

**Sport 21 Background Report no. 12**

This is no. 12 in a series of background reports being prepared during 2002/03 to inform the revision of *Sport 21*, the national strategy for sport in Scotland.

## **A Profile of Angling in Scotland**

Research Digest no. 91

by

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## FURTHER INFORMATION

This report is available on **sportscotland's** website:

[www.sportscotland.org.uk](http://www.sportscotland.org.uk)

**Governing Bodies of Sport.** Outline information on the Scottish governing bodies of sport is contained in a Fact Sheet in the series of *Sport 21* information papers. The **sportscotland** website includes contact details of all [governing bodies](#) plus links to their websites.

**Participation.** Reports on sports participation are published annually. The current version is [Sports Participation in Scotland 2001](#) (**sportscotland** Research Digest no. 90). This is available on the website and will be superseded by the report for 2002 in early summer 2003.

**Sports Clubs in Scotland.** The full and summary versions of the report [Sports Clubs in Scotland](#) (**sportscotland** Research Report no. 75 and Research Digest no. 59) have been published and are available from **sportscotland** and on our website. Reports with the responses to all the questions in the national survey of clubs (from which a selection for angling are included in this report) have been published for the following ten sports where the sample sizes were considered large enough to justify individual analyses. These are also available on the website.

<b>Angling</b>	Football
Athletics	Golf
Badminton	Hockey
Bowls	Swimming
Cricket	Tennis

**Facilities Database.** **sportscotland** maintains and continues to develop a substantial database of sports facilities in Scotland. Four projects in 2002 are updating the information for indoor sports facilities, pitches and courts, golf facilities and countryside sports provision and are also addressing qualitative aspects and the resulting refurbishment and replacement implications. These follow the publication of [The Ticking Time Bomb](#) that identifies the implications for Scottish swimming pools over the next 20 years. Information from the facilities database may be obtained by contacting: [alexander.major@sportscotland.org.uk](mailto:alexander.major@sportscotland.org.uk) (0131 472 7525).

**Profiles of Individual Sports.** This series of profiles of individual sports draws on governing body information; participation data; the sports club survey; and the facilities database. The following sports are being profiled in these Background Reports designed to inform the revision of *Sport 21*, and the profiles are being placed on the website during the autumn of 2002.

<b>Angling</b>	Cricket	Hockey
Athletics	Curling	Rugby
Badminton	Football	Swimming
Bowls	Golf	Tennis

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was prepared by **sportscotland's** Research Unit as part of a series of Background Reports to inform the revision of *Sport 21*, the national strategy for sport in Scotland. It is one of 12 profiles of sports that include information on the organisation of the sport; participation; clubs; and facilities. The participation and clubs sections are based on information from two studies commissioned by **sportscotland**:

- The angling information from the survey of sports clubs in Scotland derives from analyses by the Planning Data Management Service of the sports clubs questionnaire data gathered by the Survey Unit on behalf of the Centre for Leisure Research, all of Edinburgh University.
- The angling information from the regular survey of sports participation by the general public that derives from System's Three's Scottish Omnibus Survey.

**sportscotland** is grateful to colleagues at the angling governing bodies for their help; and the 88 angling clubs throughout Scotland who took the time and trouble to complete questionnaires.

**sportscotland**  
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# SECTION 1: ORGANISATION OF ANGLING

Angling is one of the oldest recreational activities, with its origins as a sport probably dating back to ancient Egypt. Angling has traditionally been distinguished from commercial or subsistence fishing by the presence of three factors: a personal angler, the sporting element and the use of recognised fishing tackle based on hook and line. There are three basic methods of sport fishing: bait fishing, fly fishing and spinning (including trolling); and three main types: coarse, game and sea. Coarse fish include all indigenous freshwater fish other than salmonids or game fish (salmon, sea trout, brown and rainbow trout). Sea fishing has three main forms: angling from the shore, jetties etc, inshore fishing (within about 5km of the shore) and deep sea fishing.<sup>1</sup>

