

# Profiles of water-oriented outdoor recreation groups in Denmark

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## Background

Water-oriented outdoor recreation plays an important role in a small country with intensive land use and limited terrestrial nature areas. The extensive coastal areas represent the main 'wilderness' areas and are very diverse ranging from the Wadden Sea tidal areas, and sandy beaches of the North Sea to more protected waters, islands and fjords towards the Baltic Sea. This provides opportunities for many different recreation activities. The Danish coastlines are over 8000 km long and generally publicly accessible. Most of the population lives in coastal municipalities in Denmark and hereby have opportunities for water-oriented recreation within close proximity. But what types of water-oriented recreation appeal to different people? Who are the underwater recreationists? Who are the beachcombers?

## Aim

The paper aims at drawing profiles of the different groups participating in different types of water-oriented outdoor recreation in Denmark in relation to a number of socio-demographic variables.

A deeper understanding of the different user groups, their profiles, and their spatial distribution are important aspects of management in e.g. marine and coastal areas.

## Methodology

The analyses are based on data from a national mapping and documentation of water-oriented recreation within the adult population in Denmark. A dual approach of crowd-sourced PPGIS and a nationally representative survey combined with the mapping tool was used for data collection. In total, 92 different water-oriented recreation activities classified into 16 main types were included in the study. The large representative sample of 10,291 valid responses provides novel and in-depth insight into participation in even smaller activities rarely studied in a national context.

Water-oriented outdoor recreation was defined broadly as all outdoor recreation activities in which water was part of the recreation experience (e.g. passive activities like taking a walk along the seashore) as well as the classical water activities (swimming, boating etc.). All activities had to be undertaken within the past year in Denmark.

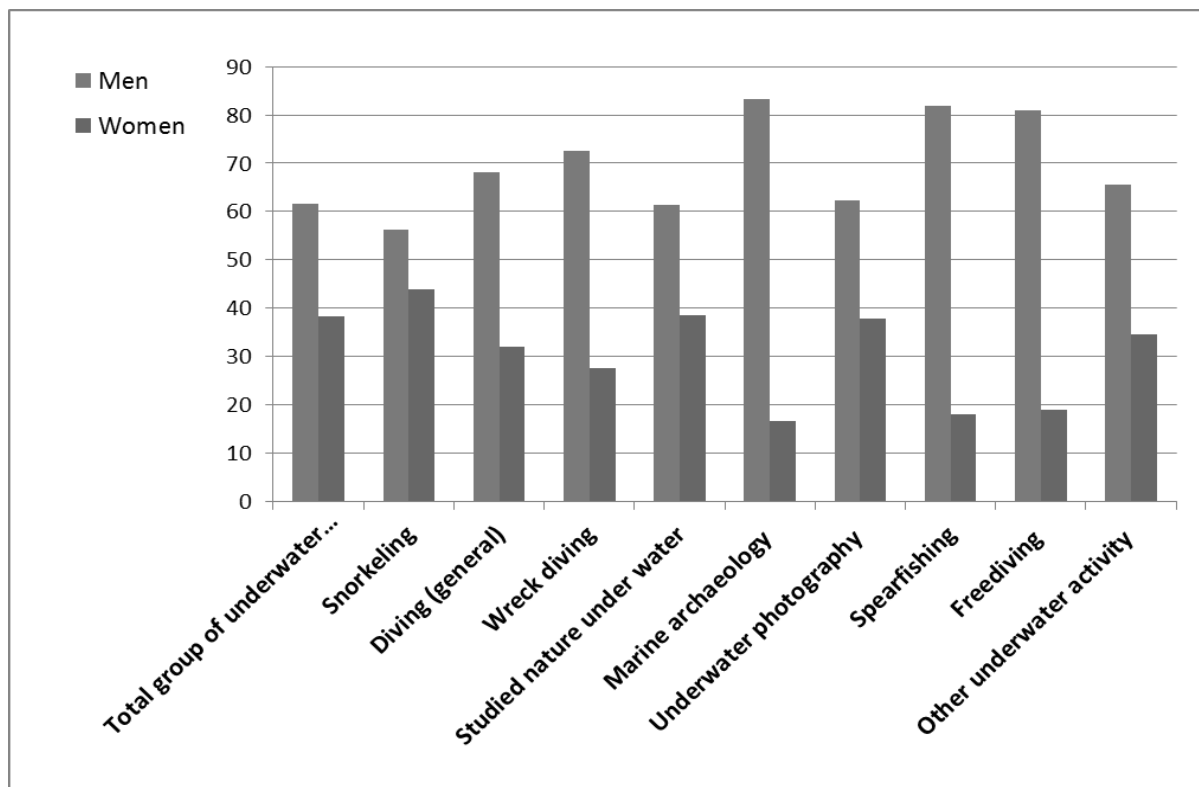
## Results

Results show that 77.6 % of the adult population annually participates in water-oriented recreation in Denmark with women having an overall higher participation than men. All 92 different activities had users hereby showing a very diverse activity pattern. The results indicate significant differences in the water-oriented activities in relation to a number of socio-demographic variables. Some activities were found to have very significant gender differences with fishing, hunting, boating and diving being highly male dominated. For most activities, the participation declined with age while a few activities increased indicating a shift from more physically demanding to 'softer' activities.

Based on the extensive and nationally representative data, profiles will be drawn of the different main user groups (and in some cases sub-groups) to illustrate who the users are. Also, the innovative mapping approach provides novel insight into the spatial distribution of the recreation activities of the different user groups. This may also contribute to the profiling of the groups.

## Conclusions

The overall profiles of water-oriented recreationists in Denmark will be presented and similarities and differences be discussed. The implications of the methodology, mapping and profiling of the water-oriented user groups for planning and management in marine and coastal areas will be discussed.



**The figure** shows the **gender differences in underwater recreation** (one of the 16 different main categories of water-oriented recreation in the national study in Denmark comprising 92 different water-oriented outdoor recreation activities) for the overall category and within the 8 sub-activities of this activity. (n = 401 for underwater recreation). This illustrates how underwater recreation is generally a male-dominated activity but has large gender variation among sub-activities.

Kaae, B.C., Olafsson, A.S. & Draux, H. (2018) Blåt friluftsliv i Danmark (Blue recreation in Denmark). IGN Rapport Februar 2018. Institut for Geovidenskab og Naturforvaltning, Københavns Universitet, 169 s. ill

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