



Flemish running events in international perspective: participant profile, motivation and attitudes

Results based on the European RUN for HEALTH project

Kobe Helsen
Jeroen Scheerder

With the cooperation of
Kostas Alexandris
Paul Hover

Policy in Sports & Physical Activity Research Group
KU Leuven

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CHAPTER 1. BACKGROUND

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1.1. Mission and objectives



Mission and objectives of the RUN for HEALTH project

1. Investigate how running can be used to promote health-enhancing physical activity and social welfare from a broad perspective (e.g. management, marketing, policy, communication).
2. Investigate participants' motivation, attitudes, retention, physical activity levels, well-being and socio demographics.
3. Study indicative examples of successful European running events in five European countries to identify key factors for maximizing the benefits and propose strategies for successful organising running events.
4. Develop guidelines and policy recommendations for the organization of running events (see also Helsen et al., 2020; Hover et al., 2020).
5. Develop a proposal with best practices which will be used as educational material for sports and event managements students.
6. Stimulate (inter)national exchanges between, among others, event organisers and policy-makers.
7. Increase awareness among the general population about the benefits (health and social) of participating in running events.

See also www.runforhealth.eu

1.2. Research consortium



- Funded by Erasmus+ programme (European Commission): 2019-2020 (2 years project)
- Coordinator: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece)
- Partners: Breda University of Applied Sciences (the Netherlands), European Association for Sport Management, European Culture and Sport Organization (Italy), KU Leuven (Belgium), Lithuanian Sports University (Lithuania), Mulier Institute (the Netherlands)



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1.2. Research consortium



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 - Peter van Eldert

1.3. Project design



WP1: Project management

- Develop plan for activities and roles

WP2: Dissemination

- Disseminate end products

WP3: Quality control and impact evaluation

- Critical evaluation/monitoring of activities and progress

WP4: Field research

- Data collection (interviews, surveys, observations)

WP5: Study successful events

- Best practices of organising events

WP6: Develop guidelines (good practice and policy recommendation)

- Summarise and propose recommendations/ strategies

1.4. Reading guide and aims of SPM72



Reading guide

As an **introduction**, Chapter 2 presents the evolution and trends of running and running events, as well as advantages of participation in running events.

Chapter 3 provides information on the **context and procedure** of the data that is collected for the RUN for HEALTH project in general, and the data that is used for this SPM Report in particular.

The **results of the quantitative data** collection are presented in Chapter 4, which covers the largest part in this SPM Report. In this Chapter, the Flemish (Belgium) event runner is compared with event runners in the four other European countries (Greece, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands) from different perspectives.

The **conclusion** of this report can be found in Chapter 5.

Aims of this SPM72 Report

The aim of this report is to provide **in-depth insights** for event stakeholders in Flanders (Belgium). Based on the presented results, interested parties get an overview of the profile of Flemish event participants and how this differs from their European counterparts. This enables stakeholders **to tailor and shape their policy** accordingly.



CHAPTER 2. INTRODUCTION

- [2.1.](#) Participatory running events
- [2.2.](#) Benefits of participatory running events



2.1. PARTICIPATORY RUNNING EVENTS



- Participatory sports events (PSEs) have two important characteristics
 - “open-entry events” (Crofts, Schofield & Dickson, 2012b, p. 149): meaning everyone can participate (both elite and non-elite participants)
 - With a particular focus on “promoting participation and engagement rather than the sporting outcome” (Coleman & Ramchandani, 2010, p. 25): meaning the events are not tied to an ongoing competition
- PSEs come in different shapes and sizes. Common PSEs are in running, cycling, swimming and quite recently in triathlon and walking as well (Crofts et al., 2012b; Lane et al., 2010)
 - This SPM Study 80 focuses on the participatory running events



- Two (/Three?) waves of running
 - Wave 0: <1960, mainly practiced by competitive athletes in track and field clubs
↓ *cultural revolution, informalisation, fitness revolution*
 - Wave 1: 1960s and 1970s, running/jogging as recreational pastime activity (*yuppies* as early adopters), from USA to Europe, from marathon to other distances, stagnation in 1990s
↓ *democratisation*
 - Wave 2: 2000s, new segments (women, middle-aged), completing > competing (Van Bottenburg, Scheerder & Hover, 2010)
↓ *experiences*
 - Wave 3 (?): today, younger runners, special running events (fun run, urban trail, color run, obstacle run, etc.)
- In 2013, there were approximately 50 million runners in the European Union (Breedveld, Scheerder, & Borgers, 2015)

Based on Scheerder, Breedveld & Borgers (2015b)



