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**2017**

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# PARTICIPATION SURVEY



[USLACROSSE.ORG](http://USLACROSSE.ORG)

# ABOUT THIS SURVEY

The US Lacrosse Participation Report is produced annually to help monitor the participation levels at different levels of the game around the country. This report counts only participation on organized teams, and does not include leisure time play of the sport.

There are several sources of data for this report, with the primary sources being US Lacrosse membership data and reports compiled by full-time US Lacrosse regional staff members. External sources of data include the National Collegiate Athletic Association, the National Federation of State High School Associations and Laxpower.com

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## ABOUT US LACROSSE

US Lacrosse is the national governing body of lacrosse. Since 1998, we have been dedicated to providing leadership, support and resources to members of the lacrosse community. Fueled by a passion for the game, US Lacrosse plays a central role in the rapid growth of the sport throughout the United States and abroad. US Lacrosse currently serves nearly 450,000 members in communities across the nation.

US Lacrosse headquarters are located in Sparks, Md., and the organization employs more than 80 full- and part-time employees. The organization also relies on the contributions of hundreds of volunteers that serve in a variety of leadership roles to share their expertise.

A national board of directors determines policy, the officers of which meet monthly to monitor progress. Nine board committees meet regularly to help shape policy in their particular areas of expertise.

### Mission

As the sport's national governing body, US Lacrosse provides national leadership, structure and resources to fuel the sport's growth and enrich the experience of participants.

### Support Our Mission

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, US Lacrosse relies on the generosity of its members and donors to fund its activities and support its mission. The organization provides a leadership role in virtually every aspect of the game throughout the United States, and offers a number of programs and information services to its national membership and lacrosse enthusiasts. To make a gift to help support US Lacrosse, please visit [uslacrosse.org/donate](https://uslacrosse.org/donate)



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# LACROSSE TODAY

Over the first two decades of US Lacrosse's existence, lacrosse has been one of the fastest-growing team sports at the country at all levels. The sport is continuing to grow, but has featured a flattening growth rate in recent years.

In 2017, national lacrosse participation edged up slightly at 0.1% to a total of just under 826,000 active players. Since the first US Lacrosse Participation Report in 2001, total participation has increased 226 percent.

## Lacrosse Participation in 2017

Level	Male Players	Female Players	Total Players	% 1-Year Growth
Youth	283,390	163,823	447,213	-1.6%
High School	183,745	140,944	324,689	2.8%
College	25,177	17,331	42,508	0.3%
Professional	270	120	390	5.4%
Post-College	7,475	4,708	12,183	-5.2%

## Total Participation Since 2001

Year	Players	% 1-Year Growth	# New Players
2001	253,931	-	-
2002	288,104	13.5	34,173
2003	301,560	4.7	13,456
2004	351,852	16.7	50,292
2005	381,568	8.4	29,716
2006	426,022	11.7	44,454
2007	480,627	12.8	54,605
2008	524,230	9.1	43,603
2009	568,021	8.4	43,791
2010	624,592	10.0	56,572
2011	684,730	9.6	60,137
2012	722,205	5.5	37,475
2013	746,859	3.4	24,654
2014	772,772	3.5	25,913
2015	802,044	3.8	29,272
2016	826,033	3.0	23,979
2017	826,983	0.1	960



# YOUTH

Youth lacrosse (14 and under) dipped slightly below 450,000 in 2017. The increase towards early sport specialization is a challenge for all youth sports participation and lacrosse is not immune despite a relatively healthy environment as compared to some other sports.

For the fourth consecutive year there 14 states (California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and Virginia) with at least 10,000 participants at the youth level and several other states, including Illinois, Utah, Washington and Wisconsin, closing in on the threshold.

