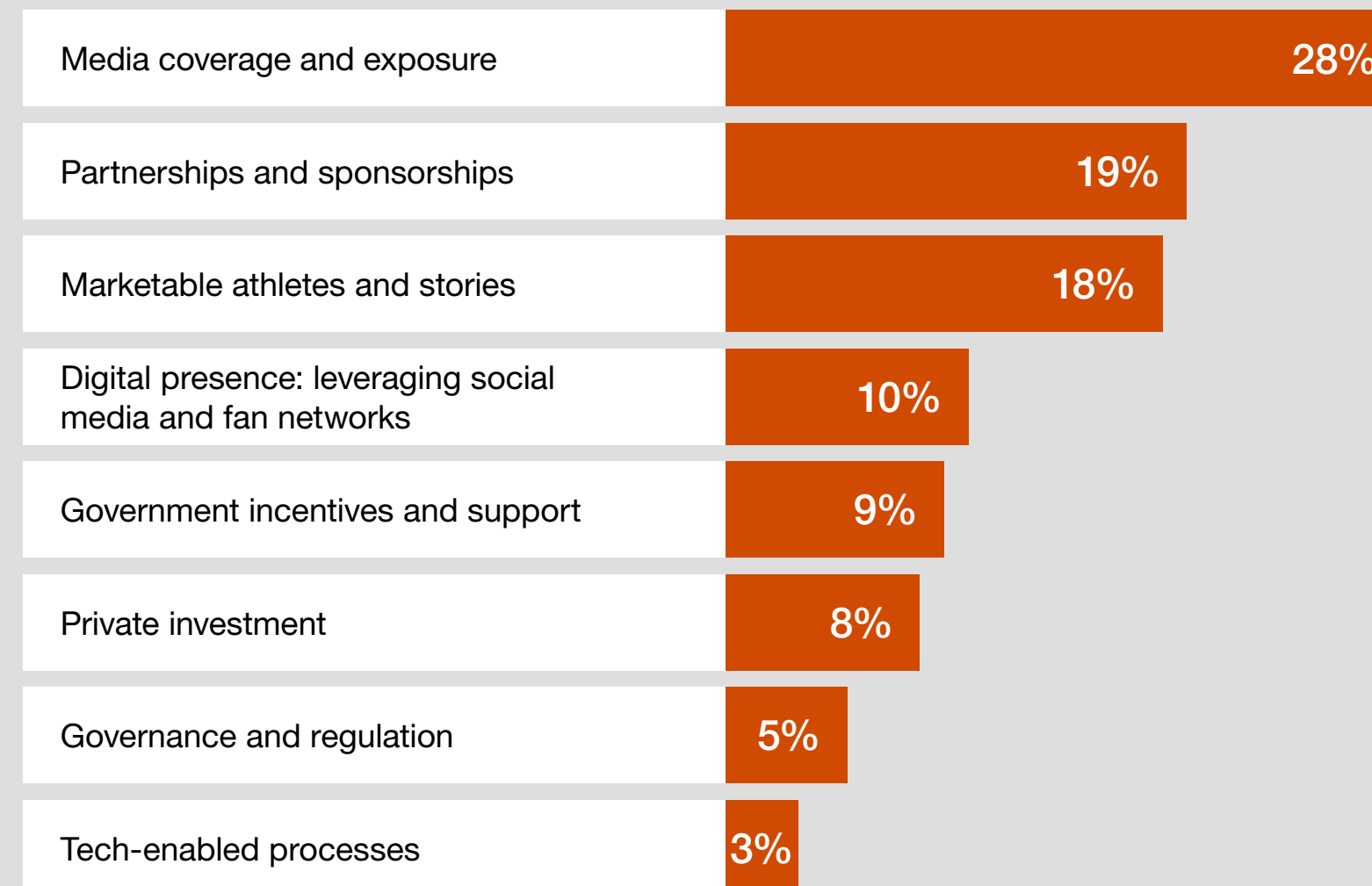
## Insight 16

# Developing women's sport requires leaning into differences and creating a distinct proposition

- One of the key topics of conversation in boardrooms is how to bridge the gap between the long-term potential of women's sport and the short-to medium-term transition period and funding requirements.
- Building visibility and reach should be a priority for driving growth. Sporting organisations need to better understand the makeup of current fans and potential fans, through rich data and accurate insight that can help inform strategic decisions and improve experiences and engagements.
- In contrast to men's sport which has been long established, women's sport, has an opportunity to carve its own path. Being a 'second mover' means less expectation to do the same again, and greater creative freedom to create inclusive experiences suited to new audiences.

### Key requirements for developing a successful women's sports property

Percentage of respondents, mentions in top-3 aspects



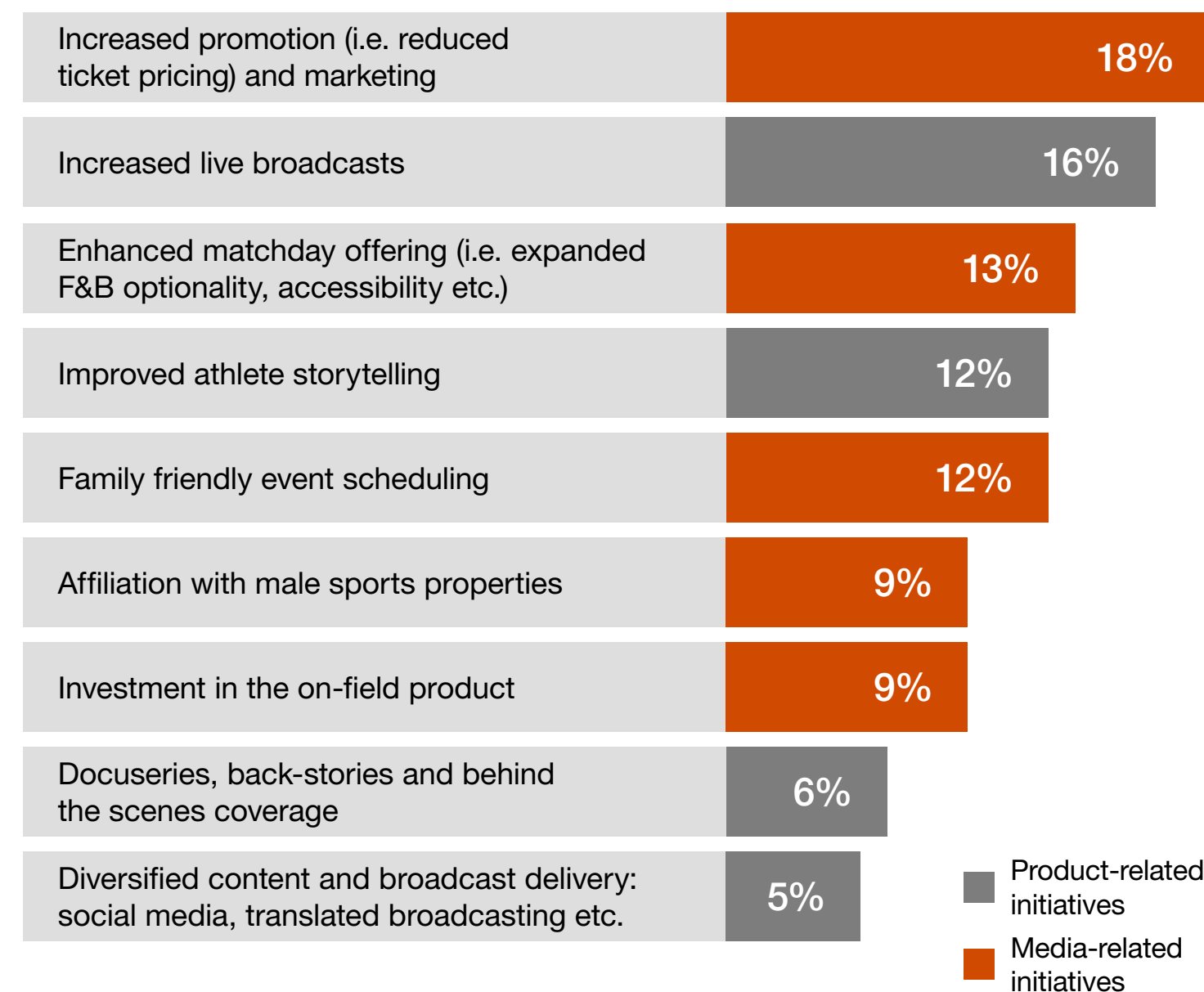
Source: PwC Analysis, N=354



**Insight 17**

# Enhanced product-consumer fit key to accelerate the trajectory of women's sports

**Best methods for attracting wider audiences to women's sports properties**  
 Percentage of respondents, mentions in top-3 aspects



- Investment in the 'product' is crucial, from better promotions to enhanced matchday offerings and investment in the on-field quality of play. A focus on defining the product and ensuring each women's sport property can create its own narrative and space within a congested sports calendar is essential for future growth.
- Media-related initiatives will also remain key to fueling the trajectory of women's sports. By sharing authentic personal stories on diverse platforms, athletes can engage audiences, foster loyalty and inspire the next generation. In turn, this drives higher attendance at events, increased viewership, and a larger fan base, which attracts more investment and sponsorship opportunities.

