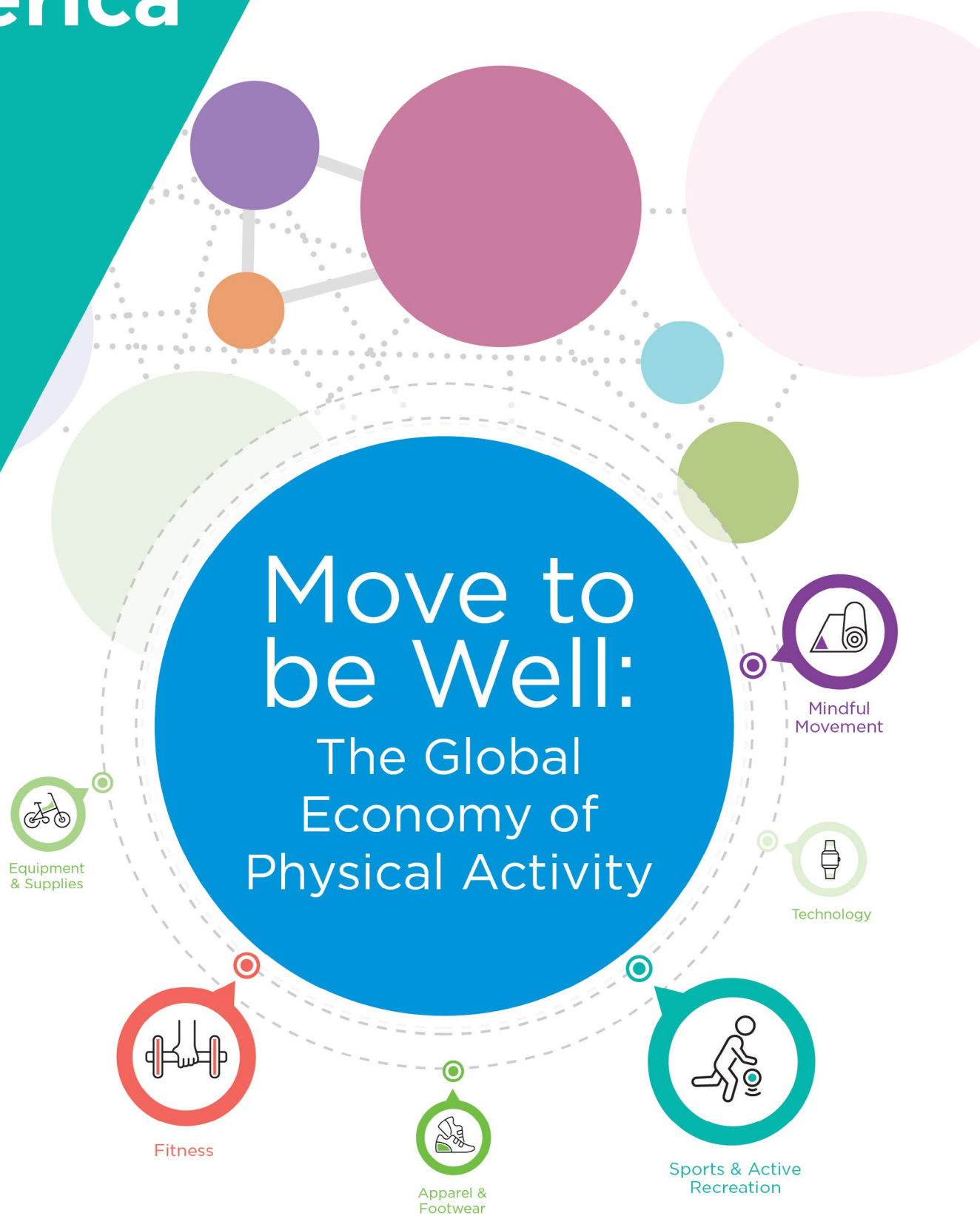


North America 2019



**GLOBAL WELLNESS
INSTITUTE™**
EMPOWERING WELLNESS WORLDWIDE



Move to be Well: The Global Economy of Physical Activity

NORTH AMERICA - OCTOBER 2019



GLOBAL WELLNESS
INSTITUTE™

EMPOWERING WELLNESS WORLDWIDE

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

ABOUT THE GLOBAL WELLNESS INSTITUTE

The Global Wellness Institute (GWI), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is considered the leading global research and educational resource for the global wellness industry and is known for introducing major industry initiatives and regional events that bring together leaders and visionaries to chart the future. GWI positively impacts global health and wellness by advocating for both public institutions and businesses that are working to help prevent disease, reduce stress, and enhance overall quality of life. Its mission is to empower wellness worldwide.

www.globalwellnessinstitute.org

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Move to be Well: The Global Economy of Physical Activity was co-authored by Ophelia Yeung and Katherine Johnston, Senior Research Fellows at the Global Wellness Institute. Together, they have four decades of experience leading research and strategy development for businesses, universities, research institutions, and multilateral and government organizations under the auspices of SRI International, a Silicon Valley-based technology and innovation company. Since 2008, Ms. Yeung and Ms. Johnston have worked with the team at what has become the Global Wellness Institute to pioneer groundbreaking research on the global wellness economy and its subsectors. Tonia Callender, GWI Research Fellow, contributed significant research in global, regional, and country-level developments. Alice Rusnak, Research Intern, provided assistance in literature and data research.

Copyright © 2019 by the Global Wellness Institute

Quotation of, citation from, and reference to any of the data, findings, and research methodology from this report must be credited to "Global Wellness Institute, *Move to be Well: The Global Economy of Physical Activity*, October 2019."

For more information, please contact research@globalwellnessinstitute.org or visit www.globalwellnessinstitute.org.

Move to be Well:
The Global Economy of Physical Activity

North America

OCTOBER 2019



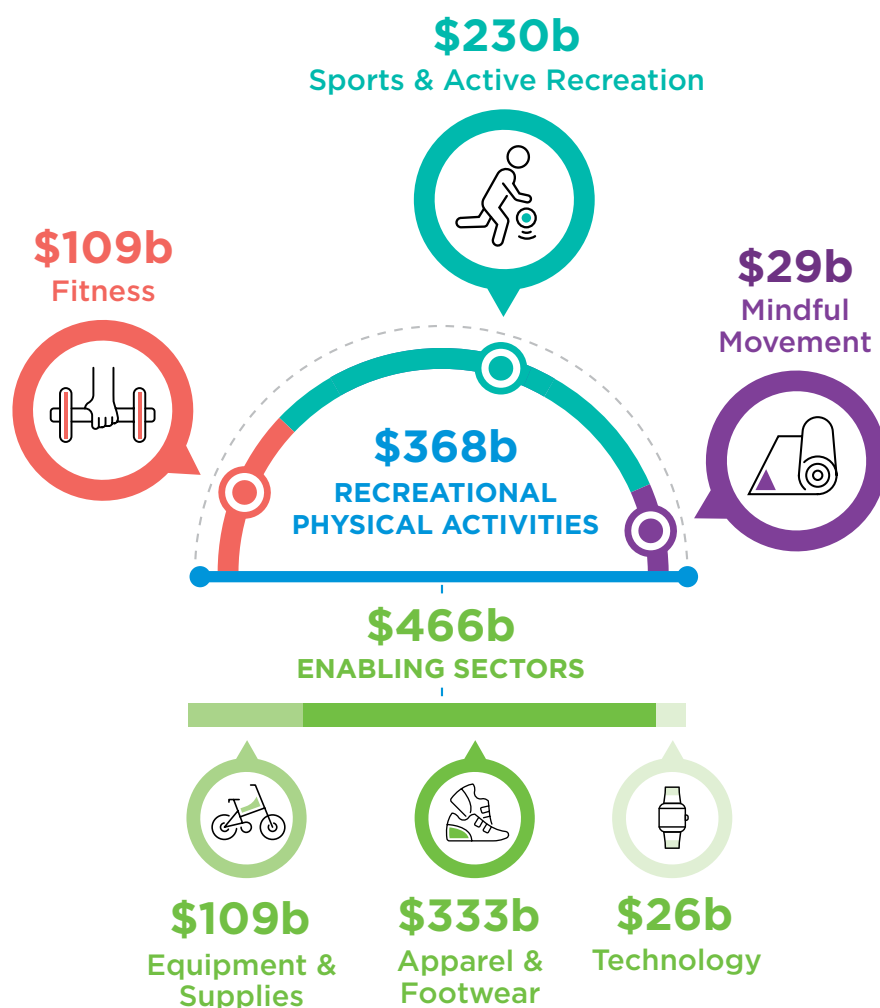
GLOBAL WELLNESS
INSTITUTE™
EMPOWERING WELLNESS WORLDWIDE

Global Context

Physical activity is an \$828 billion global market.

The Global Wellness Institute (GWI) estimates that recreational physical activities generated \$828.2 billion in private sector economic activity in 2018. Within this market, 44% or \$367.7 billion represents direct consumer expenditures on activity participation (fitness, sports and active recreation, and mindful movement). The remaining 56% or \$465.9 billion represents the enabling sectors (apparel and footwear; fitness equipment, sporting goods, and related supplies; and fitness- and exercise-related technologies).

