



2023 SNAPSHOT

Working towards gender equity in sport leadership has the potential to change our sport system for the better. Diverse boards, leadership teams and staff mean sport organizations are more innovative, inclusive, accountable and better able to manage risk including safe sport, financial sustainability and effective governance.

A STARTING POINT FOR CONVERSATIONS AT THE PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL LEVEL

2023 is our second year collecting leadership data in the provincial/territorial sport system. Given differences in participation since 2022, we are not providing year-over-year comparisons. Instead, we present these data as a starting point for conversation, reflection and change. Provincial and territorial leaders play a critical role in delivering sport across Canada and we look forward to collaborating further with our sport partners to provide an accurate snapshot of women and gender-diverse people in Canadian sport leadership.

In recent years, commitments from all levels of governments, dedicated funding sources and strong leadership from within sport organizations have continued to drive gender equity in sport leadership forward.

THE PROOF IS IN THE NUMBERS:

1. Over the past five years, the percentage of women holding board seats in the national sport system has increased by 9 points (from 34% in 2018 to 43% in 2023).
2. Gender equity at the staff leadership level has held steady over time and is higher than most other industries in Canada.

While progress is being made, there is still work to be done to ensure sport leadership reflects the full diversity of Canadian society.

The Women in Sport Leadership Snapshot 2023 highlights and celebrates recent successes in sport leadership diversity. It also challenges sport organizations to continue to embed gender equity in their organizations and bring diversity, beyond gender, to their boards and senior leadership teams so more women, girls, and gender-diverse people are represented in the sport system and can benefit from the power of sport.

Thank you to all sport leaders who participated in the 2023 leadership snapshot and to our provincial and territorial partners for your assistance in collecting these data.

Board Representation

National Sport Organization (NSO) – Multisport Service Organization (MSO) – Canadian Sport Institute (CSI)

BOARD MEMBERSHIP



43% OF NATIONAL BOARD MEMBERS ARE WOMEN

(+2% from 2022)

BOARD LEADERSHIP



40% OF NATIONAL BOARD CHAIRS ARE WOMEN

(+2% from 2022)

NSOs	MSOs	CSIs
42% OF BOARD ARE WOMEN	46% OF BOARD ARE WOMEN	45% OF BOARD ARE WOMEN
(+4% from 2022)	(-3% from 2022)	(+4% from 2022)

NSOs	MSOs	CSIs
42% HAVE A WOMAN CHAIR	36% HAVE A WOMAN CHAIR	29% HAVE A WOMAN CHAIR
(+3% from 2022)	(+4% from 2022)	(-14% from 2022)

46% OF SURVEYED PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS ARE WOMEN

46% OF SURVEYED PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL BOARD CHAIRS ARE WOMEN

WELCOMING GENDER DIVERSITY IN LEADERSHIP

The data above indicate where women hold positions of power on boards. At the national level, one non-binary person holds a board seat. At the provincial/territorial level, five non-binary people hold board seats. As we work to improve sport for all, it will be important to continue welcoming leadership diversity beyond the gender binary.

NEW GENDER EQUITY GOVERNANCE CODE REFORMS

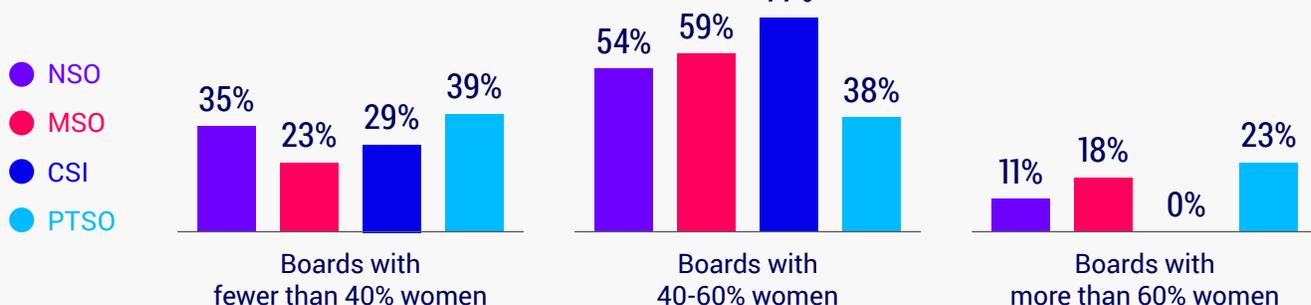
In 2022, the Government of Canada introduced reforms to the Canadian Sport Governance Code that require NSOs to have no more than 60% of any gender on their boards by April 2025. We applaud this decision to embed gender equity into organizational policy and will support organizations as they take action to meet these targets.