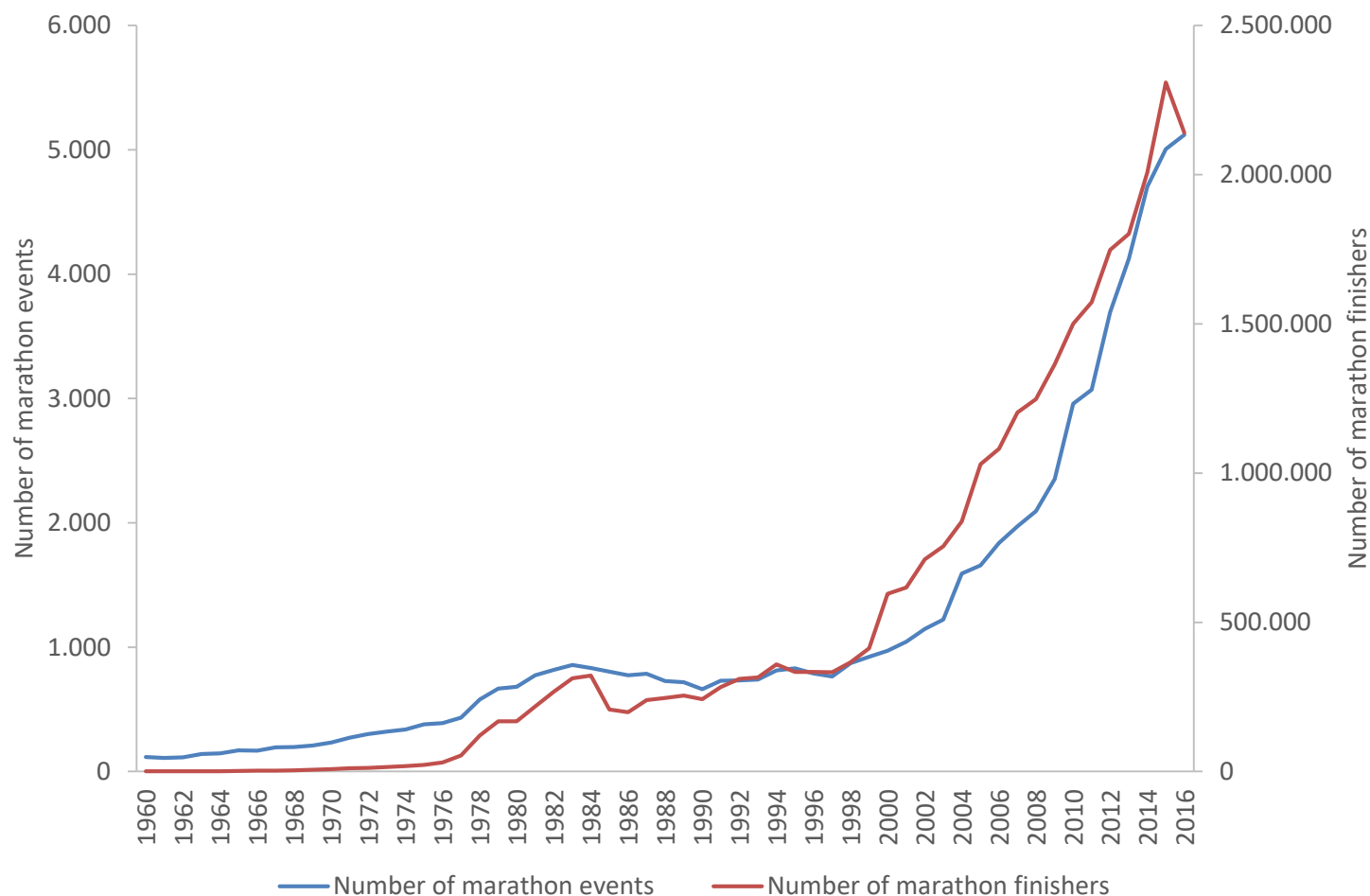
- Originally, people ran in track and field clubs on athletics tracks
- Along the way, running was also practiced on public roads and other public spaces
- These *light* forms of running prevented people from having to join clubs to practice running
- Running events are very popular examples of *light* running and increased in popularity since the 1970s
- Numbers suggest the existence of two waves of running events as well (see Figure 2.1)
 - These two waves followed the waves of running
 - Worldwide, there were approximately 200 organised marathons in the 1970s. This increased to almost 1,000 in 1984. After a period of stagnation, the number of marathons increased again at the turn of the century to more than 4,000 marathons in 2013
 - Apart from the popularity of marathon distances, shorter distances have gained in popularity as well
- Figure 2.1 suggests the very strong increase in participants of marathon events. However, scholars argue participation in running events is declining in recent years (e.g. Andersen, 2020; Kennedy et al., 2019)

Based on Scheerder, Breedveld & Borgers (2015b)

Participatory running events



Figure 2.1. Evolution of the number of marathon events and marathon finishers worldwide, 1960-2016



Source: adapted by authors' own calculations from Scheerder et al. (2015b, p. 9), based on www.arrs.run