## US Lacrosse Annual Participation Survey

Year	Youth Boys	Youth Girls	Total Youth	1-Yr Growth
2006	139,188	81,609	220,797	
2007	155,866	85,715	241,581	9.4%
2008	168,768	96,446	265,214	9.8%
2009	182,249	115,022	297,271	12.1%
2010	201,727	122,946	324,673	9.2%
2011	230,356	130,919	361,275	11.3%
2012	252,060	137,215	389,275	7.8%
2013	265,428	138,342	403,770	3.7%
2014	279,771	145,065	424,836	5.2%
2015	287,519	157,061	444,580	4.6%
2016	292,695	161,832	454,527	2.2%
2017	283,390	163,823	447,213	-1.6%





# HIGH SCHOOL

Lacrosse has been the fastest-growing team sport in the nation at the high school level for at least the last two decades. In 2017, total participation was just under 325,000 total participants. Over the five-year period from 2012 to 2017, the number of schools sponsoring boys' lacrosse rose 24 percent and the number of schools with girls' lacrosse rose 28 percent. Over the last 10 years, both boys' and girls' lacrosse have grown by more than 80 percent.

There is still room for considerable growth. Ohio, Illinois and Utah have become the most recent states to adopt lacrosse as a fully-sanctioned high school championship sport, but only 22 states currently have full championship status. Two other states have some level of formal recognition from the state governing body, but more than half of the states in the United States do not have lacrosse as an official sport. Additionally, less than 20 percent of the schools that traditionally report data to the NFHS currently sponsor lacrosse.

The participation numbers from US Lacrosse listed below the NFHS chart include the hundreds of high school teams that are not included in the NFHS data, either because their state does not collect lacrosse data, they are private schools not part of the NFHS structure or they are school-based club teams.



## NFHS Growth Rates (2012 to 2017) • Number of Schools Sponsoring Sport

Boys Sports	2012	2017	Growth Rate
Lacrosse	2,338	2,900	24.0%
Indoor Track	2,644	3,207	21.3%
Bowling	2,467	2,835	14.9%
Volleyball	2,180	2,400	10.1%
Cross Country	14,155	15,087	6.6%

Girls Sports	2012	2017	Growth Rate
Lacrosse	2,118	2,717	28.3%
Indoor Track	2,588	3,207	23.1%
Bowling	2,451	2,835	15.1%
Softball	14,142	15,440	9.2%
Swimming	7,221	7,721	6.9%

## US Lacrosse Annual Participation Survey

Year	HS Boys	HS Girls	Total HS	1-Yr Growth
2006	96,777	65,244	162,021	
2007	112,496	74,550	187,046	15.4%
2008	131,092	87,731	218,823	16.9%
2009	136,710	90,914	227,624	4.0%
2010	149,400	105,914	255,314	12.2%
2011	162,416	112,865	275,281	7.8%
2012	166,471	115,677	282,148	2.5%
2013	169,095	120,951	290,046	2.8%
2014	172,815	124,423	297,238	2.5%
2015	176,039	129,083	305,122	2.7%
2016	180,399	135,488	315,887	3.5%
2017	183,745	140,944	324,689	2.8%

# COLLEGE

College lacrosse continues to surge in popularity with two major breakthroughs in the West. Utah announced a new varsity men's program, just the second new men's lacrosse program at a Power 5 school since 1981.

The addition of the new varsity women's program at Arizona State led to the Pac-12 adopting women's lacrosse as a conference sport. Two of the Power 5 leagues — the ACC and the Big Ten — offer both men's and women's lacrosse in addition to the Pac 12 women's league.

The sport is also thriving at the small college level all around the country. Growth is being seen in the NCAA Division II and III ranks, in the NAIA and club leagues like the MCLA. The US Lacrosse participation figures below the NCAA chart include all of these levels of play.



In total, 26 new varsity programs began play in 2017, bringing the total of new programs to the sport to more than 140 over a four-year period from 2014 to 2017.

## NCAA Growth Rates (2012 to 2017) • Number of Schools Sponsoring Sport

Men's Sports	2012	2017	Growth Rate
Volleyball	98	128	30.6%
Lacrosse	295	371	25.8%
Indoor Track	634	709	11.8%
Water Polo	43	47	9.3%
Ice Hockey	135	144	6.7%

Women's Sports	2012	2017	Growth Rate
Lacrosse	376	498	32.5%
Ice Hockey	86	100	16.3%
Indoor Track	711	803	12.9%
Golf	596	667	11.9%
Swimming	527	548	4.0%