Celebrating Success: 54% of NSOs currently meet the gender equity requirement and are well positioned to realize the benefits of diverse perspectives and lived experience in decision making.¹ Although the Governance Code has not been applied to MSOs and

CSIs, 59% and 71% respectively meet the requirement. Meanwhile, 38% of surveyed provincial/territorial organizations are meeting this standard.

Continued Attention: 7% of national organizations and 11% of surveyed provincial/territorial organizations have either no women or gender-diverse people or only one woman at the board room table. This points to an area of continued attention and action. Steps forward could include introducing equitable recruitment practices such as reaching out to women and gender-diverse people directly for positions and including them on every slate.²

DISTRIBUTION OF BOARD SEATS



¹ Women on Corporate Boards Globally (2017). Catalyst.

² The Leading Edge (2018). Canadian Women & Sport.

Staff Representation

National Sport Organization (NSO) – Multisport Service Organization (MSO) – Canadian Sport Institute (CSI)

STAFF LEADERSHIP



42% OF NATIONAL CEOS ARE WOMEN

(-5% from 2022)

NSOs	MSOs	CSIs
38% OF CEOS ARE WOMEN	59% OF CEOS ARE WOMEN	29% OF CEOS ARE WOMEN
(-5% from 2022)	(-3% from 2022)	(no change)

46% OF SURVEYED PROVINCIAL/ TERRITORIAL CEOS ARE WOMEN

Celebrating Success: Sport remains ahead of other industries in Canada where on average women hold only 31% of senior staff positions.³

SENIOR STAFF (Direct Reports to the Ceo)



51% OF NATIONAL SENIOR STAFF ARE WOMEN

(+2% from 2022)

NSOs	MSOs	CSIs
46% OF SENIOR STAFF ARE WOMEN	46% OF SENIOR STAFF ARE WOMEN	46% OF SENIOR STAFF ARE WOMEN
(-3% from 2022)	(+11% from 2022)	(-3% from 2022)

48% OF SURVEYED PROVINCIAL/ TERRITORIAL SENIOR STAFF ARE WOMEN

Continued Attention: 8% of national organizations and 26% of surveyed provincial/territorial organizations have no women in senior staff positions. This points to an opportunity for some sport organizations to review hiring and promotion practices for hidden gender bias.⁴

DIVERSITY ON SMALL TEAMS

For organizations with small staff teams, being intentional about gender diversity is especially important.

At the national level, 4% of organizations have no full-time staff and 8% have only one full-time staff member. Meanwhile, 15% of surveyed provincial/territorial organizations have no full-time staff and 51% have only one full-time staff (i.e., a CEO/ Executive Director).

The need for diversity does not change with small organizations, instead it requires creativity. For example, organizations can look for collaboration opportunities across sports and/or across regions, or prioritize representation among volunteers, including the board. Tools like the [Gender Equity LENS framework](#) can help organizations understand and act on a commitment to gender equity.



³ International Women's Day (2022). Statistics Canada.

⁴ The Leading Edge (2018). Canadian Women & Sport.