## Governing Bodies

1 There are Scottish governing bodies for each of the three disciplines of angling:

Coarse: Scottish Federation for Coarse Angling (SFCA)

Game: Scottish Anglers National Association (SANA)

Sea: Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers (SFSA)

## Coarse Angling

2 A policy of catch and return is central to coarse angling, increasingly using specially stocked waters. The following coarse fish species in Scotland are listed by the SFCA:

Barbel	Crucian Carp	Gudgeon	Roach
Bream	Dace	Perch	Rudd
Carp	Eel	Pike	Ruffe
Chub	Grayling	Powan	Tench

3 The SFCA is the governing body of the sport of coarse angling in Scotland. It was established in the early 1980s following the initial formation of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Coarse Fishing Association in 1967. Contact:

Scottish Federation for Coarse Angling  
Mr Steve Clerkin, Secretary  
8 Longbraes Gardens  
Kirkcaldy  
Fife KY2 5YJ  
email: [stephen.clerkin@uk.sun.com](mailto:stephen.clerkin@uk.sun.com)  
website: [www.sfca.co.uk](http://www.sfca.co.uk)

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<sup>1</sup> Centre for Leisure Research *A digest of sports statistics for the UK*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. London: Sports Council, 1991.

## Game Angling

- 4 Game angling covers migratory (salmon and sea trout) and non-migratory (brown trout, grayling, char and rainbow trout) game fish.
- 5 SANA is the governing body for the sport of game angling in Scotland. It was established in 1985 as a result of the amalgamation of the Scottish National Angling Clubs Association (founded in 1888) and the Scottish Anglers' Association (1910). In 2002 it had 392 affiliated clubs with an estimated 30,000 members. Contact:

Scottish Anglers National Association  
National Game Angling Academy  
The Pier  
Loch Leven  
Kinross KY13 8UF

tel: 01577 861116  
fax: 01577 864769  
email: [admin@sana.org.uk](mailto:admin@sana.org.uk)  
website: [www.sana.org.uk](http://www.sana.org.uk)

## Sea Angling

- 6 Sea angling covers numerous species of fish caught from boat or shore around the coast of Scotland. The SFSA's marine fish records list 88 species caught by rod and line.
- 7 The SFSA is the governing body for the sport of sea angling in Scotland. In 2002 it had 41 affiliated clubs. Contact:

Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers  
Unit 28, Evans Business Centre  
Mitchelston Drive  
Mitchelston Industrial Estate  
Kirkcaldy  
Fife KY1 3NB  
tel/fax: 01592 657520  
website: [www.sfsa.freereserve.co.uk](http://www.sfsa.freereserve.co.uk) (no email)

## Economic Impact

- 8 Angling is one of a handful of sports that have a significant impact on the economy. Game angling in particular brings income to Scotland as a whole and to rural areas within the country. A survey in 1989<sup>2</sup> estimated that the value of salmon angling alone to the Scottish economy was then around £50m a year, expenditure that would support some 3,400 jobs. A study under way for Highlands and Islands Enterprise will provide new figures in 2004 for both game and sea angling.

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<sup>2</sup> Mackay Consultants *The economic importance of salmon fishing and netting in Scotland. Summary report*, p8 Inverness/Edinburgh: Highlands & Islands Development Board and Scottish Tourist Board, 1989.

## SECTION 2: PROFILE OF ANGLERS

### Participation Rates

- 9 Three per cent of the adult (16+) and six per cent of the child (8-15) population had been angling within the previous four weeks during the most popular months (Table 1). Adult participation rates for angling have not varied from about three per cent since data were first collected in 1987. When these rates are applied to the Scottish population, around 140,000 adults and 30,000 children had taken part.