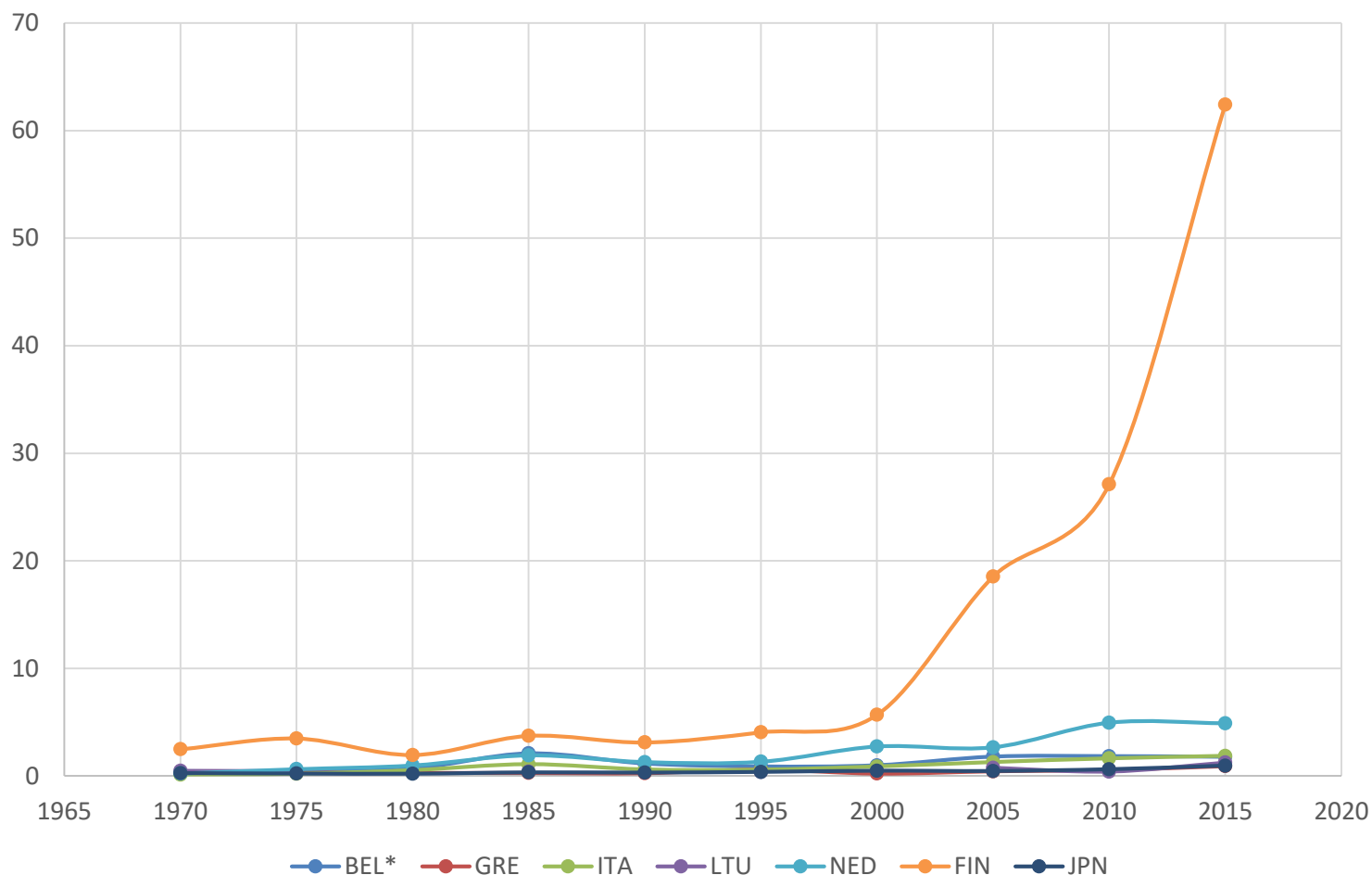
- For this project, data was collected at running events in five European countries (see also paragraph 3.1. Context and procedure). Figures 2.2 and 2.3 show the number of marathon events and number of marathon finishers in the respective countries
- Both Finland and Japan are included as well:
 - Some data were collected in Finland as well (see paragraph 3.1. Context and procedure)
 - As Asian countries are upcoming running nations, Japan is included as benchmark
- Figure 2.2 presents the evolution of the number of marathon events, with a correction for the population aged 18 years and older, in the respective countries
 - Results show the highest number of marathons per one million inhabitants in Finland for each year with a remarkable increase since 2000
 - Greece and Japan show the lowest numbers (each less than one for each year) with Belgium* scoring slightly higher
- Figure 2.3 presents the evolution of the number of marathon event finishers, with a correction for the population aged 18 years and older, in the respective countries
 - The six European countries mainly follow the two waves of running with Finland again showing highest numbers (for the number of marathon event finishers per one million inhabitants) and Belgium* as second lowest
 - Numbers show a remarkable increase for Japan from 2000 onwards