Source: PwC Analysis, N=393



An executive point of view

with **Martina Pavlová**, ECA Women's Vice Chair |  
International Relations Manager, AC Sparta Praha

# Balancing commercial growth and broader development of women's football

Women's football across Europe is developing rapidly, but the pace of growth varies a lot by region. Over the last 5 to 10 years we've seen particularly strong development in leading football markets such as England, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain. The push towards professionalisation in the top leagues is evident, with a move towards full-time professional teams creating stronger competitions and driving opportunities and exposure for players. In turn, this shift is driving greater levels of investment, which is essential for both growing the number of professional players and clubs, and improving the quality on the field.

Leading European football clubs (e.g. Olympique Lyonnais, FC Barcelona) have invested heavily in women's club football and worked hard to integrate the team into the wider club structure. Several big football clubs have followed suit, which has enhanced domestic and international club competitions. But some regions and countries, such as my native Czechia, are still early in their development journey and have a long way to go. The differences between markets can be vast and often boils down to economic strength and societal attitudes towards women's football. Clubs in stronger markets are able to generate more revenue (or have stronger financial support) and can reinvest it into creating a better product. This investment, coupled with evolving societal support encouraging girls at grassroots to play football, is crucial for the sport's continued development.

The potential for growth in women's football in Europe is substantial, particularly through further development of the product. We need to invest in player development, infrastructure and competitions to raise the overall level of the game. I see continental competitions as a key contributing factor that provide clubs with international exposure, better competitive matchups, and more opportunities to develop players. Women's football offers clubs a chance to attract and engage new audiences, such as families and younger fans, which in turn can help attract new sponsors and enhance the match-day experience.

For women's football to thrive several challenges need to be addressed. One major obstacle is changing societal perceptions that hinder the acceptance of women's football and female professional athletes, ensuring female players of all ages want to play football and see a future pathway. We also need to balance a commercial focus with the broader development of the sport. For instance, expanding the match calendar provides better exposure and development opportunities for players, but also poses a risk to their welfare if workloads aren't managed carefully. If you want to increase quality of play, you can't overload people. Another critical challenge is ensuring the women's game gets the support of the media, to give us the reach we need to inspire people to play and attend games.

The responsibility for growth of women's football will lie with multiple stakeholders, including clubs, owners, leagues, national associations (FAs), and governing bodies (e.g. UEFA and FIFA). Clubs play a critical role in developing players and can learn from high performance expertise developed in the men's game, but they do have an opportunity to be more courageous on the commercial side and try new things in dealing with sponsors, partners, media and fans. National Associations play an important role in creating incentives, providing resources and establishing a clear strategy for growth, which is particularly vital in regions where football is less developed. Additionally, there's a potential to collaborate with the public sector namely on education and further development, which is something we see in the US already. The education programmes need to be available for coaches and technical staff, where the emphasis should be on the particularities of women's football. Ultimately, collaborative efforts among all parties are necessary to ensure a unified approach to development of women's football.

Martina Pavlová is a specialist in international relations and diplomacy. Since joining AC Sparta Praha in 2007, she has been responsible for organising international games for both men's and women's first teams. Martina serves as ECA board member and was previously on ECA's Women's Football Committee.



# 06 Future of major events

From UEFA Euro 2024 to the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games, a packed sporting calendar highlights the continued popularity of major events.

Yet, despite the inspirational aspects of sports, financial considerations remain the key incentive - and barrier - to hosting major events. Investment in infrastructure and urban regeneration are the main attractions, but concerns around budget overruns and rising security costs can deter potential hosts from submitting a bid. Understandably, public support is also important, particularly with taxpayers often bearing the financial burden of such events without direct benefits, necessitating community engagement and demonstration of longer-term benefits.

Driven by the high costs associated with hosting events and limited returns for governments, financial challenges are likely to remain a key concern. New commercial or hosting models will be required in the future, which could see co-hosting become a more common model for major sports events.

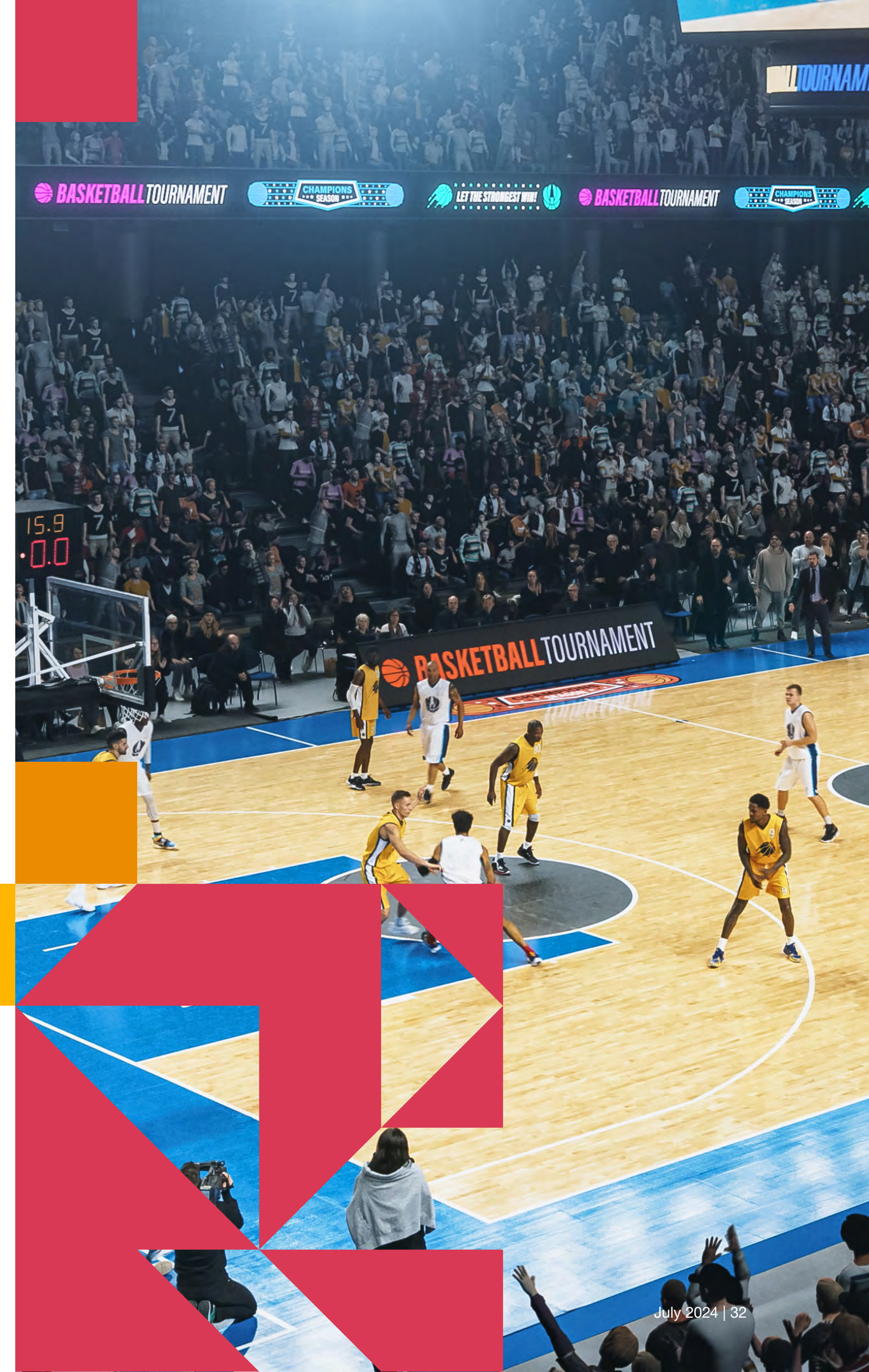
International sport federations play a vital role in shaping event formats and can address hosts' financial concerns by looking to involve private investors and creating models to engage new fan bases. Other emerging trends highlighted include greater digital accessibility, environmental, social and governance matters and a shift towards inclusivity and shared responsibilities.

“

Sports events have continued to evolve commercial and delivery models, and the focus has shifted from purely onsite engagement to athlete-focused and athlete-generated content across diverse digital platforms.”