**Table 1: Participation in Angling During the Season, 1999-2001**

Participation (most popular 2 mos)	Adults (aged 16+)	Men	Women	Children	Boys	Girls
Participation in last four weeks during the season						
% of respondents	3	7	0.5	6	9	2
No. of participants (000s)*	139	127	11	29	25	5
Base <sup>†</sup> :	6,145	2,949	3,196	1005	487	518

- 10 In terms of the number of participants, angling is similar in popularity among adults to bowls and badminton. Among children it is similar in popularity to martial arts, hillwalking/climbing and riding. (Table 2)

#### Source

Since 1987 **sportscotland** has commissioned data on sports participation every other month from System Three's Scottish Opinion Survey. This is a monthly survey of about 1,000 adults (aged 16 and over) from 40 sampling areas in mainland Scotland. Since 1998 children (aged 8 to 15) have been included in the survey. The question asked is:

- In the last 4 weeks, have you taken part, however informally, in any of these sports or physical recreations in Scotland?

A showcard with a list of sports is used so that respondents are in no doubt as to what to include and acts as a reminder. The last four weeks is a period that normally results in good recall, particularly of the number of times they have taken part. It also allows a rough definition of 'participation' to be determined, excluding those who rarely take part. 'However informally' emphasises that participation is not limited to formal or competitive activity. The focus is on participation by Scottish residents in Scotland.

The data are analysed for **sportscotland** by the Planning Data Management Service of Edinburgh University. Sports participation questions are included in the survey every other month throughout the year, but for purposes of identifying actual participation rates only data from the most popular two months each year are analysed, in order to avoid artificially lowering the average with rates from out-of-season participation. Results over three years are combined in a three-year moving mean. This is intended to boost accuracy by increasing the sample size, and to smooth out year-on-year variations that are simply due to sample fluctuations. Statistics on participation in angling are provided here for 1999-2001. For further comparisons with other sports, see **sportscotland's** Research Digest no. 90, *Sports Participation in Scotland 2001*, also available on **sportscotland's** website. This is updated annually, usually early summer.

\* Population figures from the GROS 2000 mid-year estimates provisionally revised from the 2001 Census.

<sup>†</sup> Here and throughout, the 'Base' figure is the total number of respondents to the question.

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**Table 2: Participation in Sports/Physical Recreations During the Season, 1999-2001**

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<b>Sport/Physical Recreation</b>	<b>Adults (16+)</b>	<b>Children (8-15)</b>
Percentage of respondents during most popular two months		
Walking (2+ miles)	32	21
Swimming	22	52
Football	11	62
Cycling	10	43
Golf	10	15
Dance	9	19
Keep fit/Aerobics	9	11
Snooker/Billiards/Pool	8	15
Multigym/Weight training	7	4
Running/Jogging	6	38
Tenpin bowling	6	10
Hillwalking/Climbing/Mountaineering	5	5
Bowls	4	2
<b>Angling</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>
Badminton	3	22
Sailing and other water sports	2	2
Tennis	2	18
Yoga	2	0.5
Athletics	1	22
Basketball/Netball/Volleyball	1	37
Horse riding	1	5
Ice skating/Ice hockey	1	10
Martial arts	1	6
Rugby	1	11
Skiing	1	3
Squash	1	3
Table tennis	1	8
Gymnastics	0.7	17
Curling	0.5	0.6
Hockey	0.5	18
Cricket	0.4	4
Judo	0.1	1
<b>Base:</b>	<b>6,166</b>	<b>996</b>

Figures are from a representative sample of households in mainland Scotland participating during the four weeks prior to interview in the most popular two months for each sport, cumulated over 1999-2001.

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- 11      Something of an urban (or rural) myth has spread in the media, where angling is regularly quoted as being 'the most popular participant sport'. This may have derived from a Sports Council and National Anglers' Council review of angling which claimed (1991, p3) that "Angling is a sport which commands arguably a

greater number of participants than any other"<sup>3</sup>. This was as erroneous then as it is now. Scottish data have consistently shown that angling is not one of the top ten most popular participant sports, as do the figures for sports participation throughout Great Britain from the more rigorous General Household Surveys. Nevertheless, as one of the few sports with more than one per cent of the adult population taking part, angling is a substantial sport in terms of participation.