GLOBAL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ECONOMY: \$828 Billion in 2018



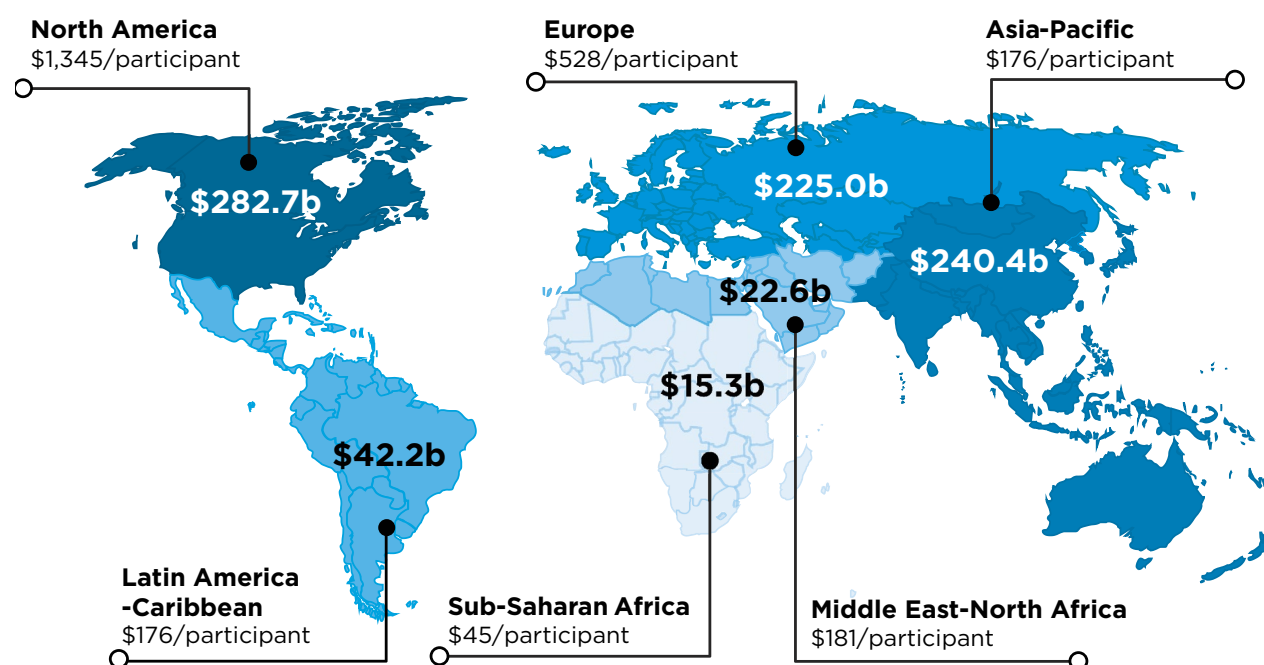
Note: Numbers do not sum to total due to overlap in segments.

Source: Global Wellness Institute

Globally, physical activity spending averages about \$306 per participant per year, with \$136 spent on participating in activities and \$172 spent on apparel, footwear, equipment, sporting goods, and technology devices and services. Per participant expenditures are very high in North America (\$1,345) and Europe (\$528) while significantly lower in the rest of the world. **Importantly, a large portion of the global population, especially in less wealthy countries, participates in recreational physical activities without spending much money** – for example, playing soccer in an empty field, swimming in a public/community pool, running in the streets, or doing tai chi in a park. Many of these free activities depend on publicly-funded infrastructure such as local parks and recreational centers, but participation in these activities still generates significant private sector economic activities, such as athletic shoes and clothing purchases, government purchases of equipment for community gyms or parks, etc.

Physical Activity Market by Region, 2018

Expenditures on participation in recreational physical activities and supporting products and services (equipment & supplies, apparel & footwear, technology)



Global: \$828.2b Expenditures (\$306/participant) • 35% Participation Rate

*Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding.
Source: Global Wellness Institute*

North America Highlights

Physical Activity Economy in North America, 2018

	Market Size* Participation Rate* / (US\$ Billions)		Average Spending per Participant
Recreational Physical Activities	57.8%	\$114.3	\$544
Sports & Active Recreation	50.5%	\$62.4	\$339
Fitness	29.1%	\$40.5	\$383
Mindful Movement	17.4%	\$11.4	\$180
Enabling Sectors		\$171.2	\$814
Apparel & Footwear		\$123.1	\$586
Equipment & Supplies		\$40.0	\$190
Technology		\$8.6	\$41
Total Physical Activity Economy in North America		\$282.7	\$1,345

*Market size measures consumer expenditures on classes, memberships, entry fees, trainers, and related services and methods of participation. Participation rate measures the share of the total population who participate in one or more of the three physical activity categories on a regular basis (at least monthly). Note: Numbers may not sum because of overlap between segments and rounding. Source: Global Wellness Institute.

Physical Activity Markets in North America, 2018

	Recreational Physical Activities* (US\$ millions)	Enabling Sectors (US\$ billions)			Total Market Size (US\$ millions)
		Technology	Equipment & Supplies	Apparel & Footwear	
United States	\$105,008.9	\$8,111.1	\$37,532.3	\$117,052.5	\$264,622.9
Canada	\$9,302.7	\$508.3	\$2,451.9	\$6,039.6	\$18,113.6

* Measures consumer expenditures on classes, memberships, entry fees, trainers, and related services and methods of participation in three types of recreational physical activities (sports & active recreation, fitness, and mindful movement).

Source: Global Wellness Institute

Sports & Active Recreation Markets in North America, 2018

	Sports & Active Recreation Participation Rate*	Sports & Active Recreation Market Size* (US\$ millions)
United States	51.5%	\$57,576.3
Canada	41.9%	\$4,774.5

* Participation rate measures the share of the total population who participate in this physical activity category on a regular basis (at least monthly). Market size measures consumer expenditures on classes, memberships, entry fees, trainers, and related services and methods of participation.

Source: Global Wellness Institute

Fitness Markets in North America, 2018

	Fitness Participation Rate*	Fitness Market Size* (US\$ millions)
United States	29.3%	\$37,033.2
Canada	26.4%	\$3,480.5

* Participation rate measures the share of the total population who are paying members of various types of gym/health club/fitness facilities and/or who access or utilize their services/classes/facilities on a regular basis (at least monthly). Market size measures consumer expenditures on classes, memberships, entry fees, trainers, and related services and methods of participation.

Source: Global Wellness Institute

Mindful Movement Markets in North America, 2018

	Mindful Movement Participation Rate*	Mindful Movement Market Size* (US\$ millions)
United States	17.7%	\$10,399.4
Canada	15.3%	\$1,047.8

* Participation rate measures the share of the total population who participate in this physical activity category on a regular basis (at least monthly). Market size measures consumer expenditures on classes, memberships, entry fees, trainers, and related services and methods of participation.

Source: Global Wellness Institute

North America Developments

In North America, a massive and well-developed physical activity economy exists side-by-side with an increasingly inactive population.

- Valued by GWI at \$282.7 billion, the North American physical activity market is massive and well-developed. As the world's largest physical activity economy, the United States ranks number one in all recreational physical activity markets (fitness, mindful movement, and sports and active recreation), as well as in the enabling sectors (technology, equipment and supplies, and apparel and footwear). The fitness market is especially well-developed and diverse across North America, with the high fitness participation rates in Canada (26.4%) and the United States (29.3%) indicating relatively mature markets. Consumers interested in fitness and mindful movement have a dazzling array of options to choose from, as businesses continue to innovate to provide differentiation and new value propositions. In recent years, market growth has been driven by the proliferation of boutique studios and budget gyms, which are quickly extending into smaller cities as well as suburban neighborhoods. The decline in suburban malls has created new spaces and opportunities for the sector; it is becoming common to see gyms and yoga studios taking up spaces vacated by large box stores and smaller retail business in high- to middle-income suburban shopping centers.
- Despite having large physical activity markets in terms of expenditures, about 46% of American adults¹ and 84% of Canadian adults² are not getting the recommended amount of physical activity essential to good health, according to government data. Both nations have witnessed a rise in obesity (almost 40% of U.S. adults³) along with stagnant or rising inactivity levels among younger age groups. Sports and active recreation participation among children ages 6-12 is declining in both countries.⁴ There is no question that there is a huge disparity in physical activity access across different socioeconomic groups. Although the commercial fitness sector is expanding its reach, these businesses are still primarily targeting those who are more able and likely to exercise – the educated, more affluent, younger demographics, and those living in major urban centers and wealthy suburban areas. Generally, fitness participation rates are higher on the east and west coasts in both countries than in the central regions. Recent analysis of the “geography of fitness” by Richard Florida and *CityLab* found that the availability of fitness and recreational facilities across the United States tracks closely with key socioeconomic indicators (e.g., higher incomes, education levels, and “creative class” and high-tech occupations).⁵ While non-profit organizations such as the YMCA and local community facilities are filling some gaps, people living in low-income, rural, minority, native, and other marginalized communities have much less access to physical activity infrastructure. It is critical to address this gap because these communities are at higher risk of physical inactivity and chronic disease.

¹ U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (2019). *Trends in Meeting the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines, 2008-2017*. <https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/data/index.html>.

² Statistics Canada (2019). *Tracking physical activity levels of Canadians, 2016 and 2017*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/190417/dq190417g-eng.htm>.

³ U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (2018, Aug. 13). *Overweight & Obesity: Adult Obesity Facts*. <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/adult.html>.

⁴ See: 1) Aspen Institute Project Play (2018). *State of Play 2018: Trends and Developments*. https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/2018/10/StateofPlay2018_v4WEB_2-FINAL.pdf. 2) Statistics Canada (2014, April 23). *Canadian Social Trends: Kids' Sports*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-008-x/2008001/article/10573-eng.htm>.

⁵ 1) Florida, R. (2019, Jan. 8). Your Fitness Resolution Might Be Easier If You're Rich. *CityLab*. <https://www.citylab.com/life/2019/01/fitness-exercise-affluent-class-divides/579592/>. 2) Florida, R. (2019, Jan. 10). The Geography of American Gym and Fitness-Center Brands. *CityLab*. <https://www.citylab.com/life/2019/01/fitness-studio-gym-density-income-education-resolution/579595/>.

The United States leads the world in fitness innovations and new business models.