**Kit McConnell**  
Sports Director of the  
International Olympic Committee  
[Read the interview](#)



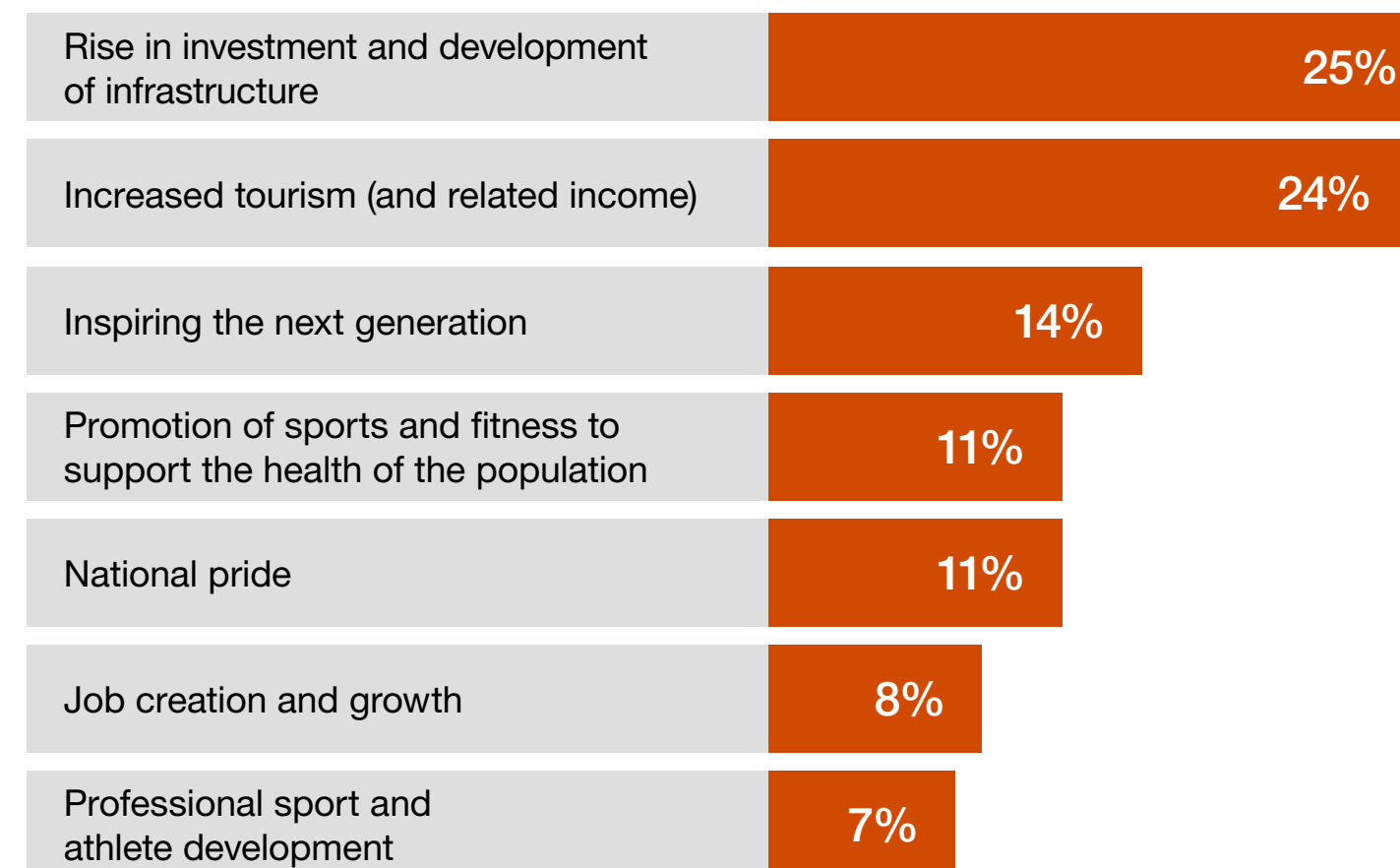




## Insight 18

# Major sports events remain a catalyst for investment in infrastructure and urban regeneration

### Main incentives to host major sports events Percentage of respondents



- Financial benefits remain the main motivation for hosting major events, with initiatives like the Grand Paris Express rail network and the urban regeneration in Seine-Saint-Denis highlighting the importance of infrastructure development linked to sports events.
- The emotional and cultural impacts of hosting events also play a significant role, particularly for smaller-scale events that offer substantial social and cultural benefits rather than the same level of direct financial return.
- While major sports events offer athletes opportunities to compete, gain recognition and inspire future generations, professional sport and athlete development rank lower than financial impact and broader community benefits.

Source: PwC Analysis, N=398

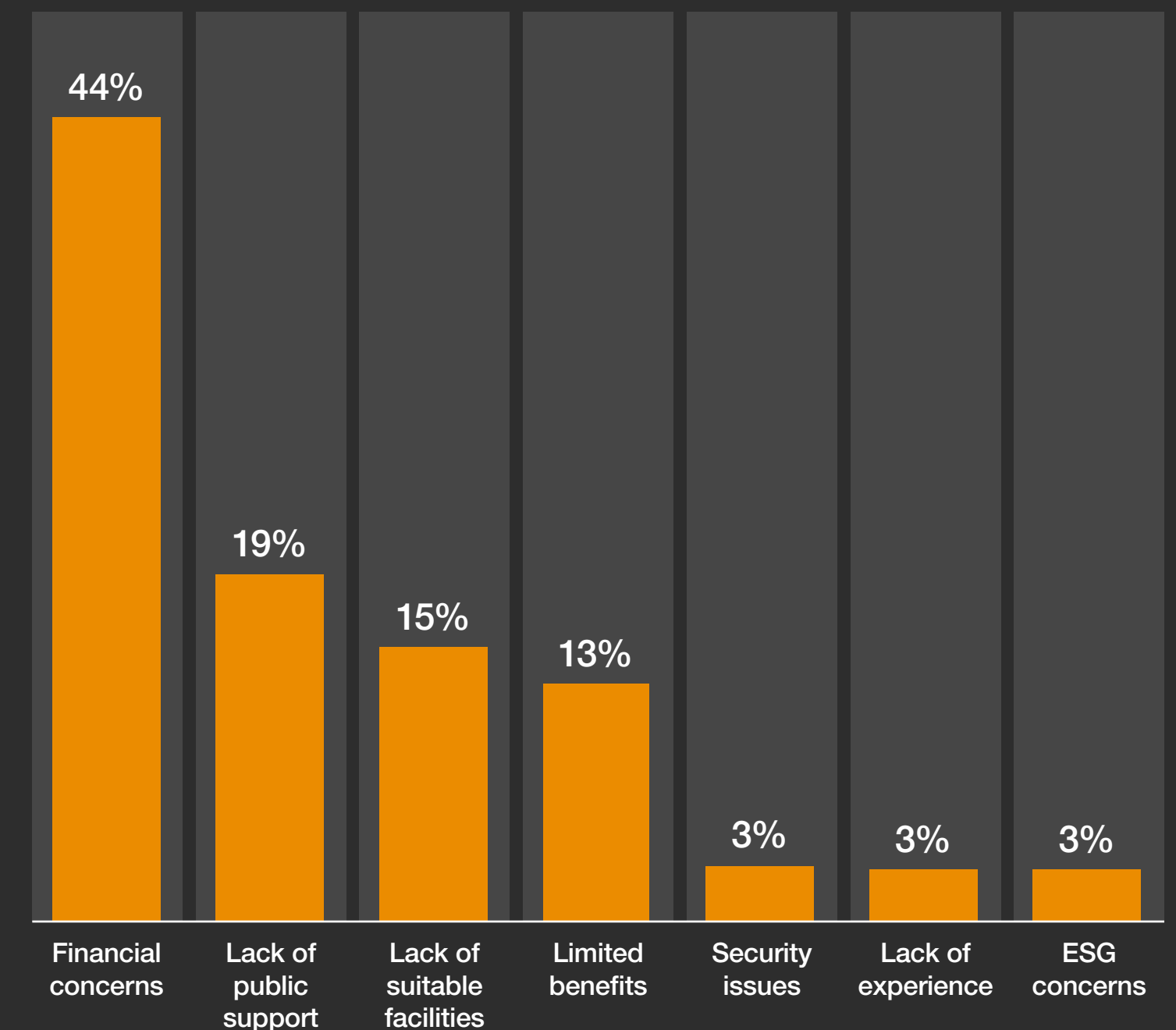


## Insight 19

# Financial concerns a substantial barrier to hosting major events

- Interest in hosting major sporting events is often triggered by incentives such as economic development and international prestige. However, financial concerns remain the top barrier, with budget overruns common in major events, such as the Rio 2016 Olympic Games and the Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games. Global instability is leading to heightened security costs, making financial considerations even more critical for potential hosts.
- Public support for major events can be low because taxpayers often bear the financial burden of deficits incurred from hosting. Engaging communities and demonstrating clear, long-term benefits are crucial for gaining the necessary public buy-in.
- Recent major event bidding cycles have seen fewer nations involved, highlighting an increasingly challenging environment for international federations. External factors such as climate change are further reducing the pool of potential hosts - particularly for winter sports. Sustainable practices and innovative solutions are essential to adapt to these changing conditions, as will a change in the economic model between international federations and host nations and cities.