* In comparison with the remainder of the report, numbers of Belgium (not only Flanders) are shown here

Participatory running events



Figure 2.2. Evolution of the number of marathon events, 1970-2015 (per 1,000,000 inhabitants aged 18 and over)



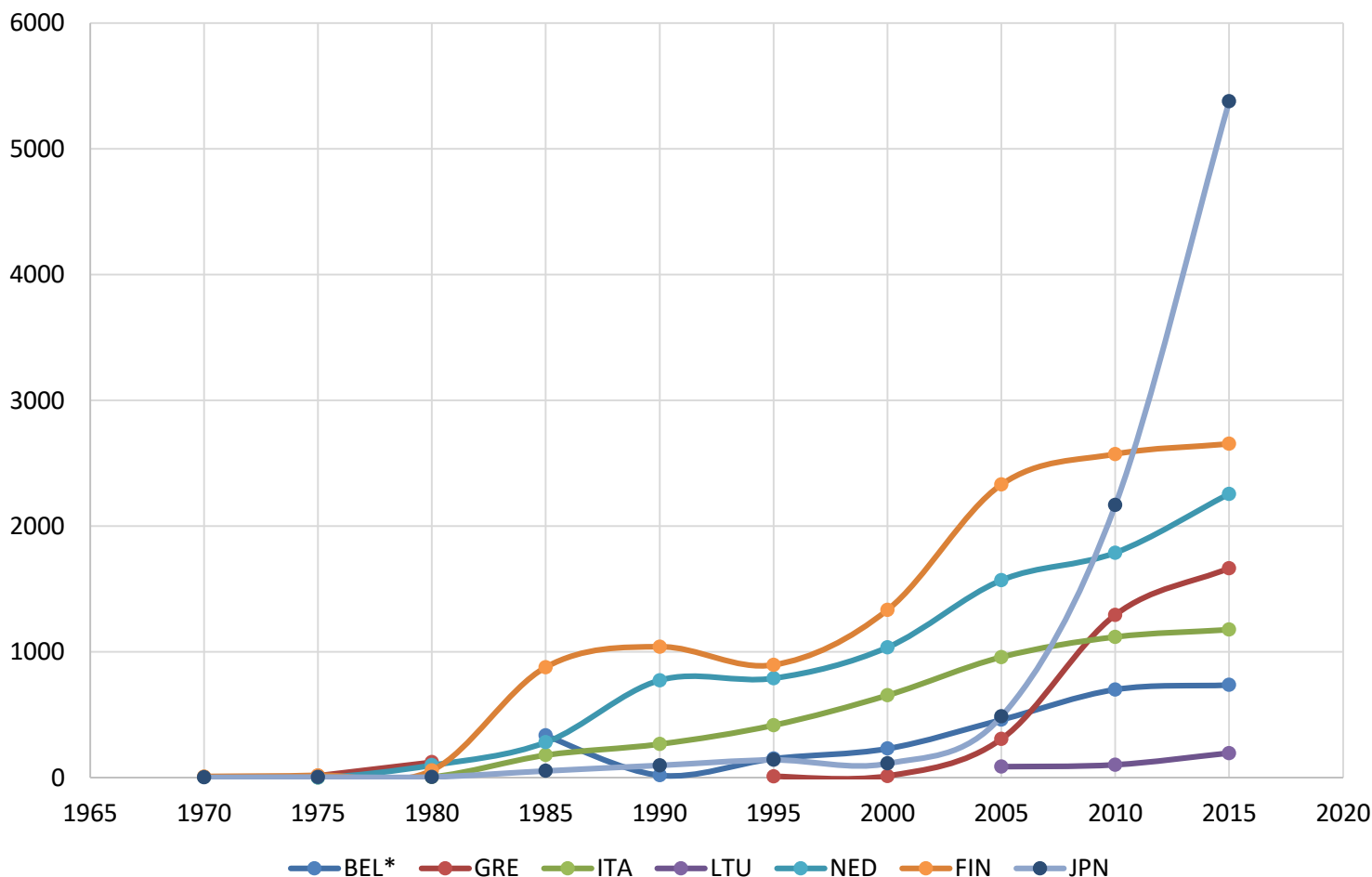
Source: adapted by authors' own calculations based on www.arrs.run

* In comparison with the remainder of the report, numbers of Belgium (not only Flanders) are shown here

Participatory running events



Figure 2.3. Evolution of the number of marathon finishers, 1970-2015 (per 1,000,000 inhabitants aged 18 and over)



Source: adapted by authors' own calculations based on www.arrs.run

* In comparison with the remainder of the report, numbers of Belgium (not only Flanders) are shown here