- With a vibrant and entrepreneurial private sector, and backed by deep investment capital, the United States continues to lead the world in innovations for the physical activity sector. Many of these innovations are not so much in the invention of new exercise or fitness regimes, but in creating new value propositions through creative use of technology, savvy marketing and branding, understanding of consumer psychology, and a keen sense of discovering unmet market needs. For example, riding stationary bikes at home or going to spin classes are not new activities. Yet, SoulCycle has become a sensation in recent years – leading the rise of a whole new boutique fitness segment – by providing an extremely high-quality workout, led by charismatic instructors in studios with a specific vibe/ambiance, and most importantly by infusing its participants with the emotion of belonging to a tribe. And for this experience and a special sense of belonging, loyal customers happily shell out \$35 for a class. Similarly, Peloton has revolutionized the in-home fitness experience by combining networked equipment with interactive live streaming (or on-demand videos), bringing to life what was previously a solitary and boring exercise, mostly conducted in people’s basements in front of their televisions. Peloton’s dual revenue stream from selling \$2,000 bikes (and accessories) and \$39 monthly subscriptions has raised its valuation to multi-billions in just a few years. Likewise, while circuit/interval training has existed for decades, Orangetheory has created a new business model using heart-rate monitoring, big-screen sharing of participant metrics, and intense instructor coaching to help exercisers achieve and sustain the optimal “orange zone.” These fitness business innovations have quickly inspired others in the United States and are proliferating to the rest of the world through expansions, franchising, and development of competing businesses and brands.
- Technology is ubiquitous in the physical activity sector, transforming businesses and consumer experiences in multiple ways: fitness trackers, cameras and sensors, networked equipment, augmented and virtual reality, social media, mobile applications, gamification, and so on. In addition to exercise-related software and platforms, the United States also leads in exercise business technologies (e.g., software for onboarding, scheduling, tracking, streaming content, billing, management, etc.). Class finder and booking intermediaries, which first emerged in the United States (ClassPass is the largest player), have become a major disruptor for gyms and fitness studios around the world in the past few years.

- The United States is home to innovative hybrid models creating a nexus between fitness and other sectors, such as: fitness and travel; fitness and workplaces/coworking; fitness and co-living; fitness and medical/health services; etc. Companies such as Reebok and Peloton are partnering with international hotel brands to bring fitness equipment and programming to their guests, many of whom are accustomed to the same products and services at home. Equinox recently entered the hospitality market by opening the high-end Equinox Hotel in the Hudson Yards development in New York City. Life Time has opened Life Time Work coworking spaces alongside its fitness centers in four locations across the United States, and it has recently announced a “Life Time Living” concept to be launched in three U.S. cities. Medical fitness centers have proliferated across the United States, meeting the needs of customers not well-served by commercial gyms, and providing rehabilitation, physical therapy, medically-supervised exercise, and general fitness for disease prevention. Many of these centers are established by hospital systems and health clinics. Fitness enterprises such as Life Time Athletic and GENAVIX Inc. have also entered the medical fitness market by incorporating medical services into their offerings.
- The United States has also played a leading role in the development of innovative real estate, design, and urban planning approaches that encourage physical activity, including the rapid growth of a variety of wellness real estate concepts that embed physical activity infrastructure and amenities right into people’s living environments (see *Chapter IV* for more details). New York City’s Center for Active Design pioneered the “active design” concept, which is a set of planning, design, and building principles that promote physical activity in people’s daily routines.⁶ In the last five years, the Center for Active Design has worked with partnering developers (e.g., Vitus Group, Blue Sea Development, Avalon Bay) and public housing authorities to bring active design features into dozens of affordable housing projects across the United States, in cities from Seattle, to Denver, to New York City – reaching lower-income and vulnerable populations that are typically at the highest risk for physical inactivity and chronic disease. In 2017, Fannie Mae (the government sponsored mortgage securitization corporation) introduced a Healthy Housing Rewards™ initiative that provides financial incentives for borrowers who incorporate healthy/active design features into newly constructed or rehabilitated affordable multifamily rental properties, and it is partnering with the Center for Active Design to implement the program.⁷

⁶ For more information on active design, see: Center for Active Design (2010). *Active Design Guidelines: Promoting Physical Activity and Health in Design*. <https://centerforactivedesign.org/guidelines/>.

⁷ For more information, see: <https://multifamily.fanniemae.com/financing-options/specialty-financing/healthy-housing-rewards>

Mindful movement, led by yoga, has become completely mainstream in North America.

- Estimated by GWI at \$11.4 billion, mindful movement generates a significant portion of the North American physical activity economy. The United States is the world's largest market, in terms of both participation rates (17.7%) and expenditures (\$10.4 billion), and it accounts for over one-third of all mindful movement spending worldwide in 2018. Canada also has one of the highest participation rates for mindful movement, estimated at 15.3%. Yoga is the most dominant form of mindful movement, while Pilates, barre, and stretch are commanding an increasing following among mostly wealthy urban and suburban females, and tai chi is gaining practitioners among the 50+ population. In the last ten years or so, the United States has been the epicenter of transforming yoga from a fringe practice among a relatively small group of New Age people into a mainstream exercise activity that is offered at comprehensive gyms, small independent studios, franchised facilities, community recreation centers, and via streaming online services and yoga apps. The co-opting of yoga by the fitness industry has transformed both yoga and fitness. With the Westernization and mainstreaming of yoga, most North American consumers no longer associate yoga with a specific spiritual practice but approach it as an exercise system with a mindfulness component. This rising popularity of yoga is also influencing the direction of fitness – evolving from workouts characterized by pounding, pumping, fat burn, and muscle building, toward incorporating more deliberate and mindful modules focused on toning, balance, flexibility, alignment, and breath. Yoga consistently ranks among the most popular exercise trends in the United States, and participants and offerings have expanded from women in prosperous and educated urban areas to a full spectrum of demographics and regions (men, smaller towns, rural areas, etc.). The yoga philosophy of supporting communities has also sparked interest in bringing the practice to underserved areas and groups. For example, through organizations such as Yoga to the People and the Prison Yoga project, yoga practice is reaching people in inner cities, prisons, and schools.

In the absence of a government sponsored national plan, the United States relies on a diverse set of stakeholders to plan, fund, and implement physical activity strategies.

- In the absence of a federal government-sponsored national physical activity strategy, the private sector, nonprofits, community organizations, and state and local governments in the United States have taken the lead in creating strategies that encourage physical activity, and these efforts tend to be fragmented. For example, the 2016 National Physical Activity Plan was developed by a coalition of non-governmental organizations to spur dialogue, provide recommendations, and prod government and local stakeholders into action, including participation from business and industry; community recreation, fitness, and parks; education; faith-based settings; healthcare; mass media; public health; sports; and transportation, and land use and community design.⁸ Adoption by states and local communities is voluntary; West Virginia and San Antonio, Texas, subsequently adopted the plan and adapted it to their local contexts. The Personal Health Investment Today (PHIT) initiative is a collaboration of over 100 private companies, NGOs, and other stakeholders, aiming to combat physical inactivity.

⁸ See: <https://www.physicalactivityplan.org/index.html>

- PHIT provides grants to over 400 elementary schools for physical education programs, informs the public about the importance of exercise, and hosts its own national fitness month. Recently, it has been working to have the U.S. Congress pass the PHIT Act, which would permit taxpayers to use pre-tax medical spending accounts to offset physical activity expenses.⁹ The open-sourced Walk [Your City] campaign encourages grassroots and “guerrilla” efforts to install simple and inexpensive wayfinding signs that improve cities’ walkability.¹⁰ The Active Schools initiative (launched in 2013 as part of Michelle Obama’s *Let’s Move!* campaign) is a public-private partnership working with more than 23,000 schools around the United States to integrate 60 minutes of movement and play into the day for every K-12 student.¹¹ Dozens of communities across the United States, both large and small, have launched their own local physical activity initiatives, many of which were originated under Michelle Obama’s *Let’s Move! Cities, Towns, and Counties* campaign.¹²
- Nonprofit organizations and local governments across the United States play a leading role in providing physical activity opportunities and infrastructure, especially to those who are not adequately served by the commercial sector (e.g., youth, seniors, and people in low-resource areas). In many communities, locally-funded and operated public community centers, parks, swimming pools, and sports facilities provide the main venues for sports, fitness, and active recreation among much of the population. According to data from the National Recreation and Park Association, 57% of parks and recreation agencies across the United States provide recreation/gym/fitness centers, while 79% offer fitness classes;¹³ GWI estimates that at least 11 million people are served by these offerings. Across the country, more than 2,700 YMCAs provide recreational facilities and sports training, fitness centers, group fitness classes, private lessons, and fitness training for youth, families, adults, and seniors. The organization has continually evolved to reach underserved groups, especially seniors and low-income communities. Many U.S. communities host Open Streets events to encourage walking, biking, and outdoor recreation, following on the model of Seattle’s Bicycle Sundays (launched in 1965) and Bogotá’s Ciclovía (launched in 1974). As of 2016, an estimated 135 cities across the United States had hosted Open Streets events, although the majority of these occur only once a year.¹⁴
- In the United States, the health industry is paying more attention to increasing physical activity, especially among high-risk groups. Through refunds and incentive programs, insurance companies have begun to partner with medical providers and employers to get more people to exercise. In 2007, the American Medical Association and the American College of Sports Medicine collaborated to create Exercise is Medicine (EIM), a program that encourages physicians to write prescriptions for exercise.¹⁵ EIM is now a global initiative that receives

⁹ See: <http://www.phitamerica.org/>

¹⁰ See: <https://walkyourcity.org/>

¹¹ See: <https://www.activeschoolsus.org/>

¹² See: <https://www.healthychommunitieshealthyfuture.org/>

¹³ National Recreation and Park Association (2019). *2019 NRPA Agency Performance Review: Park and Recreation Agency Performance Benchmarks*. <https://www.nrpa.org/siteassets/nrpa-agency-performance-review.pdf>.

¹⁴ See: 1) Active Living Research (2017). *Open Streets: Trends and Opportunities*. <https://activelivingresearch.org/open-streets-trends-and-opportunities>. 2) The Street Plans Collaborative and The Alliance for Biking and Walking (2012). *The Open Streets Guide*. https://nacto.org/docs/usdg/smaller_open_streets_guide_final_print_alliance_biking_walking.pdf.