**Main reasons potential hosts of major events refrain from submitting a bid**  
Percentage of respondents



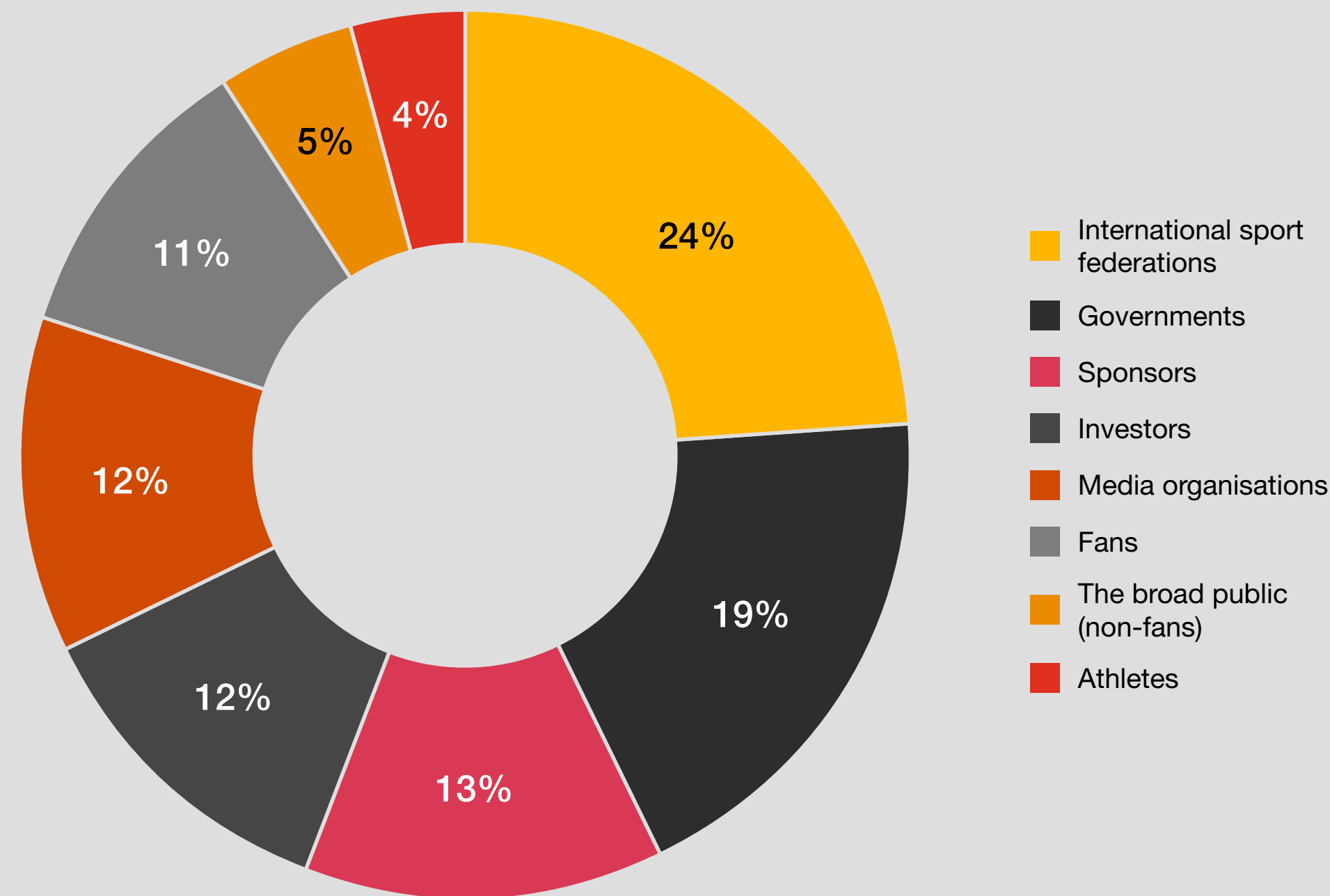
Source: PwC Analysis, N=411

## Insight 20

# International federations and governments will shape the future of major events

### Stakeholders driving the future shape of major sports events

Percentage of respondents



Source: PwC Analysis, N=411

- International federations are pivotal in shaping the future of major sports events. They have significant control over the sporting calendar, competition formats and attractiveness of sport to global audiences. Those that address hosts' financial concerns by considering different commercial models for host cities and nations and creating new ways to engage audiences will prosper in the increasing competition for attention, relevance and engagement.
- Governments focused on economic development, national pride, and community engagement will influence the size and format of sporting events in the future. New formats and creative ways to deliver events will enable governments to actively promote locations and increase the value of hosting major events.
- Although athletes are seen to have a limited influence on the future of major events, as they increasingly use social media to connect directly with fans and voice their opinions their influence in shaping the future of sports events should grow.



## Insight 21

# Event hosting model to change and shift towards shared responsibilities

- The majority of respondents believe new commercial or hosting models will be required in the future, likely driven by the high costs associated with hosting events and limited returns for governments.
- Co-hosting could become a standard model for future major sports events, with examples including the 2026 Asian Games (hosted by the Aichi Prefecture and the city of Nagoya in Japan) and the 2026 FIFA World Cup, co-hosted by three countries. However, the decentralisation of events poses challenges to the fan experience, which is particularly important to events like the Olympic Games that thrive on a unified atmosphere and a unique experience.
- Driven by global trends in sustainability and ESG considerations, respondents highlighted the importance of utilising existing infrastructure. International federations need to innovate and adopt new delivery models to stay relevant and accommodate evolving trends.
- Respondents were split on whether future major sports events will be predominantly financed by governments or private investors. Government financing typically emphasises community building and city development, while private investment focuses on financial returns. However, a dual-financing approach opens up opportunities for more innovative hosting models and cutting-edge event experiences.

### How major events might evolve in the coming years Percentage of respondents

Major sports events will become **more accessible** (either virtually or physically)

69%

N = 382

Major sports events will become **more exclusive**

31%

Local Organising Committees will continue to host major sporting events in **one central location** such as a city or a region

14%

N = 389

Local Organising Committees will shift to co-hosting models to deliver major sporting events in **multiple locations**

86%

Major sports events will **downsize** and use more existing infrastructure

60%

N = 377

Major sports events will **grow in size** and trigger large infrastructure development projects

40%

Major sports events in the future will continue to be predominantly **financed by the government**

50%

N = 377

Major sports events in the future will be **financed by private investors**

50%

International federations / governing bodies will need to develop new **commercial / hosting models** to attract host countries / cities

64%

N = 376

**Existing commercial / hosting models** will continue to be adopted by International federations / governing bodies to attract host countries / cities

36%

An executive point of view

with **Kit McConnell**, Sports Director of the International Olympic Committee (IOC)

# The societal impact and unique value of major sporting events

In recent years, the world of sports has seen significant transformation, with the ever-increasing number of events leading to an evolving international sports calendar. Despite this, traditional major events like the Olympic Games, FIFA Football World Cup, major world championships and tennis majors remain central to the global sports landscape. Sports events have continued to evolve commercial and delivery models, and the focus has shifted from purely onsite engagement to athlete-focused and athlete-generated content across diverse digital platforms. Technology now allows athletes to engage directly with fans, meaning sport becomes increasingly more interactive and personalised. What sets sports apart, is that they are not just consumer or entertainment products. They hold unique value as positive global phenomena that unite societies, both nationally and internationally.

Paris 2024 is expected to reach a global broadcast audience of close to four billion. Whilst the spirit of sport transcends societal divides, building a better world through sport also means ensuring access for all. Sport is a vital enabler for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically the goal of ensuring more people from all backgrounds can benefit from participating in community sports. To remain an integral part of society, sporting initiatives must be supported by accessible infrastructure, qualified coaches, and adequate resources. Major events like the Olympics play a vital role in

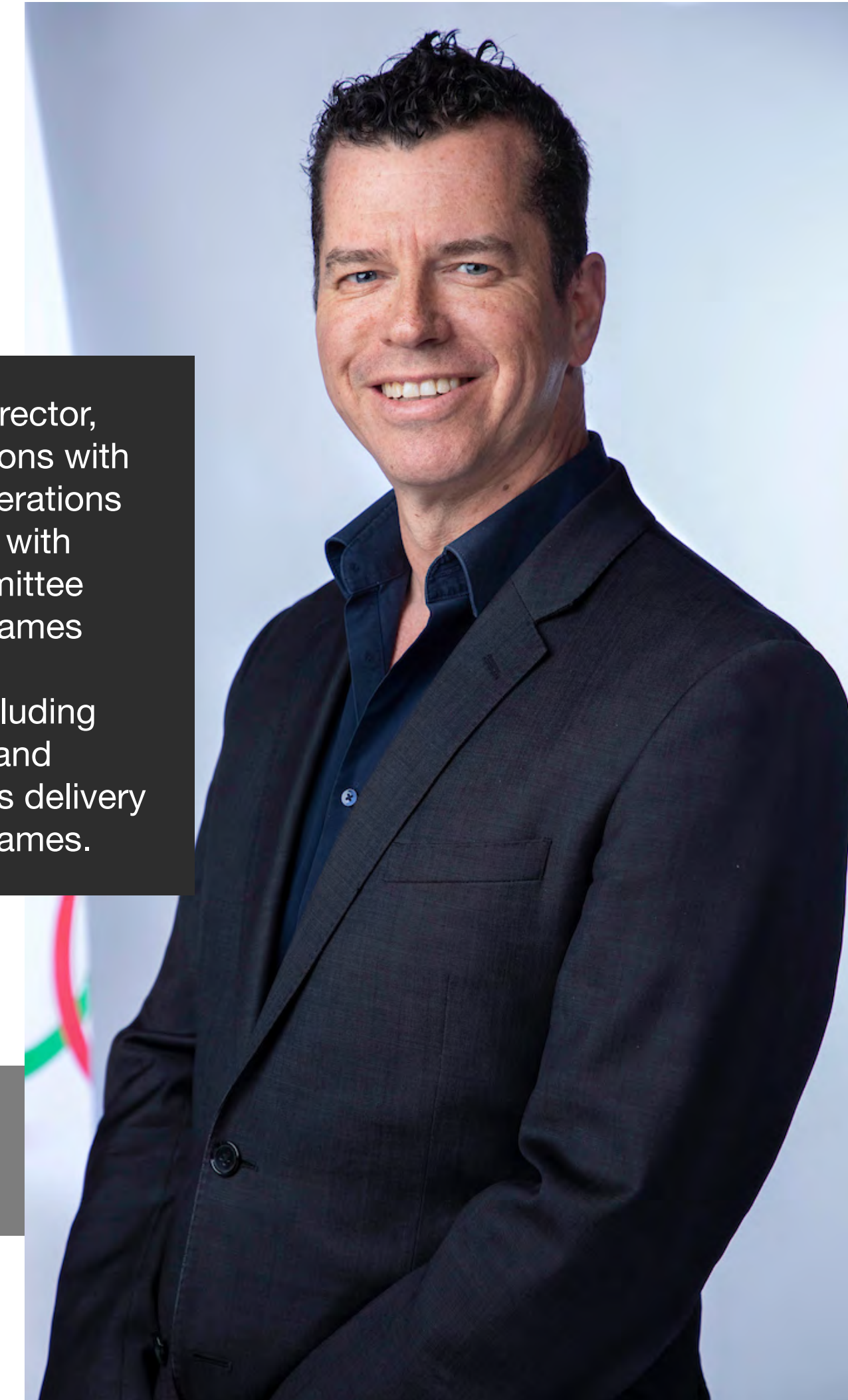
this effort by promoting access to sports and inspiring long-term engagement for host populations.