Participatory running events

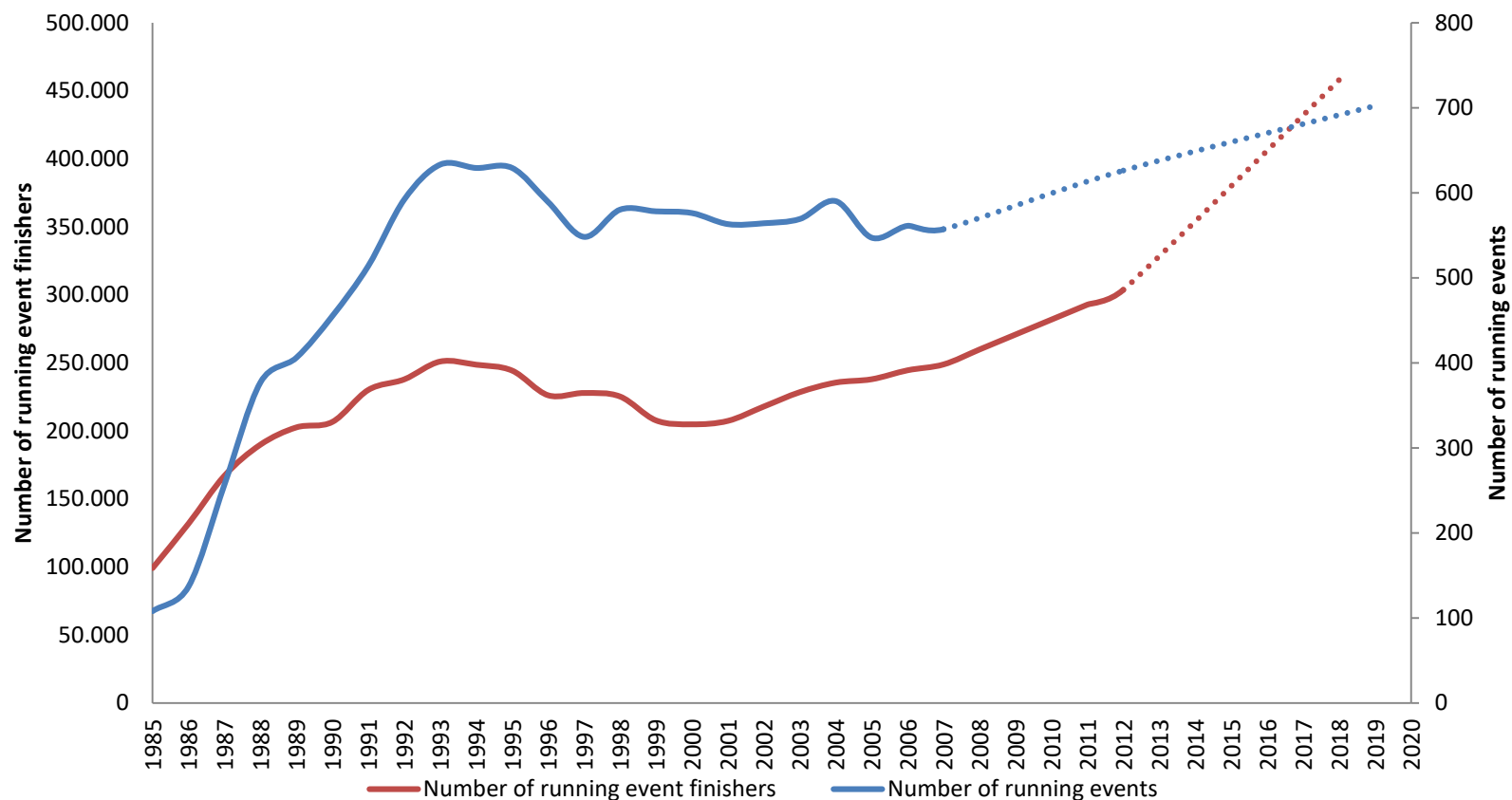


- Figure 2.4 presents the evolution of number of organised running events and number of event finishers in Flanders. In 2019, around 700 running events were organised in Flanders. This number slightly increased after a decrease from 1995 onwards
- Figure 2.5 presents the evolution of number of organised running events and running event finishers in Japan. These data suggest a significant increase in both number of running events and finishers from 2007 onwards. Nowadays, more than ten million people participate in more than 2500 running events