¹⁵ See: <https://www.exerciseismedicine.org/>

- private sector support from fitness companies such as Technogym and Anytime Fitness. Silver Sneakers, a health insurance-based fitness program for seniors, partners with private insurers and Medicare to provide seniors with free access to more than 16,000 fitness facilities across the country.¹⁶ Walk with a Doc was launched in 2005 by a cardiologist, frustrated by the challenges of encouraging behavior change within clinical settings, who invited his patients to go for a walk with him on a Saturday morning. The program has subsequently spread across the country (and across the globe) to over 500 locations, with weekly/biweekly/monthly events where doctors give brief educational talks, lead participants on a walk tailored to their pace, and sometimes provide healthy snacks and blood pressure checks.

In Canada, governments at the national and provincial levels are working to combat growing inactivity.

- Concerned with growing inactivity and its link to rising rates of obesity and chronic disease, Canada has adopted a series of policies and plans aimed at supporting physical activity and encouraging a more active population. These include: Active Canada 20/20, a physical activity strategy (2012); the Canadian Sports Policy (2012), aimed at increasing physical activity through wider sports participation; Framework for Recreation in Canada (2015); Sports for Persons with a Disability (2006); A Policy on Sport for Women and Girls (2009); Sport Canada's Policies on Aboriginal People's Participation in Sport (2005); and others. In order to put these fragmented activities under a unified framework, in 2018 Canada adopted the Common Vision as its comprehensive national physical activity policy. The plan emphasizes physical activity and physical literacy through sports and active recreation and school programs, and it outlines a system that leverages partnerships among government, provincial, local, nonprofit, and private sector partners. The government has pledged to improve the nation's aging physical activity infrastructure, and it implemented a fitness tax credit that applies to expenses related to youth physical activity, including classes and organized sports participation. Provincial governments are also active with their own local initiatives. In Calgary, for example, the provincial government has worked with community organizations and the private sector to create a high-quality recreational facility that offers fitness and sports programs, and also provides financial assistance to members in need. The governments of Quebec and Alberta have replicated New Zealand's national Green Prescription and Europe's publicly-funded physical activity prescription programs, in order to integrate physical activity into the provincial health policy framework.

¹⁶ See: <https://www.silversneakers.com/>

Move to be Well:
The Global Economy of Physical Activity

Executive Summary

OCTOBER 2019



GLOBAL WELLNESS
INSTITUTE™

EMPOWERING WELLNESS WORLDWIDE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Physical activity is essential to health, and yet, collectively we have become more inactive.

Physical activity is intrinsic to wellness, and the link between physical activity and good health has been clinically and scientifically proven. Yet, physical activity has been declining in the past few decades¹, to the point where as many as 27.5%² to 31%³ of adults around the world are now physically inactive. *The Lancet* has described the rise of physical inactivity as “pandemic, with far-reaching health, economic, environmental, and social consequences.”⁴ There is no question that our modern lifestyles discourage physical activity. Practically all aspects of life – from work and home chores to socialization, shopping, entertainment, etc. – have been transformed by urbanization, technology, motorized transportation, and new business models to become ever more sedentary. Meanwhile, our modern built environments – with auto-centric planning, declining recreational and green spaces, etc. – also discourage natural movement. Not surprisingly, most people now need to schedule time and activities in order to stay physically active.

The global growth of the fitness industry plays an important role in expanding access to physical activity, by making exercise more convenient, affordable, fun, personalized, and results-driven. Health clubs and gyms have experienced tremendous global expansion over the last decade, with over 50% growth in revenues from 2007-2018.⁵ In 2017, the Global Wellness Institute (GWI) estimated that the “fitness and mind-body” sector was worth \$595 billion, an important component of the \$4.2 trillion global wellness economy.⁶ The conundrum is that alongside the growth of the fitness industry, physical inactivity, obesity, and chronic disease have all continued to rise. As the fitness industry develops more and more choices for those who are able and can afford to exercise, there remains a massive swath of inactive population who have limited options (including many seniors; women and girls; children and teens; people in poor health; and those living in poor, rural, and marginalized areas). The reality is that participating in “fitness” remains a privilege that is not accessible for many people around the world.

¹ Ng, S.W., and Popkin, B.M. (2012). Time use and physical activity: a shift away from movement across the globe. *Obesity Reviews* 13(8), 659-680. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-789X.2011.00982.x>.

² Guthold, R. et al (2018, Sept. 4). Worldwide trends in insufficient physical activity from 2001 to 2016: a pooled analysis of 358 population-based surveys with 1.9 million participants. *The Lancet Global Health* 6, e1077-1086. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X\(18\)30357-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X(18)30357-7).

³ Hallal, P.C., et al (2012, July 18). Global physical activity levels: surveillance progress, pitfalls, and prospects. *The Lancet* 380, 247-257. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(12\)60646-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(12)60646-1).

⁴ Kohl, H.W., et al (2012, July 18). The pandemic of physical inactivity: global action for public health. *The Lancet* 380, 294-305. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(12\)60898-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(12)60898-8).

⁵ IHRSA (2019). *2019 IHRSA Global Report: The State of the Health Club Industry*. <https://www.ihrsa.org/publications/the-2019-ihrsa-global-report/>. 2007 figures obtained from: <https://www.snewsnet.com/press-release/ihrsa-releases-2008-ihrsa-global-report-the-state-of-the-health-club-industry>.

⁶ Global Wellness Institute (2018). *Global Wellness Economy Monitor*. <https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/industry-research/>.

The opportunity to engage in physical activity that enables a healthy life should not be a privilege or choice, but a right.

Health-enhancing physical activities are much broader than things that typically take place within a gym or health club. To make good health equitable to all, it is necessary for all populations to engage in physical activities of many kinds, beyond what is generally considered within the narrow definition of “fitness.” For this reason, GWI has expanded the scope of this key wellness sector from “fitness and mind-body” to “physical activity.” Reversing the global trend of physical inactivity is a gargantuan task that will require concerted efforts by the public and nonprofit sectors, in addition to private enterprises, to improve access and remove barriers to physical activity for all.

What does this study measure?

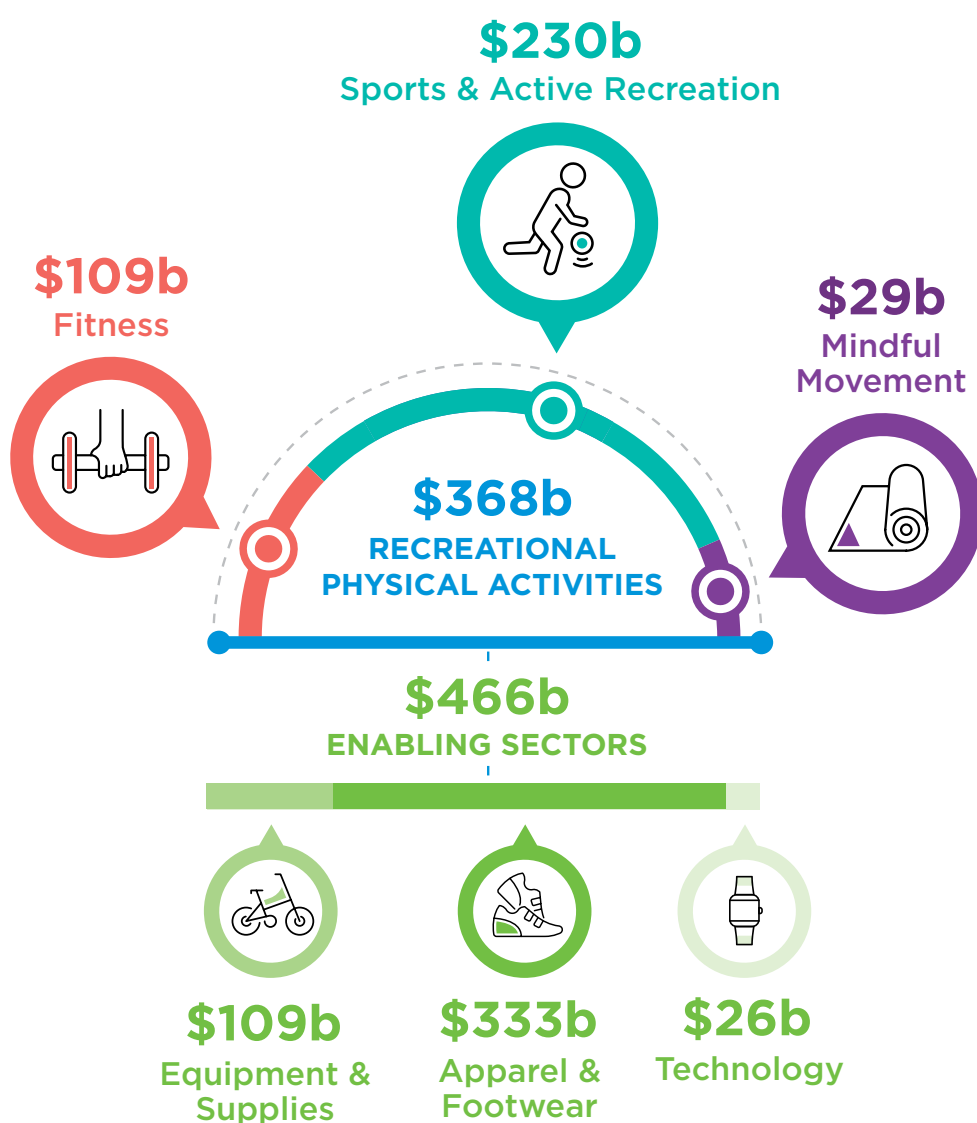
Physical activity is not only something that we do for our health, but also generates significant economic activity. Expenditures on leisure-time fitness, exercise, and active recreation represent a growing household spending line item, providing business and innovation opportunities for entrepreneurs and investors around the world. The purpose of this study is to measure the size of the **global physical activity market** and its key segments, and to highlight emerging trends, business models, cross-country variations, and public/nonprofit initiatives that can help bring physical activity to all. In this study, the global physical activity market is defined as **consumer spending associated with intentional physical activities performed during leisure and recreation**. The core of the market is the services that allow consumers to participate in three categories of recreational physical activities: **fitness, sports and active recreation, and mindful movement**. It also includes the supporting sectors that enable and facilitate participation in recreational physical activities: **equipment and supplies, apparel and footwear, and technology**.