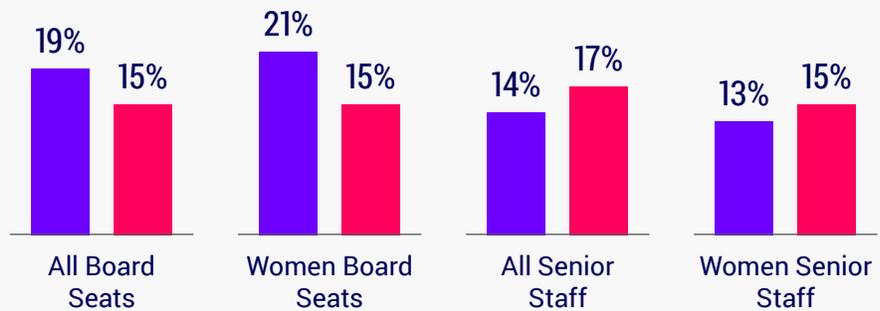
A Look At Diversity Within Sport Organizations Beyond Gender

Gender is one of many lenses we need to consider as we collectively work to create a safer, more equitable and inclusive sport system for all Canadians. Since 2021, we have asked organizations to report race/ethnicity and ability data for board members and senior staff.

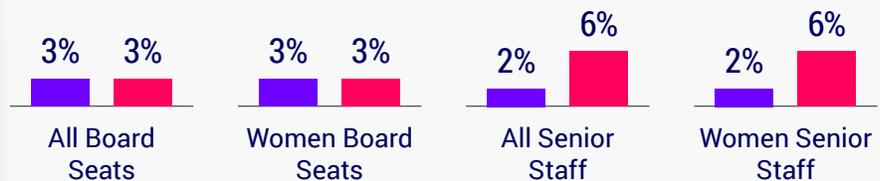
Although there are additional dimensions of diversity, and these data are incomplete,⁵ Canadian sport is far from representative of the Canadian population. While 26% of Canadians are racialized and 22% have a disability,^{6,7} sport leadership does not currently reflect this.



REPRESENTATION OF THOSE WHO IDENTIFY AS BLACK, INDIGENOUS, AS A PERSON OF COLOUR OR BELONGING TO A COMMUNITY MARGINALIZED BY SOCIETY



REPRESENTATION OF THOSE WHO IDENTIFY AS A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY



● National ● Provincial/Territorial

Celebrating Success: More organizations than ever (62%) indicated that board and staff members recently self-reported demographic information. This suggests many sport organizations recognize the importance of assessing representation beyond gender.

Continued Attention: For organizations not yet collecting this data, it may help to begin by seeking guidance to support data security and privacy. For organizations already collecting this data, it will be important to continue improving their approach to collecting this information such as having people self-report, explaining why and how the data is used, and exploring ways to ensure people feel valued for sharing this information.

5 These data are incomplete because not all organizations collect demographic information beyond gender and not all individuals disclose this information to their organizations.
 6 Changing Demographics of Racialized People in Canada (2023). Statistics Canada. Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/36-28-0001/2023008/article/00001-eng.htm>
 7 Measuring Disability in Canada (2022). Statistics Canada. Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022062-eng.htm>

Take Action

WOMEN ON BOARDS WORKSHOP

Organizations can increase the presence of women on boards by exploring how to create an inclusive board culture, understanding the value of having women on boards, and developing strategies to help overcome challenges and recruiting more women.

[LEARN MORE](#)

GENDER EQUITY PLAYBOOK

The Gender Equity Playbook helps organizations strengthen internal operations before embarking on external strategies. By establishing good internal policies, processes and programs, organizations will build their competence and confidence to explore and solve for other gender equity gaps.

[LEARN MORE](#)



National data for this report were collected from a survey of 91 NSO, MSO, and CSI organizations in August to September 2023. 86 organizations responded to the survey. The balance of the data was collected from websites in September 2023. Board and staff leadership data is based on 91 organizations; senior staff information is based on 80 organizations.

Provincial/territorial data for this report were collected by a survey of 665 provincial/territorial sport and multisport organizations in August to October 2023. 243 organizations responded to the survey.