Participatory running events



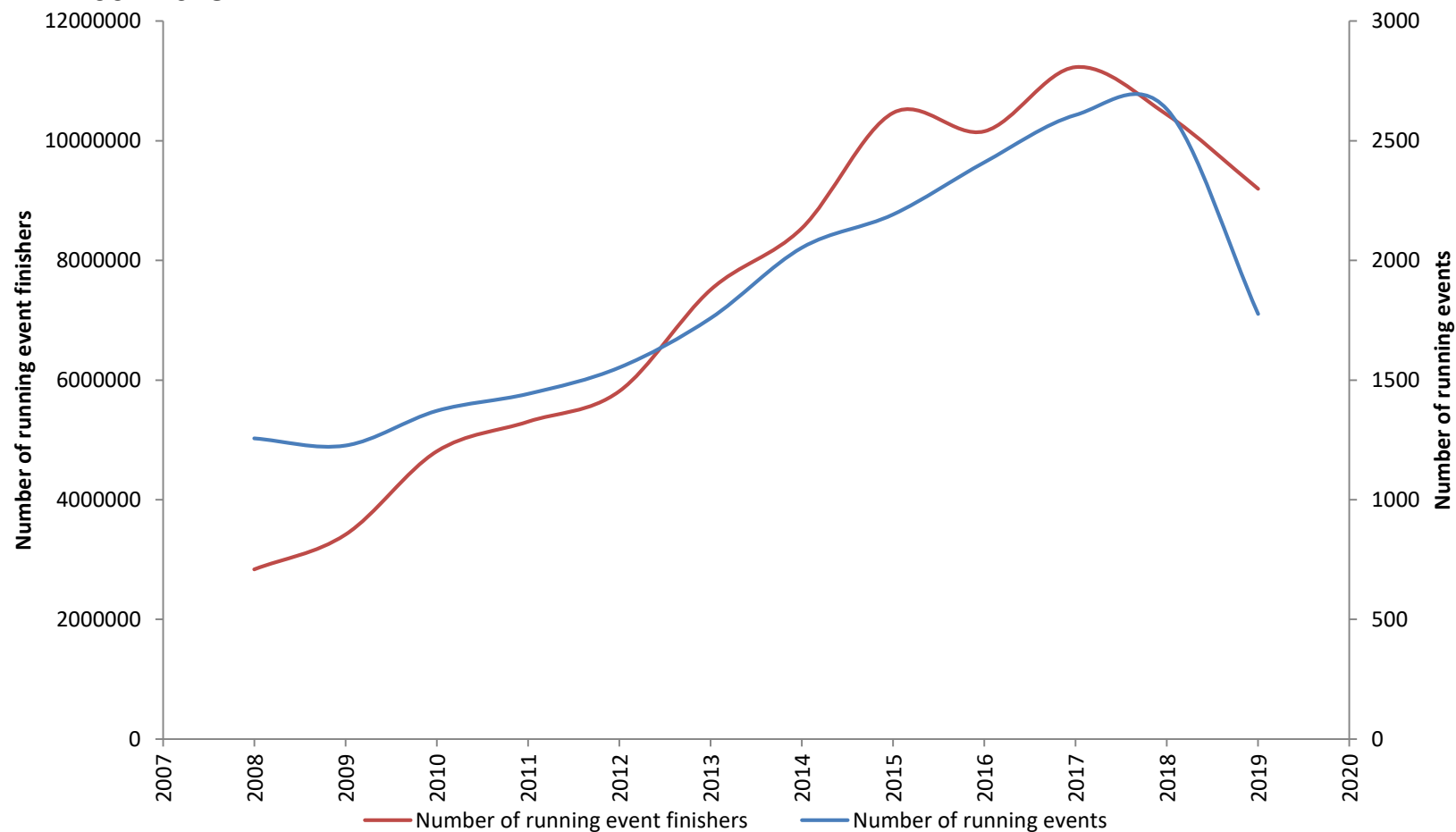
Figure 2.4. Evolution of the number of running events and running event finishers in Flanders (Belgium), 1985-2019



Source: adapted by authors' own calculations based on Scheerder et al (2015, p.36) and Scheerder & Noppe (2009)



Figure 2.5. Evolution of the number of running events and running event finishers in Japan, 2007-2018



Source: data was created with the cooperation of Ding Yi Wu (Waseda University, Japan)



2.2. BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATORY RUNNING EVENTS

Benefits of participatory running events



- Participatory running events entail advantages for different groups of stakeholders, such as participants, organisers, local authorities, suppliers, etc.
- The advantages can be classified in three groups
 1. Social effects, for example
 - Improved pride or sense of community among inhabitants
 - Development of social networks among participants and integration of vulnerable groups
 2. Health effects, for example
 - Increased levels of sports participation during event preparation
 - Increased levels of sports participation in post-event period (for some individuals)
 3. Economic effects, for example
 - Overnight stays as well as spending in bars and restaurants among participants
 - Delivering goods by local suppliers

Crofts et al., 2012b; Holmes et al., 2015; Hover et al., 2014; Huang et al., 2014; Misener & Mason, 2006; Sato et al., 2014; Scheerder et al., 2015a; Schoemaker et al., 2020; Wilks, 2013



CHAPTER 3. MATERIAL AND METHODS

- [3.1.](#) Context and procedure
- [3.2.](#) Respondents
- [3.3.](#) Instrument
- [3.4.](#) Data analyses



- Data are gathered in different ways regarding the RUN for HEALTH project:
 1. Online and on the field surveys among participants of more than 40 different running events in five* European countries (quantitative)
 2. Two semi-structured interviews with event stakeholders (e.g. event organiser, main sponsor, local sports governing body) for two or three running events in each of the five* European countries (qualitative)
 3. One semi-structured interview with a representative of the national athletics federation in six* different European countries (qualitative)
 4. Two participant observations for each of the five* European countries to map the participants' journey on a running event (qualitative)
- This report solely focuses on the online and on the field surveys (bullet point 1 above)

* Five countries include Belgium (Flanders), Greece, Italy, Lithuania and the Netherlands. The sixth country is Finland.