Physical activity is also supported by significant government expenditures, including publicly-funded infrastructure for active transportation, parks and recreation, sports facilities and programs, physical education in schools, prescriptions for exercise, etc. These public expenditures are massive, made at the national, state/provincial, and local levels in almost every country; however, they are impossible to measure across the world and are therefore beyond the scope of this study. (See discussion of “What This Study Does Not Measure” in *Chapter II* of the full report on the sectors and economic activities that are excluded by this study.)

Physical activity is an \$828 billion global market.

The Global Wellness Institute (GWI) estimates that recreational physical activities generated \$828.2 billion in private sector economic activity in 2018. Within this market, 44% or \$367.7 billion represents direct consumer expenditures on activity participation (fitness, sports and active recreation, and mindful movement). The remaining 56% or \$465.9 billion represents the enabling sectors (apparel and footwear; fitness equipment, sporting goods, and related supplies; and fitness- and exercise-related technologies).

GLOBAL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ECONOMY: \$828 Billion in 2018



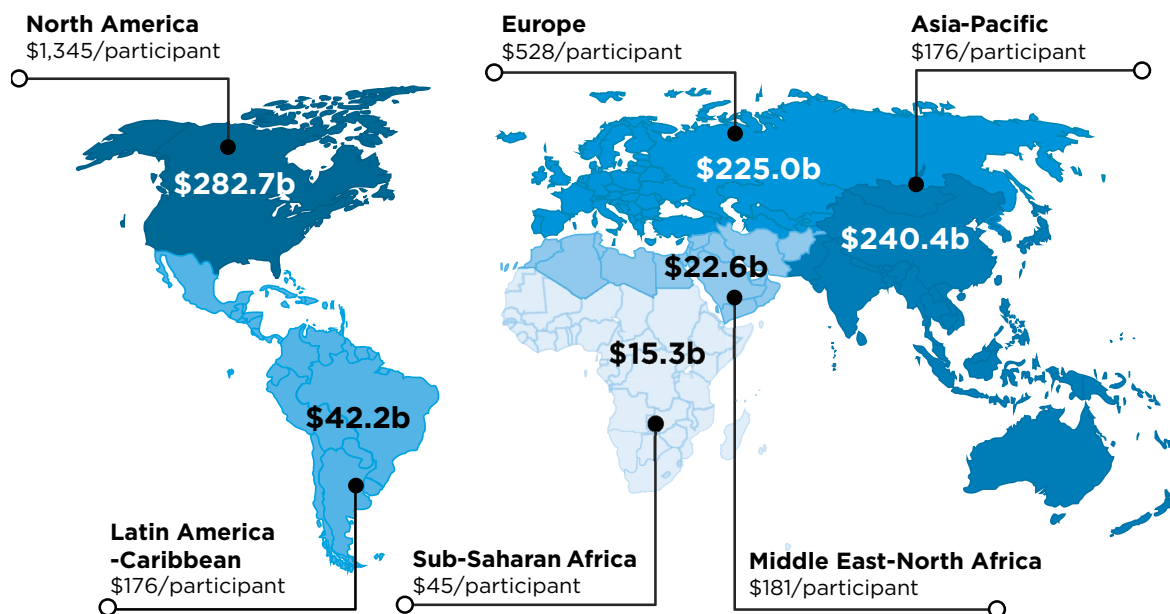
Note: Numbers do not sum to total due to overlap in segments.

Source: Global Wellness Institute

Globally, physical activity spending averages about \$306 per participant per year, with \$136 spent on participating in activities and \$172 spent on apparel, footwear, equipment, sporting goods, and technology devices and services. Per participant expenditures are very high in North America (\$1,345) and Europe (\$528) while significantly lower in the rest of the world. **Importantly, a large portion of the global population, especially in less wealthy countries, participates in recreational physical activities without spending much money** – for example, playing soccer in an empty field, swimming in a public/community pool, running in the streets, or doing tai chi in a park. Many of these free activities depend on publicly-funded infrastructure such as local parks and recreational centers, but participation in these activities still generates significant private sector economic activities, such as athletic shoes and clothing purchases, government purchases of equipment for community gyms or parks, etc.

Physical Activity Market by Region, 2018

Expenditures on participation in recreational physical activities and supporting products and services (equipment & supplies, apparel & footwear, technology)



Global: \$828.2b Expenditures (\$306/participant) • 35% Participation Rate

*Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding.
Source: Global Wellness Institute*

Globally, the top twenty markets account for 86% of all physical activity spending globally. In many large markets, spending on enabling sectors – largely driven by apparel and shoes purchases – can greatly exceed spending on actual physical activity participation, such as in the United States, France, Brazil, India, and South Africa. In other countries, such as South Korea, Australia, and Netherlands, the opposite is the case. The rate of participation in recreational physical activities varies widely among the top markets, ranging from a high of 84% in Australia and Taiwan to a low of 15% in India.

Top Twenty Physical Activity Markets by Market Size, 2018

	Recreational Physical Activities		Enabling Sectors (US\$ billions)	TOTAL Physical Activity Market (US\$ billions)	Rank in 2018
	Participation Rate*	Market Size* (US\$ billions)			
United States	58.8%	\$105.0	\$162.2	\$264.6	1
China	48.6%	\$53.6	\$56.9	\$109.3	2
Japan	69.6%	\$20.8	\$23.2	\$43.9	3
United Kingdom	56.8%	\$20.5	\$20.6	\$40.9	4
Germany	56.2%	\$20.3	\$19.3	\$39.4	5
France	51.7%	\$11.0	\$15.4	\$26.3	6
South Korea	73.7%	\$14.2	\$9.3	\$23.5	7
Italy	35.9%	\$8.9	\$10.5	\$19.3	8
Canada	48.4%	\$9.3	\$9.0	\$18.1	9
Australia	84.1%	\$11.4	\$5.4	\$16.7	10
Spain	49.5%	\$7.9	\$7.8	\$15.6	11
Brazil	37.7%	\$5.9	\$8.3	\$14.1	12
India	15.0%	\$3.5	\$10.0	\$13.4	13
Russia	57.8%	\$4.9	\$7.6	\$12.4	14
Mexico	44.0%	\$4.2	\$6.9	\$11.1	15
Netherlands	65.2%	\$6.0	\$3.3	\$9.3	16
Switzerland	71.8%	\$5.9	\$3.3	\$9.2	17
South Africa	31.3%	\$2.1	\$6.1	\$8.2	18
Taiwan	84.0%	\$3.7	\$4.1	\$7.7	19
Sweden	78.0%	\$2.8	\$3.2	\$5.9	20

* Participation rate measures the share of the total population who participate in one or more of the three physical activity categories on a regular basis (at least monthly). Market size measures consumer expenditures on classes, memberships, entry fees, trainers, and related services and methods of participation.

Note: Figures may not sum to total due to overlap between segments and rounding.

Source: Global Wellness Institute estimates, based upon data from Euromonitor International, Statista, and many other sources

Global Rankings for Recreational Physical Activity by Participation, 2018

	Participation Rate*	Rank		Participation Rate*	Rank
Australia	84.1%	1	Uruguay	45.5%	38
Taiwan	84.0%	2	Czech Republic	45.3%	39
Norway	83.9%	3	Lithuania	44.4%	40
New Zealand	83.8%	4	Costa Rica	44.3%	41
Iceland	79.2%	5	Mexico	44.0%	42
Sweden	78.0%	6	Panama	43.6%	43
Finland	77.5%	7	Trinidad & Tobago	42.5%	44
Mongolia	75.0%	8	Kuwait	41.8%	45
South Korea	73.7%	9	Hungary	41.3%	46
Denmark	73.5%	10	Malaysia	41.1%	47
Switzerland	71.8%	11	Peru	40.7%	48
Japan	69.6%	12	Slovakia	40.5%	49
Luxembourg	66.0%	13	Laos	39.8%	50
Netherlands	65.2%	14	Malawi	39.6%	51
Singapore	64.9%	15	Argentina	39.5%	52
Ireland	64.1%	16	Cuba	39.3%	53
Israel	61.5%	17	Turkey	39.2%	54
Slovenia	60.2%	18	Botswana	39.1%	55
Belgium	59.1%	19	Ecuador	39.1%	56
United States	58.8%	20	Bahrain	38.5%	57
Hong Kong	58.2%	21	Qatar	38.5%	58
Russia	57.8%	22	Brazil	37.7%	59
United Kingdom	56.8%	23	Latvia	37.3%	60
Germany	56.2%	24	Angola	36.0%	61
France	51.7%	25	Italy	35.9%	62
Macau	51.1%	26	Togo	35.9%	63
Austria	50.4%	27	Tanzania	35.9%	64
Cyprus	49.9%	28	Chile	35.7%	65
Spain	49.5%	29	Vietnam	35.7%	66
China	48.6%	30	Liberia	34.7%	67
Canada	48.4%	31	Oman	34.7%	68
Lebanon	48.3%	32	Portugal	34.6%	69
Eswatini	48.1%	33	Zambia	34.6%	70
Estonia	47.6%	34	Uganda	34.3%	71
Poland	47.2%	35	Indonesia	34.2%	72
Zimbabwe	46.7%	36	Croatia	33.5%	73
Papua New Guinea	46.4%	37	Cote d'Ivoire	33.3%	74

* Participation rate measures the share of the total population who participate in one or more of the three physical activity categories on a regular basis (at least monthly). Table excludes most countries with populations less than 1 million and those with major conflicts or humanitarian crises.
Source: Global Wellness Institute