The legacy of the Olympic Games Paris 2024 will emphasise the role of sports in society and improve access to sport for people across France. More than three million young people have taken part in the Olympic and Paralympic Weeks organised by Paris 2024. Over 26,000 children have learnt how to swim with the “1, 2, 3 Nagez!” summer programme, and the “Bouger Plus” programme has already benefited over 600,000 people. These are but a few examples. The power of this combination – holistic host nation engagement and an unparalleled global engagement – mean the Olympic Games can, and will, be harnessed to create lasting legacies, inspire future athletes, and introduce new global audiences to athletes, sports, and disciplines in the Olympic Games.

In our drive for equality in sport, Paris 2024 will achieve full gender equality on the field of play, for the first time in Olympic history. Moreover, the competition schedule also ensures full equality in showcasing women’s and men’s events. This milestone reinforces the progressive values that sports can promote and sets a new standard for others to follow.

The Olympic Games are about sport, and more than sport. Paris 2024 is a unique opportunity to showcase a global ideal, a platform to inspire and unite people around the world. We can’t wait for the world to come together in Paris.

As IOC Sports Director, Kit leads all relations with International Federations and partnerships with Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (OCOG) Sports Departments, including the organisation and planning of sports delivery at the Olympic Games.



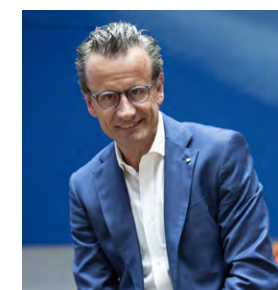
# 07 Government in sports

Governments continue to play a critical role in sports development, yet their strategies receive mixed reviews from industry stakeholders. In this section, we examine perceptions of government involvement in sports, focusing on key areas of success and improvement. Survey respondents highlight the importance of public health promotion, economic impact, and national identity, while also identifying significant challenges in communication and stakeholder engagement.

Despite the visibility of professional sports, there is a strong demand for governments to drive grassroots initiatives aimed at enhancing community well-being. There is also a notable call for better regulatory frameworks and more effective public health strategies. While hosting major events and stimulating national pride receive positive ratings, other strategic goals, such as social inclusion and private sector support, lag behind. These insights underline the complexities governments face in balancing diverse stakeholder needs and addressing the critical areas that can drive the sports industry forward.

“

Looking ahead, the role of the government in sports will become ever more complex and challenging.”



**Matthias Remund**  
Federal Office of Sports  
in Switzerland  
[Read the interview](#)





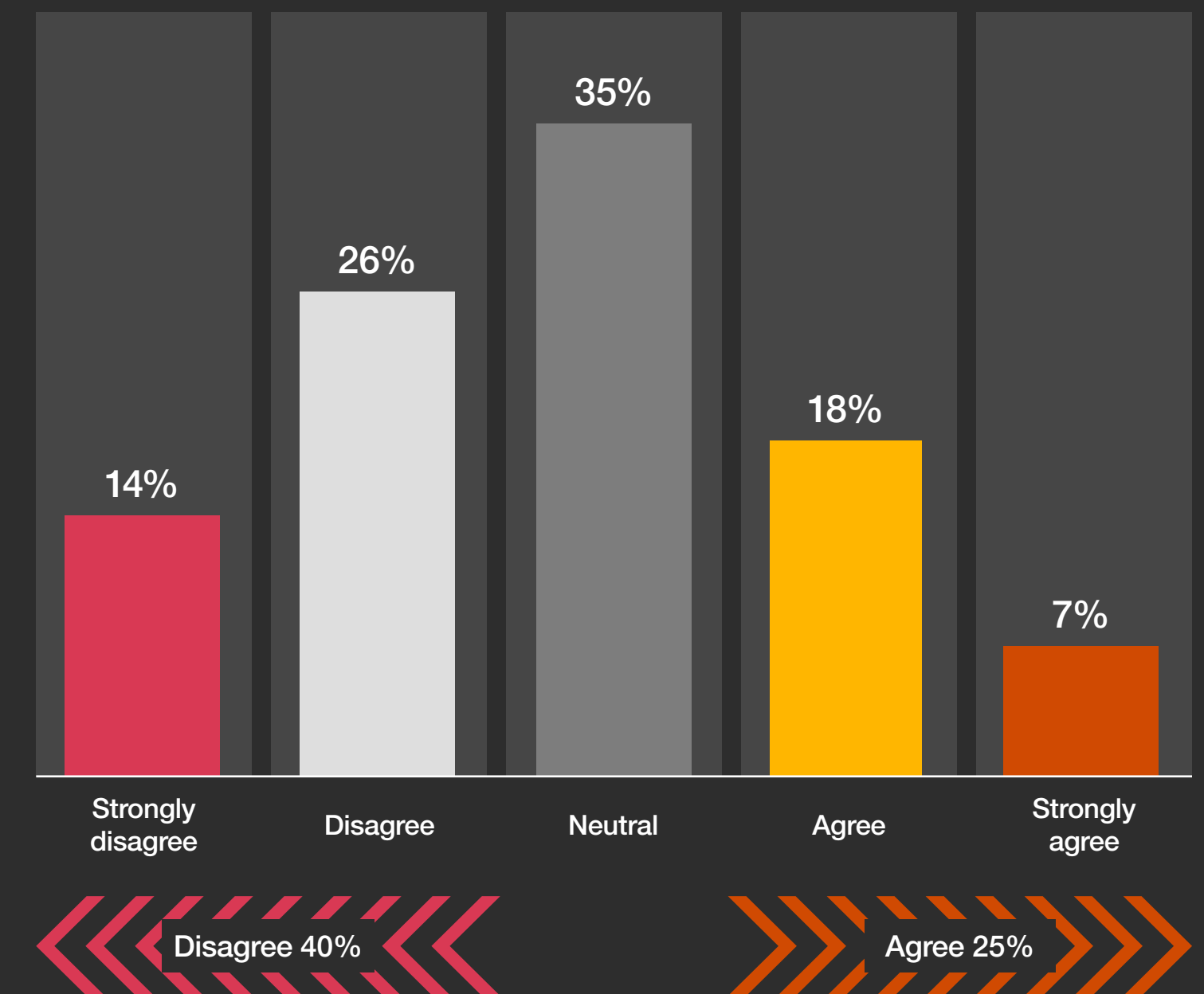
## Insight 22

# Governments must deliver a coherent vision and strategy for sports

- Only 25% of respondents agreed that their government's sports development strategy is well thought-out and comprehensive. This lack of agreement reflects the challenges governments face in creating a coherent vision for sports in their country and successfully communicating it to the public to build trust and support.
- Governments must serve a multitude of stakeholders, from athletes, sports organisations, and fans, to investors and local communities, each with diverging and at times opposing goals. Accommodating these demands with limited resources can be challenging and may contribute to the mixed perception.

### The sports development vision, strategy, and goals of my primary region's government are well-thought-out and comprehensive?

Percentage of respondents



Source: PwC Analysis, N=385

Insight 23

# Promoting public health priority for government's sports initiatives

- Survey respondents believe that the promotion of public health is governments' highest priority. While grassroots initiatives – such as community sports programmes, school physical education improvements, and public fitness campaigns – may not garner as much attention as professional sports, they have a significant and lasting impact on public health and overall community well-being.
- Since driving positive economic growth and hosting major events are closely linked, governments have an opportunity to deliver on both of these priority areas in parallel. Playing a critical role in deciding the event hosting agenda for a nation, they can take responsibility for the growth impact of hosting major events.

## Government's most important goals for sports (and related) initiatives

Percentage of respondents

Promoting public health and fitness	25%
Driving positive economic impact	14%
Hosting major sporting events	14%
Promoting social inclusion and diversity	14%
Improving competitiveness and achieving international success	13%
Stimulating national pride and identity	12%
Supporting private sector investment in sports development	8%

Source: PwC Analysis, N=372

“

Despite variations in policy approaches, certain global trends such as promoting women in sports and adapting to digital advancements are universally crucial for the public sector.”