## US Lacrosse Annual Participation Survey

Year	College Men	College Women	Total College	1-Yr Growth
2006	16,444	10,207	26,651	
2007	16,961	11,321	28,282	6.1%
2008	18,148	11,674	29,822	5.4%
2009	18,746	12,868	31,614	6.0%
2010	19,326	13,105	32,431	2.6%
2011	20,397	13,532	33,929	4.6%
2012	21,080	13,887	34,967	3.1%
2013	21,478	14,767	36,515	4.4%
2014	22,907	15,476	38,383	5.1%
2015	24,411	15,902	40,313	5.0%
2016	25,365	17,019	42,384	5.1%
2017	25,177	17,331	42,508	0.3%



# PROFESSIONAL

Professional lacrosse continued its expansion in 2017 with the announcement of the formation of the Women's Professional Lacrosse League, following on the heels of the launch of the United Women's Lacrosse League in 2016. The UWLX features four teams while the WPLL has five teams.

There are two men's professional lacrosse leagues operating in North America — Major League Lacrosse and the National Lacrosse League.

Major League Lacrosse is an outdoor league that played its first season in 2001. The league had nine franchises in 2017 (Atlanta, Boston, Charlotte, Chesapeake, Denver, Florida, Long Island, Ohio and Rochester).

The National Lacrosse League is an indoor league that dates to 1987. The NLL features teams in both the U.S. and Canada with a heavy percentage of players coming from Canada, where box lacrosse is the country's official summer sport. For the 2017-18 season, the league has nine franchises (Buffalo, Calgary, Colorado, Georgia, New England, Rochester, Saskatchewan, Toronto and Vancouver).

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## POST-COLLEGIATE CLUB

There are numerous former high school and college lacrosse players that give back to the game as coaches and officials, and many also continue to play at the post-collegiate club level. On the men's side there are more than a dozen adult leagues that primarily take place in the spring and summer, including the American Lacrosse League, a league of more than 30 teams along the East Coast. Men's post-collegiate play also includes competition for older players in Masters, Grandmasters and Supermasters divisions, and there are numerous tournaments around the country for all levels of play. There are nearly 100 organized women's post-collegiate club teams around the country that play in both local/regional leagues and tournaments throughout the year. More information about post-collegiate club playing opportunities for men and women are available on the US Lacrosse website at [uslacrosse.org/postcollegiatelax](http://uslacrosse.org/postcollegiatelax)



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# INTERNATIONAL

International lacrosse took a major step forward in 2017 as the sport was included in the International World Games in Poland. It was the first time lacrosse was included in this Olympic-style event, and the United States defeated Canada in women's lacrosse to win the championship, which came just over a week after the U.S. defeated Canada to win its third consecutive FIL Women's World Cup.

The FIL was formed in the summer of 2008 as the new governing body for men's and women's lacrosse at the international level. The organization is the result of a merger between the International Federation of Women's Lacrosse Associations (IFWLA) and the International Lacrosse Federation (ILF). The IFWLA had been sponsoring women's world championships since 1982 and the ILF had been sponsoring men's world championships since 1974.

The FIL is a member of SportAccord and the International World Games Association.

US Lacrosse governs all aspects of the U.S. men's and women's national teams and plays a leading role in supporting men's and women's lacrosse development internationally. World Championships are conducted through the FIL at the senior and U19 level every four years for both men and women. The United States has been dominant on the world stage, winning a total of 29 world championships.

## Listed below are the most recent FIL World Championship Results

Year	Event	Location	Champion	U.S. Finish
2017	Women's Senior	Guildford, England	U.S.	1st
2016	Men's U19	Coquitlam, Canada	U.S.	1st
2015	Men's Indoor	Onondaga Nation	Canada	3rd
2015	Women's U19	Edinburgh, Scotland	Canada	2nd
2014	Men's Senior	Denver, Colorado	Canada	2nd

## Upcoming World Championships

Year	Event	Location	Dates
2018	Men's Senior	Netanya, Israel	July 10-19
2019	Women's U19	Petersborough, Canada	August 1-10
2019	Men's Indoor	Langley, Canada	Sept. 19-28
2020	Men's U19	Limerick, Ireland	July 9-18
2021	Women's Senior	Towson, Md.	July 7-17