3.1. CONTEXT AND PROCEDURE



- Multi method design (see Table 3.1)
- Data collection: 28 April 2019 – 31 December 2019
- Via the Qualtrics software; the coordination of the software was assigned to Breda University of Applied Sciences. Unique weblinks were created that could be distributed to the event organisers (as regards the online data collection)

Table 3.1. Multi method design

1. Online	2. On the field (post-race; PR)
Email	Paper and pencil
By event organiser	By research team
As soon as possible after event	At finish line
Extended instrument (38 questions)	Shortened instrument (11 questions)
Networks and convenience sampling: event organisers willing to cooperate	Convenience sampling: any available person (strive for 50/50 gender ratio)
Belgium (Flanders), Greece, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands	Belgium (Flanders)



3.2. RESPONDENTS



- In total, 10168 respondents completed (a part of) the online questionnaire
 - 7476 respondents completed the whole questionnaire
 - 8411 respondents completed at least half of the questionnaire
- In total, 875 respondents completed the post-race questionnaire
- Tables 3.2 – 3.7 provide additional information for the events that are included in this research
- Events were selected based on
 1. Time frame: events between April 2019 and December 2019
 2. Convenience sample: good contacts between researchers of the project team and event organisers
 3. While aiming for diversity: variety of events based on size (small and mass participation), offered distances (from 5km or lower to marathon distances), national reputation (image and media coverage: national/international), location (city streets, nature) (see also Alexandris et al., 2019)



Table 3.2. Information for Flemish (Belgian) running events that are part of this research (1/2)

Event	Date	Data collection (O/PR)	Distances (in km)	# finishers	# respondents	Organiser
AG Antwerp 10 Miles & Marathon	28/04/2019	O/PR	1, 5, 16.1, 42.2	29230	687	Golazo
Fintro Knokke 10K	01/05/2019	PR	1, 5, 10	1789	33	Golazo
Great Breweries Marathon	12/05/2019	O/PR	25, 42.2	2184	101	Golazo
Fintro Dwars door Brugge	12/05/2019	O	1, 5, 15	4059	16	Golazo
20km door Brussel	19/05/2019	PR	20	30058	84	S.I. Brussels Promotion vzw
Fintro Stadsloop De Gentenaar	19/05/2019	O	5, 10	1926	20	Golazo
Lampiris Abdijentocht	30/05/2019	O/PR	16	2051	107	Golazo
Keytrade Bank Hasselt Urban Trail	10/06/2019	O/PR	6, 10	3000*	86	Golazo
Fintro Kortrijk Loopt voor Think-Pink	10/06/2019	O	5, 11	2495	61	Golazo
Keytrade Bank Brussels Urban Trail	23/06/2019	O/PR	5, 11	3000*	60	Golazo
Runners' Lab Midzomernachtrun	28/06/2019	O	5, 10, 15	1866	73	Golazo
Fintro The Classic	10/07/2019	O	1, 4, 10	2190	30	Golazo
Baalse Kermisloop	26/07/2019	PR	5, 10	177	23	Sportdienst Tremelo
Jogging Bogaarden	27/07/2019	PR	5, 15	125	15	Dorpscomité Bogaarden
Beleef Tongeren	10/08/2019	PR	6	200	20	Sportdienst Tongeren
Dwars door Zaventem	15/08/2019	PR	1, 5, 11, 21.5	400	29	Sportdienst Zaventem

* An exact number was not provided online by the organiser. As these events were sold out, the maximum capacity is included.

Note. O = online; PR = post-race



Table 3.3. Information for Flemish (Belgian) running events that are part of this research (2/2)