**Matthias Remund**  
Federal Office of Sports in Switzerland



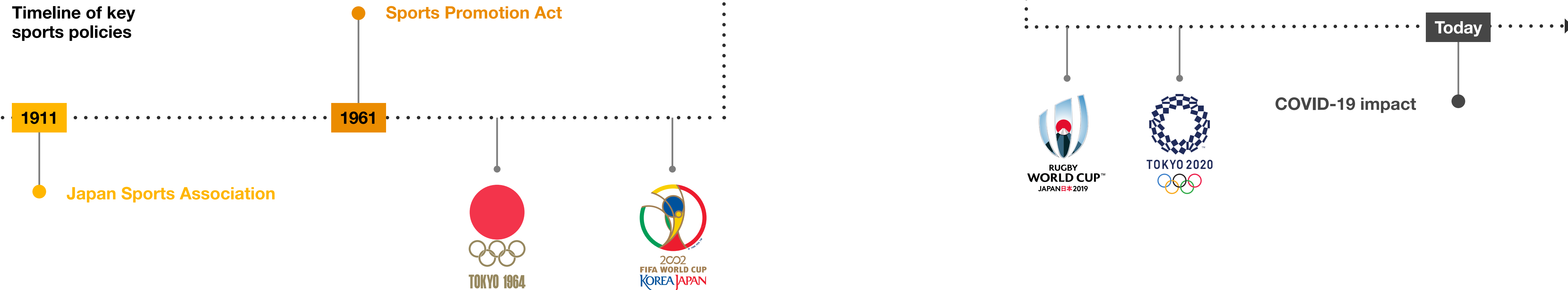


Case Study

# Government and the legacy of major events

Japanese sports policy has strong ties with major events such as the Olympics. They promote sports participation and provide a positive contribution to Japanese society and the economy.

## Timeline of key sports policies



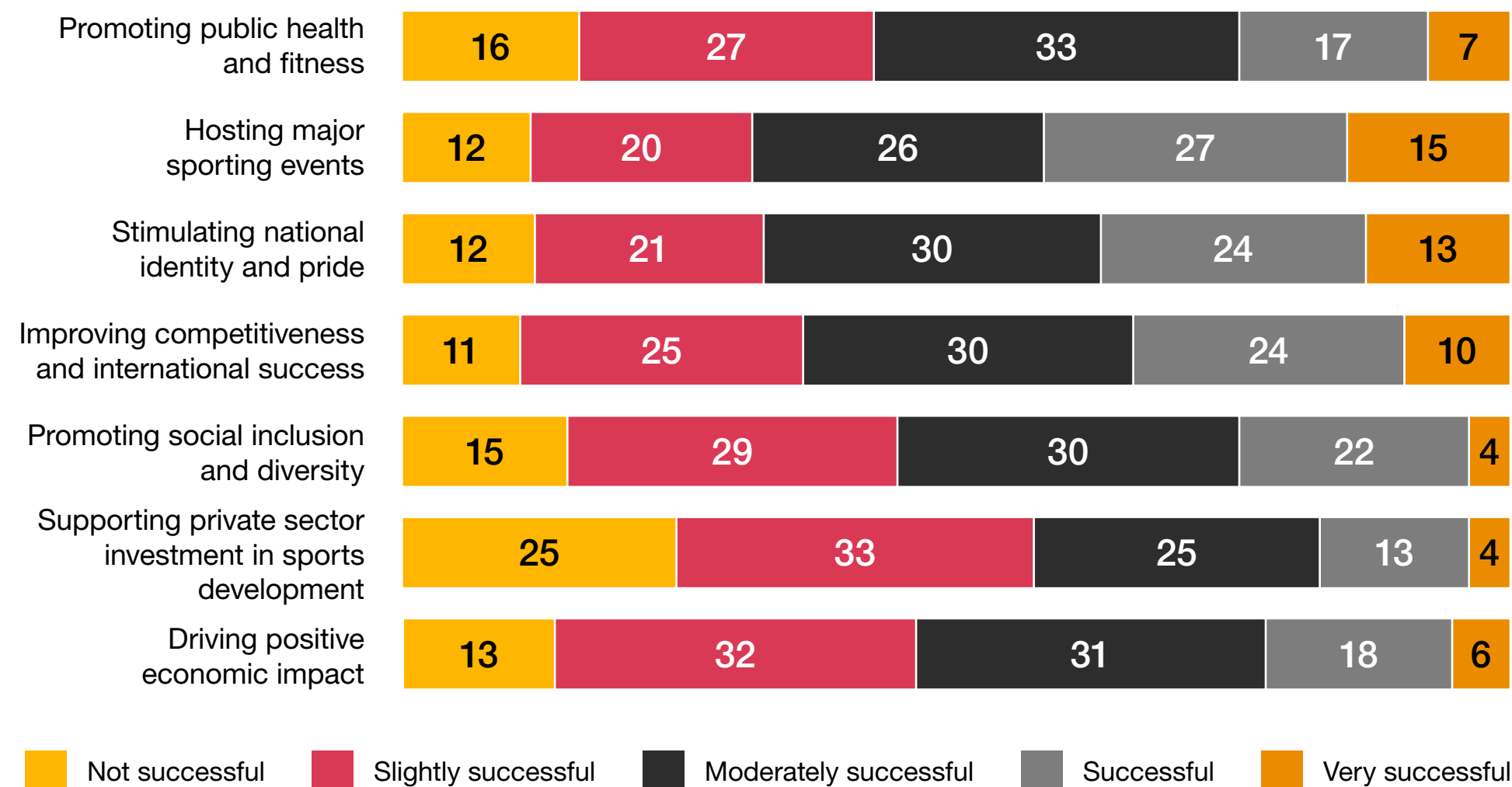
**Yoshiyuki Mano**  
Ph.D. (Sports Science)  
President of Biwako Seikei Sport College

**Insight 24**

# Governments challenged by delivering economic impact and engaging private sector investment

## Government success in achieving sport-related goals

Percentage of respondents



- While the majority of respondents see the promotion of public health as the main priority of their government, they do not rate the efforts as very successful. This indicates a gap between governmental objectives and actual outcomes, suggesting that more targeted and effective public health initiatives are needed.
- The efforts in hosting major events and stimulating national identity are viewed most positively and are connected. This positive perception could be linked to the significant public attention that major events receive, leading to increased political interest and resources to ensure these efforts are successful. High-profile events not only boost national pride, but also have the potential to drive tourism and economic activity, further incentivising government focus on these matters.
- All other strategic goals have a rather negative perception, underscoring the challenges governments face in balancing the diverse needs of stakeholders. Managing strategy and communication effectively to suit the market and address pain points remains a significant hurdle. This could involve better regulatory frameworks, enhanced support for grassroots initiatives, and clearer communication of strategic goals and progress.