## Social Profile

12 National samples of the general population such as those in the Scottish Opinion and General Household Surveys are the only means of obtaining meaningful figures on participation in sport, and for the following profile of anglers this has resulted in a reasonable sample size of 431 adult participants and a smaller sample of 90 child participants (Table 3). Some margin of error must be assumed, particularly for children. (For more details of the survey, see the box on 'Source'.)

**Table 3: Social Profile of Anglers 1999-2001 and Scottish Population 2000**

Social Profile	Adult anglers	Scottish population	Child anglers	Scottish population
	% of adults (16+)		% of children (8-15)	
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	92	47	86	51
Female	8	53	14	49
<b>Age</b>				
16-24	16	14		
25-34	23	17		
35-54	42	36		
55+	20	33		
<b>Social class<sup>4</sup></b>				
AB	20	19	11	19
C1	28	26	20	26
C2	26	22	26	22
DE	26	33	43	33
<i>Base<sup>5</sup>:</i>	<i>431</i>	<i>4.077m</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>0.518m</i>

<sup>3</sup> Sports Council and National Anglers' Council (1991) *Angling. An independent review of the sport of angling commissioned by the Sports Council and the National Anglers' Council*, p3. London: Sports Council.

<sup>4</sup> AB Higher and intermediate managerial, administrative and professional.

C1 Supervisory, clerical and junior managerial, administrative and professional.

C2 Skilled manual workers.

DE Semi-skilled or unskilled manual workers; apprentices in skilled trades; casual or lowest grade workers; state pensioners or widowers; those entirely dependent on the state long term through sickness, unemployment, old age or other reasons

<sup>5</sup> The base numbers in Tables 3 and 4 are the all-year figures (not just the two most popular months) over the three-year period for those who reported they had been angling during the four weeks prior to interview.

- 13 Angling is overwhelmingly a male sport: 92 per cent of adult anglers were men and 86 per cent of child (8-15) anglers were boys.
- 14 Angling is far more inclusive in terms of both age and social class. Participation was representative of the Scottish population through all adult age groups under 55 and although 20 per cent of anglers were aged 55+ compared with 33 per cent of the population, angling is much more of an activity for all ages than most sports. Similarly, the social class profile of anglers was fairly close to that of the overall population – a level of inclusiveness that is achieved by few other sports.
- 15 Twenty-nine per cent of adult anglers and a smaller proportion (18%) of child anglers were members of an angling club (Table 4).

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**Table 4: Club Membership of Anglers**

<b>Club membership</b>	<b>Adult anglers</b>	<b>Child anglers</b>
Percentage of respondents		
Yes	29	18
No	71	82
<i>Base</i> <sup>5</sup> :	431	61

- 16 About a third of anglers – 32 per cent of adults and 39 per cent of children – took part at least once a week during the most popular two months of the year for angling (Table 5).

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**Table 5: Frequency of Participation in Angling in the Season**

<b>Frequency (most popular 2 mos)</b>	<b>Adult anglers</b>	<b>Child anglers</b>
Percentage of respondents		
Less than once a week	68	61
Once a week	10	15
Up to twice a week	12	12
More than twice a week	10	12
<i>Base</i> <sup>6</sup> :	210	41

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<sup>6</sup> For frequency, only those who took part during the most popular two months have been included, on the assumption that 'off-season' frequency may be different from that at the most popular period of the year.

## SECTION 3: PROFILE OF CLUBS

- 17 In the summer of 1999 Edinburgh University undertook a major survey of clubs in Scotland on behalf of **sportscotland**. This section gives a selection of key results for angling clubs compared with all clubs in the survey. A total of 88 completed questionnaires were received out of 214 sent to angling clubs, a response rate of 41%. The response rate for all clubs in the survey was 36%.

### Year Established

- 18 Few (5%) angling clubs were older than a 100 years, but a quarter (26%) of the extant clubs were established in their present form in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The dynamic nature of club development is indicated by the fact that a quarter were established in the last 20 years.