	Participation Rate*	Rank
Colombia	33.2%	75
Philippines	32.7%	76
Tajikistan	32.4%	77
Nigeria	32.2%	78
Guatemala	31.9%	79
Nicaragua	31.8%	80
Equatorial Guinea	31.8%	81
Namibia	31.6%	82
El Salvador	31.5%	83
Gabon	31.5%	84
Lesotho	31.4%	85
Honduras	31.3%	86
South Africa	31.3%	87
Paraguay	31.3%	88
UAE	31.2%	89
Greece	31.1%	90
Morocco	30.9%	91
Kyrgyzstan	30.9%	92
Bolivia	30.8%	93
Kenya	30.6%	94
Romania	30.6%	95
Turkmenistan	30.6%	96
Uzbekistan	30.0%	97
Ghana	29.7%	98
Chad	29.4%	99
Kazakhstan	29.1%	100
Guinea	29.1%	101
Gambia	28.7%	102
Egypt	28.6%	103
Dominican Rep.	28.6%	104
Libya	28.5%	105
Burundi	28.3%	106
Azerbaijan	28.2%	107
Jamaica	27.9%	108
Benin	27.9%	109
Cameroon	27.9%	110
Senegal	27.9%	110
Thailand	27.8%	112

	Participation Rate*	Rank
Congo, Rep.	27.6%	113
Madagascar	27.6%	114
Guinea-Bissau	27.4%	115
Puerto Rico	27.3%	116
Tunisia	27.1%	117
Armenia	27.0%	118
Albania	26.9%	119
Algeria	26.9%	120
Georgia	26.7%	121
Timor-Leste	26.3%	122
Macedonia	26.2%	123
Serbia	26.1%	124
Saudi Arabia	26.1%	125
Belarus	25.7%	126
Iran	25.5%	127
Bosnia-Herzegov.	25.5%	128
Burkina Faso	25.4%	129
Ukraine	25.3%	130
Bangladesh	25.2%	131
Ethiopia	25.2%	132
Bulgaria	25.0%	133
Mali	24.4%	134
Jordan	24.3%	135
Rwanda	24.2%	136
Mauritius	24.1%	137
Niger	23.6%	138
Eritrea	23.1%	139
Mauritania	22.0%	140
Cambodia	21.4%	141
Myanmar	21.3%	142
Moldova	20.3%	143
Nepal	20.0%	144
Sri Lanka	19.2%	145
Sierra Leone	18.9%	146
India	15.0%	147
Haiti	14.0%	148
Pakistan	13.2%	149
Mozambique	13.1%	150

* Participation rate measures the share of the total population who participate in one or more of the three physical activity categories on a regular basis (at least monthly). Table excludes most countries with populations less than 1 million and those with major conflicts or humanitarian crises.

Source: Global Wellness Institute

From *Fitness & Mind-Body* to *Physical Activity*: GWI's New Definition for this Important Wellness Sector

The Global Wellness Institute's (GWI's) most recent *Global Wellness Economy Monitor* estimated the global wellness economy at \$4.2 trillion in 2017. *Fitness & Mind-Body* was one of the ten sectors that comprise the wellness economy and was estimated at \$595 billion in 2017.⁷ In this report, GWI is expanding the definition of this important sector to incorporate a wider range of physical activities – it now includes not only fitness/gym and mind-body (“mindful movement”) activities, but also a variety of other sports and active recreation activities that people engage in as part of being physically active. As such, we have renamed the sector *Physical Activity* and now measure it at \$828 billion in 2018. The difference between the two figures is due to the expanded definition; they should not be compared as a time series because they are measuring different things. **If we incorporate the expanded *Physical Activity* measurement into the wellness economy, wellness becomes a \$4.5 trillion market.** Future editions of GWI's *Global Wellness Economy Monitor* will replace *Fitness & Mind-Body* with the renamed and expanded *Physical Activity* sector.

GLOBAL WELLNESS ECONOMY: \$4.5 Trillion Market



Note: Numbers do not add due to overlap in segments. Dark colored bubbles are the sectors for which GWI conducts in-depth, country-level primary research. Light colored bubbles are sectors for which GWI aggregates global estimates only, drawing from secondary sources.
Source: Global Wellness Institute

⁷ Global Wellness Institute (2018).

The \$368 billion in consumer spending on recreational physical activities does not capture the full extent of global participation.

Worldwide, GWI estimates that 35% of the population participates in recreational physical activities, spending \$367.7 billion out-of-pocket on doing these activities in 2018. Asia-Pacific has the largest expenditures due to its high level of spending in the sports and active recreation category. However, on average Asian consumers spend only \$85 per participant per year on doing physical activities, compared with much higher spending rates in North America (\$544 per year) and Europe (\$256 per year). **The level of *spending* on recreational physical activities does not represent the level of *participation* in these activities.** For example, as a region Latin America-Caribbean has a higher participation rate than Asia-Pacific, although its per participant spending is quite a bit lower. Similarly, Sub-Saharan Africa has a participation rate that is just slightly lower than Asia-Pacific, although the per person spending in Africa is only \$12 (as compared to \$85 in Asia). People around the world participate actively in recreational physical activities in a variety of public and free venues (e.g., in public parks and plazas, in neighborhood basketball courts or ball fields, in vacant lots, in the streets, and at home).

Recreational Physical Activities by Region, 2018

	Recreational Physical Activities Market (US\$ billions)				
	Sports & Active Recreation	Fitness	Mindful Movement	TOTAL Market Size* (US\$ billions) (Per Participant)	TOTAL Participation Rate*
Asia-Pacific	\$83.0	\$22.7	\$10.9	\$116.6 (\$85)	33.2%
North America	\$62.4	\$40.5	\$11.4	\$114.3 (\$544)	57.8%
Europe	\$69.2	\$33.8	\$6.3	\$109.2 (\$256)	46.6%
Latin America & Caribbean	\$9.9	\$5.9	\$0.3	\$16.0 (\$67)	36.7%
Middle East & North Africa	\$4.2	\$3.3	\$0.1	\$7.6 (\$61)	25.7%
Sub-Saharan Africa	\$1.4	\$2.5	\$0.03	\$3.9 (\$12)	31.0%
Total Recreational Physical Activities Market	\$230.1	\$108.6	\$29.1	\$367.7 (\$136)	35.5%

* Participation rate measures the share of the total population who participate in one or more of the three physical activity categories on a regular basis (at least monthly). Market size measures consumer expenditures on classes, memberships, entry fees, trainers, and related services and methods of participation.

Note: Figures may not sum to total due to overlap between segments and rounding.

Source: Global Wellness Institute

Sports and active recreation is by far the most popular way for people to engage in recreational physical activities, accounting for \$230.1 billion in spending.

An estimated 33.3% of the world's population regularly engages in sports and active recreation, spending \$90 on average, and accounting for \$230.1 billion of economic activity in 2018. Sports and active recreation represents two-thirds of all recreational physical activity spending, because these activities are the most diverse, accessible, affordable, and prevalent across every region and population group. The top markets include wealthier countries with high participation rates and high average spending per participant, such as the United States, United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, and South Korea, as well as countries with lower participation rates but very high average spending, such as Italy, Canada, and Spain. Several less wealthy countries also rank among the top twenty – notably China, Brazil, Mexico, and India – because they have large populations and, therefore, a large number of participants and overall expenditures, despite lower average spending rates.

Top Twenty Sports & Active Recreation Markets by Market Size, 2018

	Sports & Active Recreation Participation Rate*	Sports & Active Recreation Market Size* (US\$ billions)	Rank in 2018
United States	51.5%	\$57.6	1
China	43.5%	\$42.3	2
United Kingdom	54.1%	\$13.5	3
Japan	66.5%	\$13.3	4
Germany	52.6%	\$12.9	5
South Korea	70.6%	\$10.9	6
France	49.3%	\$7.5	7
Australia	77.4%	\$6.7	8
Italy	33.6%	\$5.7	9
Canada	41.9%	\$4.8	10
Spain	45.8%	\$4.6	11
Switzerland	68.7%	\$4.6	12
Netherlands	60.6%	\$4.0	13
Brazil	36.8%	\$3.7	14
Taiwan	80.7%	\$2.8	15
Russia	57.2%	\$2.6	16
Mexico	43.5%	\$2.3	17
India	12.9%	\$1.8	18
Sweden	72.8%	\$1.7	19
Ireland	62.3%	\$1.4	20

* Participation rate measures the share of the total population who participate in this physical activity category on a regular basis (at least monthly). Market size measures consumer expenditures on classes, memberships, entry fees, trainers, and related services and methods of participation. Source: Global Wellness Institute

The \$108.6 billion global fitness market is dynamic, diverse, and fast-growing.

GWII estimates that 3.7% of the world's population are members of gyms, health clubs, and fitness studios and/or participate in structured or independent fitness activities or classes on a regular basis. Participants spent \$108.6 billion, or an average of \$384 per participant in 2018. Within the fitness market, GWII estimates that about 190 million people spend money on memberships, classes, and training at commercial gyms, health clubs and fitness studios, accounting for \$83.1 billion in expenditures. Another 58 million or so participate in fitness at venues that often cost much less or nothing, such as public and nonprofit gyms and fitness programs, free outdoor gyms and fitness classes, university fitness centers, etc. Interest in fitness has been growing, with new business models (e.g., luxury fitness, budget gyms, 24-hour gyms, boutique studios, small independent studios, small group training, international and regional franchises, etc.) proliferating around the world to cater to different needs, preferences, and price points.