Source: PwC Analysis, N=380



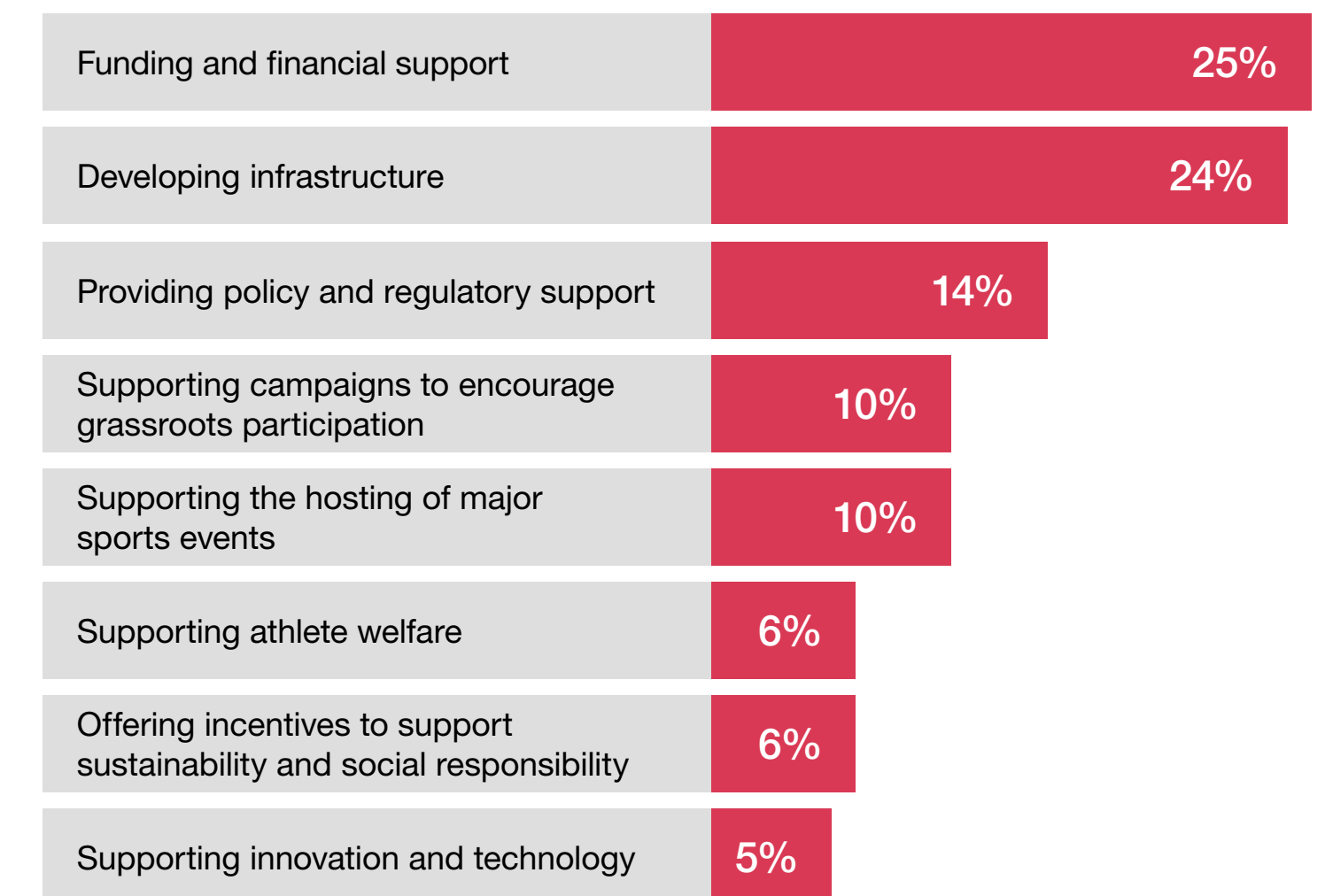
## Insight 25

# Finance and infrastructure support are key requests from sports organisations towards governments

- Funding and financial support in the form of grants and subsidies are the most pressing demands, followed by the development of sports infrastructure. This underscores the dual nature of the sports industry as both a highly commercial businesses and driver of important societal assets that support public health and social inclusion.
- It is crucial for policymakers and the sports industry to maintain a close relationship so that policies and regulations can effectively address relevant issues without damaging the positive impact sports delivers. The pandemic highlighted the importance of strong relations between policymakers and sports organisations.
- Supporting innovation and technology is not seen as a primary role of the government. This could be due to the active involvement of private sector actors and large federations in driving innovation. The sports industry appears capable and willing to innovate without relying heavily on governmental know-how, reflecting a market-driven approach to technological advancements.

### Demands of sports organisations towards their government

Percentage of respondents



Source: PwC Analysis, N=386

An executive point of view

with **Matthias Remund** of the Federal Office of Sports in Switzerland

# Public sector's growing influence in sports and society

Over the last decades, the public sector's role in sports has undergone significant changes. Sports are nowadays recognised for their benefits in improving public health, boosting the economy, and aiding children's mental health and well-being. Sports also play a crucial role in promoting societal values like gender equality and community well-being. This recognition has shifted the public sector's approach from merely promoting sports to leveraging them as tools for social development through various initiatives.

The public's investment in sports means that every policy decision in Switzerland is often scrutinised and broadly discussed across the entire community, reflecting how these outcomes affect a wide spectrum of stakeholders. This underscores the influence of government policies on community life.

Sports policy management varies globally, depending on each country's system and cultural context. Public policy approaches may range from centralised to decentralised, and from active to supportive. For instance, in Switzerland, the public sector adopts a supportive, rather than a leading or controlling stance on sports development; initiatives often originate within the sports community itself, in line with the nation's values of independence and self-responsibility. Conversely,

in other countries, the public sector may take a more central and active role in directing sports initiatives.

Despite variations in policy approaches, certain global trends such as promoting women in sports and adapting to digital advancements are universally crucial for the public sector. These efforts serve societal interests and offer significant economic benefits. Additionally, the necessity for public sector intervention in areas like setting ethical standards, enforcing anti-cheating and doping regulations, and overseeing sports betting is consistent worldwide. These responsibilities underscore the indispensable role of public sector involvement in addressing challenges that transcend national sports sectors.

Looking ahead, the role of the government in sports will become ever more complex and challenging. While the societal impact of sports is now widely recognised, the emotional investment and national pride associated with sports remain as strong as ever. Coupled with growing expectations from increasingly professional stakeholders, the government will face heightened scrutiny and pressure to navigate these intricate dynamics, ensuring that sports continue to serve as a positive force for society while maintaining ethical standards and managing economic implications.

For almost 20 years, Matthias Remund has served as the Director of the Federal Office of Sports in Switzerland. He will resume his new role as General Secretary of the International University Sports Federation (FISU) in January 2025.