*In which year was your club established in its present form?*

	<b>Angling</b>	<b>All Clubs</b>
Percentage of responding clubs		
Pre-1900	5	15
1900-1949	26	19
1950-1969	28	12
1970-1979	17	14
1980-1989	8	17
1990-1999	17	23
<i>Base</i> <sup>7</sup> :	78	3,038

### Governing Body Affiliation

- 19 Compared to sports clubs generally, a relatively high proportion (22%) of the angling clubs were not affiliated to one of the three governing bodies.

*Is your club affiliated to the governing body?*

	<b>Angling</b>	<b>All Clubs</b>
Percentage of responding clubs		
Yes	78	91
No	22	9
<i>Base</i> :	87	3,462

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<sup>7</sup> Here and throughout, the 'Base' figure is the number of clubs who gave a reply to that question.

## Competition

20 Probably related to the issue of affiliation, a similar proportion (22%) of clubs did not take part in any external competitions.

*Does your club take part in any external competition events, matches or leagues?*

	<b>Angling</b>	<b>All Clubs</b>
	Percentage of responding clubs	
Yes	78	88
No	22	12
Base:	88	3,450

## Membership

### Membership Numbers

21 Angling clubs varied considerably in terms of membership numbers. Over a third (40%) were small with under 40 members and a similar proportion (35%) were large with 100+ members. The average was 123 members.

*What is the total membership of your club? (Including players, non-players and social members)*

	<b>Angling</b>	<b>All Clubs</b>
Average mean no.	123	133
Base:	86	3,396

### Adult/Junior and Male/Female Playing<sup>8</sup> Membership

22 Three-quarters (74%) of the clubs catered for junior anglers. Only just over half (53%) included female anglers.

*Are there adult and junior **playing** members in your club?*

	<b>Angling</b>	<b>All Clubs</b>
	Percentage of responding clubs	
Adult and junior playing members	62	55
Only adult playing members	26	30
Only junior playing members	12	15
Base:	81	3,217

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<sup>8</sup> 'Playing' in the context of angling simply meant actually taking part in angling.

Are there male and female **playing** members in your club?

	<b>Angling</b>	<b>All Clubs</b>
	Percentage of responding clubs	
Male and female playing members	52	66
Only male playing members	47	28
Only female playing members	1	6
<i>Base:</i>	81	3,240

## Membership Involvement

23 Three-quarters (73%) of the members were mainly involved in recreational angling rather than taking part in competitions.

*Approximately what percentage of members are...*

	<b>Angling</b>	<b>All Clubs</b>
	Average percentage for all responding clubs	
...involved mainly in external matches/competitions/events?	25	48
...involved mainly in recreational sport?	73	44
...non-sports players/social members?	3	8
<i>Base:</i>	71	3,002

## Waiting List/Concessions

24 A fifth (22%) of the angling clubs had a waiting list for membership.

25 Concessionary rates for various groups were offered by two-thirds (67%); three-quarters of these did so for those on benefits (76%) and for children (75%).

	<b>Angling</b>	<b>All Clubs</b>
	Percentage of responding clubs that offered <b>any</b> concessions	
Those on benefits or low-waged (eg, senior citizens, unemployed)	76	54
Children	75	68
Students	12	39
Families and couples	10	24
Others	17	18
<i>Base (clubs with any concessionary rates):</i>	59	2,035
Multiple responses, so figures sum to more than 100%		

## Change in Membership Numbers

26 More clubs reported an increase (31%) in numbers of members than a decrease (20%).

*In the past five years, has membership of your club...*

	<b>Angling</b>	<b>All Clubs</b>
	Percentage of responding clubs	
...stayed the same?	48	38
...increased?	31	35
...decreased?	20	26
Don't know	1	1
<i>Base:</i>	86	3,353

## Change in Membership Age

27 Another fairly simple indicator of the health of clubs is whether they are attracting new young members. Only three per cent of angling clubs reported a decrease in the average age of their members compared with 38 per cent who reported an increase.

*In the past five years, would you say that the average age of the members of your club has...*

	<b>Angling</b>	<b>All Clubs</b>
	Percentage of responding clubs	
...stayed the same?	55	43
...increased?	38	40
...decreased?	3	15
Don't know	5	2
<i>Base:</i>	88	3,359

## Club Issues

28 A large majority (91%) of the clubs noted that there were issues that concerned them. Half or more of these were concerned about attracting new and retaining existing members. Reflecting the response to the previous question, most (81%) of the clubs who reported issues were concerned about attracting junior members.