Top Twenty Fitness Markets by Market Size, 2018

	Fitness Participation Rate*	Fitness Market Size* (US\$ billions)	Rank in 2018
United States	29.3%	\$37.0	1
United Kingdom	17.3%	\$6.3	2
Germany	16.5%	\$6.1	3
Japan	7.8%	\$5.6	4
China	0.8%	\$5.5	5
Australia	24.3%	\$3.9	6
Canada	26.4%	\$3.5	7
France	12.0%	\$3.1	8
Spain	13.8%	\$2.7	9
Italy	11.0%	\$2.7	10
South Korea	9.2%	\$2.6	11
Brazil	6.2%	\$2.0	12
Mexico	4.3%	\$1.8	13
South Africa	5.1%	\$1.6	14
Netherlands	21.7%	\$1.6	15
Poland	10.0%	\$1.2	16
Switzerland	16.8%	\$1.0	17
India	0.3%	\$1.0	18
Turkey	3.3%	\$1.0	19
Sweden	29.4%	\$1.0	20

* Participation rate measures the share of the total population who are paying members of various types of gym/health club/fitness facilities and/or who access or utilize their services/classes/facilities on a regular basis (at least monthly). Market size measures consumer expenditures on classes, memberships, entry fees, trainers, and related services and methods of participation.

Source: Global Wellness Institute

The \$29.1 billion mindful movement market is concentrated in higher-income countries, but practices are quickly spreading throughout the world.

GWII estimates that 3.8% of the world's population participates in mindful movement activities on a regular basis, with a total spending of \$29.1 billion in 2018. Yoga is the predominant activity, followed by tai chi and qigong, Pilates, barre, and a range of other niche activities that are less mainstream (e.g., Gyrotonic, Feldenkrais, etc.). Worldwide, people participating in mindful movement spent an average of \$101 per year in 2018. The rising popularity of mindful movement practices has been accompanied by a proliferation of ways in which to participate – gyms, independent studios, YMCAs and community centers, streaming apps, books and instructional DVDs, and so on – and this is especially the case with yoga. A significant portion of the growth in yoga practice worldwide is in online, at home, and low-cost methods of practicing, which is expanding access and lowering cost barriers to participation.

Top Twenty Mindful Movement Markets by Market Size, 2018

	Mindful Movement Participation Rate*	Mindful Movement Market Size* (US\$ billions)	Rank in 2018
United States	17.7%	\$10.4	1
China	7.1%	\$5.8	2
Japan	6.3%	\$1.9	3
Russia	1.4%	\$1.3	4
Germany	7.7%	\$1.2	5
Canada	15.3%	\$1.0	6
Australia	17.1%	\$0.9	7
United Kingdom	4.2%	\$0.7	8
India	4.0%	\$0.7	9
South Korea	5.1%	\$0.7	10
Spain	9.5%	\$0.6	11
Italy	4.8%	\$0.5	12
Netherlands	9.7%	\$0.4	13
France	4.7%	\$0.4	14
Taiwan	8.6%	\$0.4	15
Switzerland	5.8%	\$0.2	16
Brazil	1.1%	\$0.2	17
Hong Kong	9.0%	\$0.2	18
Denmark	13.8%	\$0.1	19
Sweden	9.2%	\$0.1	20

* Participation rate measures the share of the total population who participate in this physical activity category on a regular basis (at least monthly). Market size measures consumer expenditures on classes, memberships, entry fees, trainers, and related services and methods of participation.

Source: Global Wellness Institute

Enabling sectors account for \$465.9 billion of the physical activity market.

The physical activity enabling sectors include a wide array goods and services that support or enhance people's participation in recreational physical activities. GWI estimates that the enabling sectors generated \$465.9 billion in global economic activity in 2018, or an average of \$172 per participant. Apparel and footwear is the largest category (\$332.7 billion), followed by equipment and supplies (\$108.6 billion). Technology is the smallest of the enabling sectors, at \$26.3 billion.

North America is the region with the largest market for the enabling sectors (\$171.2 billion) and is also largest in two sub-categories – apparel and footwear, and equipment and supplies. Asia-Pacific is the second-largest market overall (\$125.5 billion) and leads in the technology segment. In every region, expenditures on the enabling sectors (both overall and per participant) are higher than expenditures on actually participating in recreational physical activities. This is primarily due to the high level of spending on apparel and footwear.

Physical Activity Enabling Sectors by Region, 2018

	Physical Activity Enabling Sectors Market (US\$ billions)			
	Technology	Equipment & Supplies	Apparel & Footwear	TOTAL Market Size* (US\$ billions) (Per Participant)
North America	\$8.6	\$40.0	\$123.1	\$171.2 (\$814)
Asia-Pacific	\$10.8	\$27.6	\$87.5	\$125.5 (\$92)
Europe	\$4.8	\$35.0	\$77.4	\$116.5 (\$274)
Latin America & Caribbean	\$1.0	\$2.9	\$22.3	\$26.2 (\$110)
Middle East & North Africa	\$0.4	\$2.6	\$12.1	\$15.1 (\$121)
Sub-Saharan Africa	\$0.7	\$0.5	\$10.3	\$11.5 (\$34)
Total Physical Activity Enabling Sectors	\$26.3	\$108.6	\$332.7	\$465.9 (\$172)

Note: Figures do not sum to total due to overlap between segments and rounding.

Source: Global Wellness Institute estimates, based upon data from Euromonitor International, Statista, Crunchbase, and other sources

The physical activity market is expected to enjoy robust growth in the next five years.

For the next five years, GWI projects that the physical activity economy will grow by 6.6% annually, significantly faster than global GDP growth (5.1% annually, as projected by the IMF). The physical activity economy is projected to surpass \$1.1 trillion, and Asia-Pacific will overtake North America as the largest region by expenditures. Over 40% of the increase in the physical activity market will be in Asia-Pacific region. China and India together are projected to account for nearly one-third of the market growth, while the United States will account for one-quarter of the increase and Europe will account for one-fifth. Around the world, rising concern about obesity and chronic disease and the awareness of their link to inactivity will continue to push governments, nonprofits, medical systems, employers, and consumers to pay more attention to physical activity. In lower- and middle-income countries and regions, demand for exercise opportunities will be fueled by expanding populations and a growing middle class with rising disposable incomes, who are increasingly embracing healthier and more active lifestyles.

Physical Activity Market Growth Projections, 2018-2023

	Projected Market Size (US\$ billions)		Projected Average Annual Growth Rate
	2018	2023	2018-2023
Total Physical Activity Economy	\$828.2	\$1,139.7	6.6%
By Region			
Asia-Pacific	\$240.4	\$373.5	9.2%
North America	\$282.7	\$366.0	5.3%
Europe	\$225.0	\$287.9	5.1%
Latin America-Caribbean	\$42.2	\$56.6	6.0%
Middle East-North Africa	\$22.6	\$33.0	7.8%
Sub-Saharan Africa	\$15.3	\$22.7	8.2%
By Sector			
Active Recreation & Sports	\$230.1	\$323.4	7.0%
Fitness	\$108.6	\$147.9	6.4%
Mindful Movement	\$29.1	\$52.1	12.4%
Apparel & Footwear	\$332.7	\$453.1	6.4%
Equipment & Supplies	\$108.6	\$139.4	5.1%
Technology	\$26.3	\$39.8	8.6%

Source: Global Wellness Institute estimates, based upon economic and industry sector projections from the IMF, Euromonitor, Statista, and GWI's data and projection model

Growth in consumer spending on physical activity will not guarantee increasing participation. Public and private sectors must work together to address the physical inactivity crisis.

The irony in these projections is that ever-increasing consumer spending on physical activity is not necessarily the solution to the global crisis of physical inactivity. From a public health perspective, the aim is simply to get more people more active, more often – regardless of whether they spend more money while doing so. The question we must ask is whether the growth in expenditures reflects more wealthy and able-bodied people (who already have a higher propensity for physical activity) spending more money on the latest fitness fads, gadgets, and apparel? Or does it reflect growing participation rates among people who were not previously physically active? In most countries, the growth projections incorporate both, at varying rates.

We do not have to spend any money at all in order to be physically active and stay healthy, especially when we have access to good parks, recreation, and outdoor amenities, and when we get enough “natural movement” in our daily lives. The world needs more appealing spaces and options for the one-quarter to one-third of adults who are physically inactive (by WHO standards), and for the two-thirds of the population who are not currently participating in recreational physical activities (by GWI’s estimates), in order to engage these people in physical activities they enjoy, at price points that are accessible to them. As such, investment in public infrastructure, parks, outdoor gyms, school programs, physical education, etc. is critically important.

GWI firmly believes that government expenditures on fitness and other recreational physical activities are complementary to the private fitness and recreation industries, and not a competitor or substitute. If the aim is to reduce sedentary behavior and expand access to facilities and services that support physical activity, then both public and private efforts are essential. Physical activity and participation rates are so low in countries around the world, there are enormous opportunities to grow the market and reach new customers – and there is a health imperative to do so. Governments, nonprofits, and private enterprises and entrepreneurs all have a major role to play.

Business innovations and public initiatives can help to overcome barriers to physical activity, mitigate a public health challenge, and expand market opportunities.

The \$828.2 billion global physical activity sector, while enormous, is currently only engaging about one-third of the world's population. The large and growing share of inactive population represents a major ongoing, global public health challenge. The solution lies in addressing the major barriers to physical activity across all spheres of life – transportation, domestic, and occupational physical activity (“natural movement”), as well as leisure and recreation options, and the recreational physical activity sector is a critical part of the solution.

GWII research and review of dozens of national and cross-country surveys revealed the major motivations and barriers to physical activity worldwide. Among adults, the top reasons for not engaging in physical activities are: **lack of time; lack of interest; physical or health conditions; and lack of motivation or habit.** Among youth, the top reasons are: **lack of time, lack of convenient facility or activity near home; not having fun; and prefer to do something else.** Across countries, time constraints are typically a more significant barrier in higher-income countries. In lower-income countries, a lack of interest or motivation and lack of access to facilities are cited more often as barriers. More surprising is that physical conditions (e.g., health-related reasons, illness, age, or the perceived inability to engage in physical activity) are frequently mentioned as a barrier, more so than cost/money constraints or access to facilities. Personal safety and being uncomfortable at a gym are also mentioned as a concern by women and girls in some countries where gender and social norms discourage female participation in sports and outdoor recreation, prevent activities in co-ed settings, or prohibit physical activity for females in general.