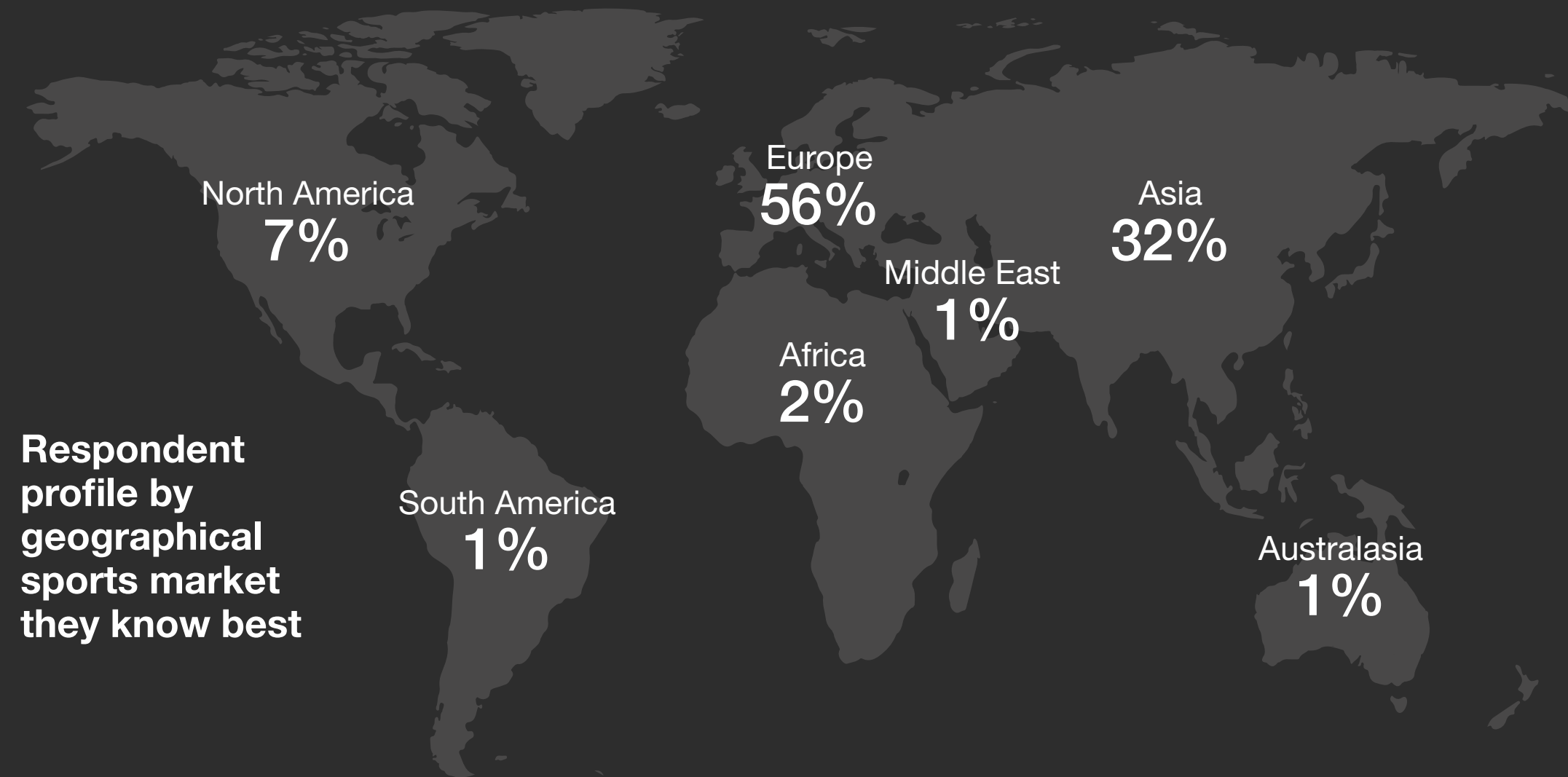


# Survey Background

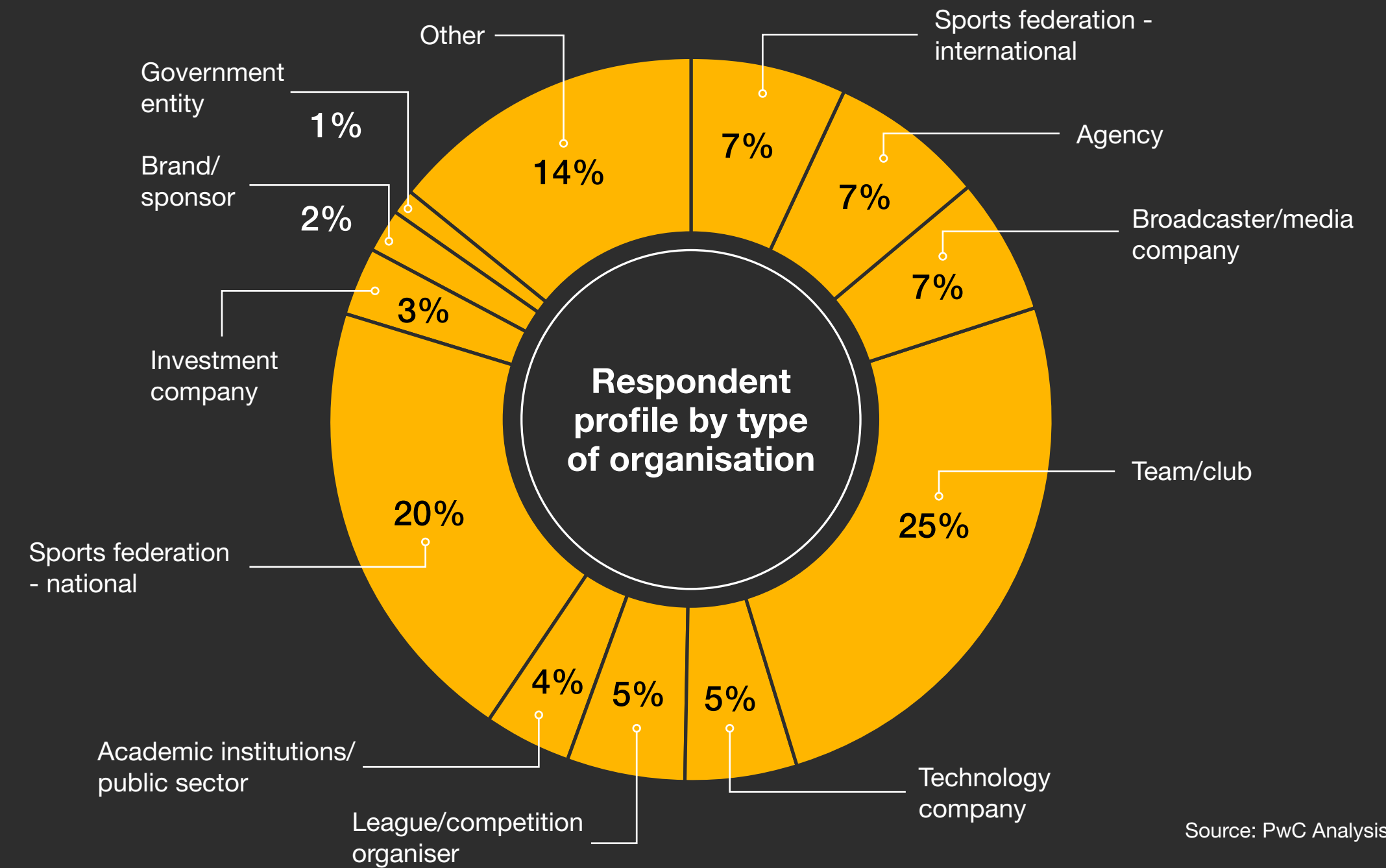
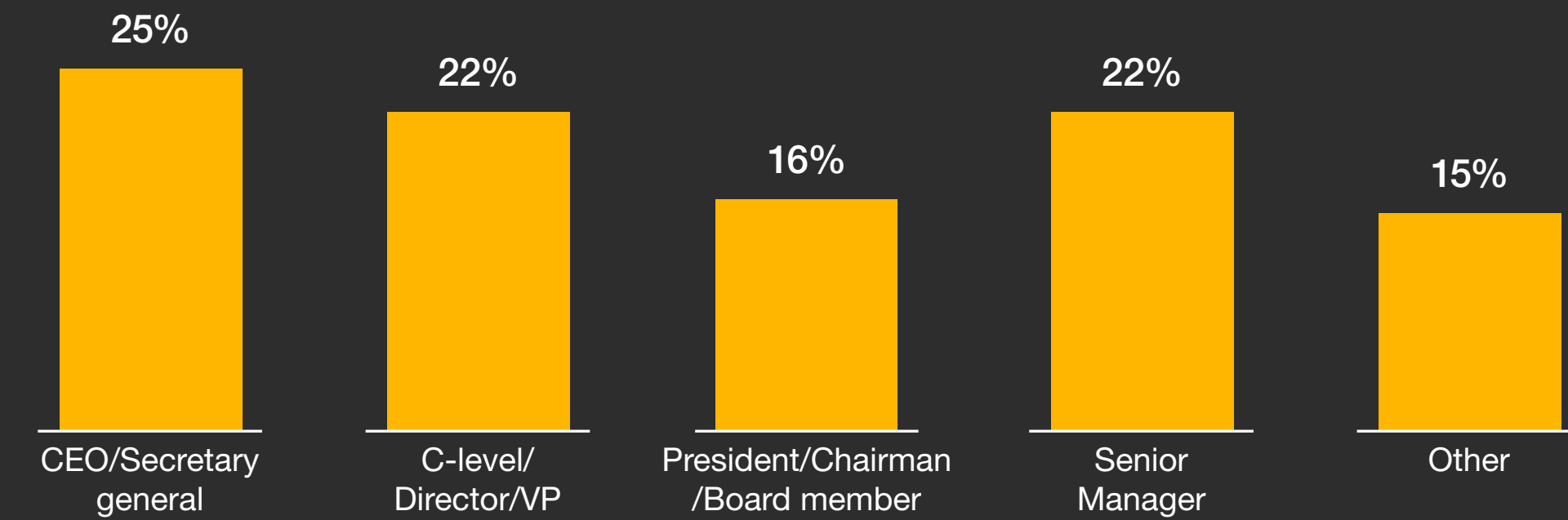
This survey was conducted by PwC's Global Sports Network between January and May 2024 using an online questionnaire distributed to sports industry leaders around the world. In total we received 411 responses from across 46 countries.

At the time each respondent held a senior position within their respective organisation.

The analysis in this report is primarily based on the collective opinion of the respondents, interviews with industry experts, and the specific insights of PwC's team (based on our executive-level experiences and project delivery).



**Respondent profile by management level**



Source: PwC Analysis, N=411

# Contacts

## Main contact



**Shin Szedlak**  
Focus areas: strategy, governance, transformation  
shin.a.szedlak@pwc.ch  
linkedin.com/in/shinszedlak

## Our sports business advisory team



**Reto Brunner**  
Focus areas: strategy, operations, deals, restructuring  
reto.f.brunner@pwc.ch  
linkedin.com/in/reto-brunner/



**Bogdan Sutter**  
Focus areas: strategy, media, transformation  
bogdan.sutter@pwc.ch  
linkedin.com/in/bogdansutter/



**Lakshmikanth Karunanithi**  
Focus area: strategy, events and operations  
lakshmikanth.karunanithi@pwc.ch  
linkedin.com/in/lakshmikanthkarunanithi/



**Szergej Maszlov**  
Focus areas: strategy, planning, transformation  
szergej.maszlov@pwc.ch  
linkedin.com/in/szergej-maszlov



**Antonia Kühne**  
Focus areas: strategy, governance, transformation  
antonia.kuehne@pwc.ch  
linkedin.com/in/antonia-kuehne/



**Jessy Nützi**  
Focus areas: strategy, governance, transformation  
jessy.nuetzi@pwc.ch  
linkedin.com/in/jessynuetzi/



**Claudio Prante**  
Focus areas: deals strategy, due diligence  
claudio.prante@pwc.ch  
linkedin.com/in/claudioprante



**Stuart Woodcock**  
Focus areas: transactions, financial due diligence  
stuart.woodcock@pwc.ch  
linkedin.com/in/stuart-woodcock41597b32



**Patrick Balkanyi**  
Focus areas: financial audit, assurance and risk  
patrick.balkanyi@pwc.ch  
linkedin.com/in/patrick-balkanyi2b217aaa



**Thibaut de Haller**  
Focus areas: tax and legal structuring  
thibaut.de.haller@pwc.ch  
linkedin.com/in/thibaut-de-haller0bb51b27



**Richard Thomas**  
Focus areas: compliance, risk consulting, internal audit  
richard.j.thomas@pwc.ch  
linkedin.com/in/richard--thomas



**Marco Bella**  
Focus areas: customer engagement and excellence, digital transformation  
marco.bella@pwc.ch  
linkedin.com/in/marco-bella-65313269/

## Credits

A big thank you to all the senior industry executives who participated in this year's survey. A special thanks to the interviewees Danny Townsend, Nick McQuire, Martina Pavlová, Kit McConnell, Matthias Remund, and Yoshiyuki Mano who have enriched the report further with their expert insights. Thank you to the PwC Global Sports team members who have helped shape the thought-provoking content in this report. And lastly, a special thank you to our Marketing and Graphics Team, as well as Lisa Machado and Mette Maj Arnung for their hard work and creativity in bringing the report to life.



**[www.pwc.ch](http://www.pwc.ch)**

PwC, Birchstrasse 160, 8050 Zurich, +41 58 792 44 00

© 2024 PwC. All rights reserved. “PwC” refers to PricewaterhouseCoopers AG, which is a member firm of PricewaterhouseCoopers International Limited, each member firm of which is a separate legal entity.