*Are any of the following [see list below] an issue in your club?*

	<b>Angling</b>	<b>All Clubs</b>
	Percentage of responding clubs	
Yes	91	94
No	9	6
<i>Base:</i>	87	3,409

If YES, those identified as issues:	<b>Angling</b>	<b>All Clubs</b>
	Percentage of responding clubs that identified any issue	
Attracting new junior members	81	68
Attracting new senior members	59	55
Attracting women members	56	41
Retaining existing members	48	54
General shortage of volunteers	39	50
Attracting family members	25	25
Financial difficulties or uncertainties	24	41
Shortage of volunteers/staff with management skills	22	29
Shortage of volunteers/staff with technical skills	10	33
Recruiting paid staff (eg, managers, coaches)	3	10
Other issues	13	10
<i>Base (respondents identifying any issue):</i>	<i>79</i>	<i>3,199</i>
Multiple responses, so figures sum to more than 100%		

## Sources of Income

29 Membership fees were the main source of income for three-quarters (77%) of the angling clubs. Fundraising, other fees and grants were the main sources for small proportions of the clubs.

*What has been the main source of the club's income over the last 12 months?*

	<b>Angling</b>	<b>All Clubs</b>
	Percentage of responding clubs	
Membership fees (incl pay & play, casual, day tickets)	77	56
Fundraising	6	15
Match or game fees	5	5
Grants	4	3
Other	8	21
<i>Base</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>3,025</i>

## SECTION 4: FACILITIES FOR ANGLING

### Facility Supply

- 30 Angling is dependent on Scotland's extensive natural resources of sea, lochs and rivers, although a number of waters have been developed and stocked.
- 31 The National Centre for Game Angling opened at Loch Leven in 2001, including competition facilities and provision for disabled anglers.

### Facility Ownership and Problems for Angling Clubs

- 32 The following information is taken from the national survey of sports clubs in 1999 also used in the previous section.

#### Facility Ownership

- 33 Not surprisingly, most (70%) clubs described the waters they used as outdoor/natural resources. A number fished in waters they owned themselves (20%), or were owned by the local authority (15%) or commercial operators (12%).

*Who owns the facilities where your club usually plays/competes/participates?*

	<b>Angling</b>	<b>All Clubs</b>
	Percentage of responding clubs	
Outdoor/natural resources	70	13
Facility owned by the club	20	30
Local authority leisure facilities	15	42
Commercial leisure, health or sport facilities	12	7
Facilities owned by another club	6	8
School facilities	0	15
University or college facilities	0	4
National training centre	0	2
Other facility or location	27	12
<i>Base:</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>3,320</i>

Multiple responses, so figures sum to more than 100%

#### Facility Problems

- 34 Only 17 per cent of the clubs stated that their fishing was held back by facility problems. These included a quarter of those who described their facilities as natural resources.

*Is the development of your club's playing/training held back by any problems with facilities? (Proportion responding 'yes' by type of ownership of facilities used.)*

	<b>Angling</b>		<b>All Clubs</b>	
	<i>%</i>	<i>Base</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Base</i>
Percentage of responding clubs using each ownership type				
All types of ownership	17	82	43	3,365
Outdoor/natural resources	25	55	50	501

*Base: Number of responding clubs using each type of water ownership*

35 The only problem raised by a significant proportion of clubs – and only by a tenth (11%) – was the lack of local accessibility of suitable waters.

*Which of the following problems affect the facilities your club uses?*

	<b>Angling</b>	<b>All Clubs</b>
	Percentage of responding clubs	
The facilities are not available locally	11	13
The facilities are too expensive	7	22
The facilities are of poor quality	4	20
The facilities are not available when needed	2	19
The facilities have inflexible management	1	10
<i>Base:</i>	82	3,365
Multiple responses		