Top Barriers to Physical Activity Worldwide	Top Motivations for Physical Activity Worldwide
Adults <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Lack of time2. Lack of interest3. Physical or health conditions4. Lack of motivation or habit	Adults <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Maintaining good health2. Stress reduction or relaxation3. For fun or pleasure
Youth <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Lack of time2. Lack of convenient facility or activity near home3. Not having fun4. Prefer to do something else	Youth <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. For fun, entertainment, or joy of movement2. To be with friends3. To be fit or healthy

Source: Global Wellness Institute review of over 75 studies and surveys across 60 countries

The full report provides numerous examples of innovations, new business models, and public policy initiatives that can help overcome barriers to physical activity, increase participation, and extend the many benefits of movement to more people around the world. These approaches are summarized below.

Mitigating time constraints and increasing convenience. The market has developed many new approaches, services, and businesses to make physical activity more flexible and convenient.

- Apps and digital services are enabling workouts on demand.
- New business models and technologies are revolutionizing the home gym.
- The fitness-hospitality nexus enables people to continue their exercise routines during travel.

Making physical activity a daily habit. As natural movement declines in daily life, there are ways to re-insert movement back into our routine activities and the places where we spend much of our time.

- Workplace wellness initiatives incorporate physical activity into work days.
- New business models are enabling fitness for freelancers.
- Physical education in schools builds lifelong physical activity habits.
- Schools can incorporate movement for children throughout the day.

Making physical activity fun and appealing. Recognizing that consumers are more motivated by fun than by a sense of obligation, businesses and communities have introduced different ways of making physical activity more fun and appealing.

- Build connections with leaders, teams, tribes, and communities.
- Put the “play” back into youth sports.
- Leverage technology to make physical activities fun and rewarding.
- Dance as exercise.

Enabling movement in all physical conditions. The activities and businesses that exist today mainly serve people who are already active or capable of conducting physical activity, leaving out many people whose physical conditions (related to age, medical conditions, disability, injury, etc.) make it difficult for them to participate. There are opportunities to serve this population, who could benefit greatly from physical activities.

- This rise of silver fitness.
- Mainstreaming therapeutic and recovery fitness.
- Prescribing exercise.

Embedding physical activity in the built environment. An important way to engage more people in physical activity is by making movement a default in daily life, through infrastructure, design, and convenient amenities.

- Designing buildings, neighborhoods, and cities to encourage natural movement.
- The rise of wellness real estate.

Making physical activity affordable and accessible to everyone. Accessibility of facilities and affordability remain important barriers to physical activity, especially for people with lower incomes or who live in low-resource areas. Both private businesses and the public sector can play important roles in improving accessibility and lowering cost barriers.

- The growth of high-value, low-price gyms.
- The importance of small business in serving communities.
- Safe and comfortable spaces for women and girls.
- Government investments in infrastructure and programs are critical for improving access.

Research Scope and Methodology

The definitions, conceptual framework, and estimation models for the global economy of physical activity are developed by the authors under the auspices of the Global Wellness Institute (GWI). All data presented in this report are for the year 2018. The analysis and figures are based on extensive primary and secondary research conducted from January 2018 to August 2019, including literature reviews, qualitative and quantitative research, and expert interviews.

Country-level data on physical activity participation rates and expenditures are developed by the authors using our proprietary databases and economic models, cross-referenced with in-house data and research conducted by GWI and the authors for other key wellness industries (e.g., wellness real estate, wellness tourism, workplace wellness, etc.). Key public and private sources consulted include: World Bank, International Monetary Fund, World Health Organization, United Nations, Eurostat, Euromonitor International, Statista, government ministries and statistical agencies, and a wide variety of country-specific and industry-specific organizations, databases, publications, and media sources. Specific resources used to develop different types of data presented in this report are listed below:

- **For physical activity participation rates, motivations, and barriers:** Sports/recreation/physical activity population surveys conducted at the country level by government ministries, public statistical agencies, and nonprofit/academic research institutes (over 330 studies across 94 countries, in 17 languages); regional sports/recreation/physical activity data gathered by the European Union/Eurostat (in 28 EU member countries); WHO STEPwise Approach to Surveillance (STEPS) country reports (conducted in 113 countries); International Health, Racquet, & Sportsclub Association (IHRSA) global and regional reports (covering 65 countries); activity-specific participation studies and data from a variety of research institutes, journal articles, private organizations, media, websites, etc. (e.g., yoga studies conducted by *Yoga Journal* or the German Professional Association of Yoga Teachers/BDY).
- **For physical activity expenditures:** Spending data were gathered from the same sources listed above, as well as consumer expenditures data from Euromonitor International and from national consumer expenditure/household budget surveys conducted on a regular basis by governmental statistical agencies in 67 countries around the world.
- **For physical activity enabling sectors (technology, equipment, apparel):** GWI relied primarily on data from Euromonitor International, Statista, and Crunchbase for these segments, supplemented by numerous industry-specific organizations, publications, websites, and media sources, and GWI's own original research for some technology segments.

GWI's estimates generally do not directly mirror data found in any of the sources listed above, because we have made adjustments to ensure numbers fit our definitions and methodology, and we have used our own estimation models to fill in data for countries not covered by these sources.

APPENDIX: SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

North America

- Aspen Institute (n.d.). *Project Play: Challenges to Physical Activity*. <https://www.aspenprojectplay.org/kids-facts-challenges>.
- Aspen Institute Project Play (2018). *State of Play 2018: Trends and Developments*. https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/2018/10/StateofPlay2018_v4WEB_2-FINAL.pdf.
- Esmail, N. (2017, April). *Complementary and Alternative Medicine: Use and Public Attitudes 1997, 2006, and 2016*. Vancouver: Fraser Institute. <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/studies/complementary-and-alternative-medicine-use-and-public-attitudes-1997-2006-and-2016>.
- Florida, R. (2019, Jan. 10). The Geography of American Gym and Fitness-Center Brands. *CityLab*. <https://www.citylab.com/life/2019/01/fitness-studio-gym-density-income-education-resolution/579595/>.
- Florida, R. (2019, Jan. 8). Your Fitness Resolution Might Be Easier If You're Rich. *CityLab*. <https://www.citylab.com/life/2019/01/fitness-exercise-affluent-class-divides/579592/>.
- Florida, R. and Boone, A. (2018, Jan. 2). The Urban Fitness Revolution. *CityLab*. <https://www.citylab.com/life/2018/01/the-urban-fitness-revolution/549467/>.
- IHRSA (2018). *IHRSA Fitness Training Report*. Boston, MA: IHRSA. <https://www.ihrsa.org/publications/ihrsa-fitness-training-user-report/>.
- IHRSA (2018). *IHRSA Health Club Consumer Report*. Boston, MA: IHRSA. <https://www.ihrsa.org/publications/the-2018-ihrsa-health-club-consumer-report/>.
- McCall, P. (2015, Dec. 7). *10 Fitness Trends to Look Out For in 2016*. American Council on Exercise. <https://www.acefitness.org/education-and-resources/professional/expert-articles/5762/10-fitness-trends-to-look-out-for-in-2016>.
- Mindbody (2019). *Fitness in America: behaviors, attitudes, and trends*. <https://docplayer.net/123204354-Fitness-in-america-behaviors-attitudes-and-trends.html>.
- Mindbody (2019). *Mindbody Wellness Index: Understanding the State of the Wellness Industry in America*. <https://business.mindbody.io/education/wellness-index-2019>.
- National Recreation and Park Association (2019). *2019 NRPA Agency Performance Review: Park and Recreation Agency Performance Benchmarks*. <https://www.nrpa.org/siteassets/nrpa-agency-performance-review.pdf>.
- NPR, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health (2015, June). *Sports and Health in America*. <https://media.npr.org/documents/2015/june/sportsandhealthpoll.pdf>.
- Outdoor Industry Association (2018). *2018 Outdoor Participation Report*. <https://outdoorindustry.org/resource/2018-outdoor-participation-report/>.
- Physical Activity Council (2019). *2019 Physical Activity Council's Overview Report on U.S. Participation*. <http://www.physicalactivitycouncil.com/pdfs/current.pdf>.

- Statistics Canada (2013, Feb.). *Sport Participation 2010*. http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2013/pc-ch/CH24-1-2012-eng.pdf.
- Statistics Canada (2019, May 21). *Sports for fun and fitness*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2019039-eng.htm>.
- Statistics Canada (2019). *Tracking physical activity levels of Canadians, 2016 and 2017*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/190417/dq190417g-eng.htm>.
- Women's Sports Foundation (n.d.). *Do You Know the Factors Influencing Girls' Participation in Sports?* <https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/support-us/do-you-know-the-factors-influencing-girls-participation-in-sports/>.
- Woods, R.A. (2017, May). *Sports and Exercise*. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. <https://www.bls.gov/spotlight/2017/sports-and-exercise/home.htm>.
- Yoga Journal, Yoga Alliance, and Ipsos Public Affairs (2016). *2016 Yoga in America Study*. <https://www.yogajournal.com/page/yogainamericastudy>.



To download the full Move to be Well:
The Global Economy of Physical Activity report, visit:
[GLOBALWELLNESSINSTITUTE.ORG](https://www.globalwellnessinstitute.org)

**WE ACKNOWLEDGE AND THANK OUR INDUSTRY RESEARCH SPONSORS
WHO MADE THIS REPORT POSSIBLE:**

OCTAVE Institute

Biologique Recherche

Cannuka

Technogym

Chōsen

Hydrafacial

MindBody

Six Senses

Accor Hotels

AMAALA

BestLifeRewarded

BodyHoliday

Eterneva

Pure Global

Rancho La Puerta

Universal Companies

WW



GLOBAL WELLNESS
INSTITUTE™

EMPOWERING WELLNESS WORLDWIDE

333 S.E. 2nd Avenue, Suite 2048
Miami, FL 33131, USA

www.globalwellnessinstitute.org