Event	Date	Data collection (O/PR)	Distances (in km)	# finishers	# respondents	Organiser
B.In.Kom-Run	24/08/2019	PR	4, 7, 14	117	21	Music Band Con Brio
Leuven Night Run	24/08/2019	PR	3, 10	3000*	17	Tofsport Leuven
Spartacus Thor	15/09/2019	O	2, 7, 12	1381	38	Golazo
Holle Wegen Jogging	21/09/2019	PR	5, 9, 14	552	25	Holle Wegen Jogging vzw
KBC Brussels Night Run	21/09/2019	O/PR	7	5500	26	Golazo
Lampiris Leuven Nature Trail	22/09/2019	O/PR	12, 16, 25	1029	28	Golazo
BoslandTrail	27/09/2019	O	50, 10	3000	47	BoslandTrail vzw
Fintro Dwars door Mechelen	29/09/2019	PR	1, 5, 10	2462	37	Golazo
Brussels Airport Marathon & Half Marathon	06/10/2019	O	1, 6.5, 21.1, 42.2	6938	95	Golazo
HBvL Dwars door Hasselt	13/10/2019	O/PR	1, 3, 5, 10, 15	7450	104	Golazo
Adecco Brussels Ekiden	19/10/2019	O/PR	relay	6007	118	Golazo
Athora Great Bruges Marathon	20/10/2019	O/PR	21.1, 42.2	4406	289	Golazo
Havenland Run – Night	02/11/2019	O/PR	8, 12	668	44	Golazo
Havenland Run – Day	03/11/2019	O/PR	8, 13.5, 23.5	868	31	Golazo
Keytrade Bank Urban Trail Brugge	10/11/2019	O/PR	6, 11	4000*	138	Golazo
Spartacus Koppenberg	17/11/2019	O	5, 10	852	125	Golazo
Keytrade Bank Urban Trail Mechelen	14/12/2019	O/PR	6, 10	4000*	77	Golazo
Eindejaarscorrida Leuven	31/12/2019	O	4, 8, 12	6108	257	DCLA
Eindejaarscorrida Gent	31/12/2019	O	5, 11	1427	54	Golazo

* An exact number was not provided online by the organiser. As these events were sold out, the maximum capacity is included.

Note. O = online; PR = post-race



Table 3.4. Information for Greek running events that are part of this research

Event	Date	Data collection (O/PR)	Distances (in km)	# finishers	# respondents	Organiser
RunTogether	13/10/2019	O	3, 6	400	81	Group of sponsors
Τρέχω για τη μνήμη - τρέχω για τη χαρά	08/10/2019	O	1, 5, 10	400	109	Municipality of Kalamaria
Athens Marathon – The Authentic	10/11/2019	O	1, 5, 10, 42.2	50000	4274	SEGAS

Table 3.5. Information for Italian running events that are part of this research

Event	Date	Data collection (O/PR)	Distances (in km)	# finishers	# respondents	Organiser
Mezza Maratona Di Chiavari	22/06/2019	O	7.5, 21.1	555	24	ASD Chiavari Tigullio Outdoor
Giro del Lago Campotosto	29/06/2019	O	12, 25	251 (only for 25km)	8	AS Podistica e Solidarietà + Polisportiva Campotosto
Maratonina di San Luigi	09/06/2019	O	10.2	303	5	AS Podistica e Solidarietà
Run 4 Health IV Edition	06/10/2019	O	3.5, 7	141 (only for 7km)	51	Azienda Sanitaria Locale ASL RM1
Roma Urbs Mundi	20/10/2019	O	5, 15	2758 (only for 15km)	70	Associazione Bancari Romani
Livorno Half Marathon	10/11/2019	O	10.6, 21.1	1012 (only for 21.1km)	11	ASD Livorno Marathon
Maratona di Ravenna	10/11/2019	O	21.1, 42.2	4526	28	Ravenna Runners Club ASD
Firenze Marathon	24/11/2019	O	42.2	7450	118	AS Firenze Marathon

Note. O = online; PR = post-race



Table 3.6. Information for Lithuanian running events that are part of this research

Event	Date	Data collection (O/PR)	Distances (in km)	# finishers	# respondents	Organiser
Birstono Pusmaratonis	04/05/2019	O	1.5, 5, 10, 21.1	2000	300	Association 'Savas miestas'
Olimpine Diena	01/06/2019	O	2, 5, 10	1300	83	Lithuanian National Olympic Committee
Citadele Kauno Maratonas	09/06/2019	O	1.5, 5, 10, 21.1, 42.2	4000	35	Kaunas marathon club

Table 3.7. Information for Dutch running events that are part of this research

Event	Date	Data collection (O/PR)	Distances (in km)	# finishers	# respondents	Organiser
Amersfoort Marathon	16/06/2019	O	2, 5, 10, 21.1, 42.2	4503	1372	Stichting Marathon Amersfoort
BrandLoyalty Vestingloop	26/05/2019	O	1, 5, 10, 15	6002	1458	Artishock events & marketing

Note. O = online; PR = post-race



3.3. INSTRUMENT



- The online instrument contained 38 questions, divided in five themes. It was constructed by the different project partners and mainly based on past (international) research:
 - 1) Past and current sports and running participation, past and current physical activity, and running involvement (Alexandris, 2016, based on Kyle et al., 2004; Scheerder & Boen, 2009)
 - 2) Event preparation (Derom, VanWynsberghe & Scheerder, 2015; Schoemaker, van Genderen & de Boer, 2020)
 - 3) Event evaluation, emotions and motivation (Alexandris et al., 2009; Salien et al., 2018; Scheerder & Boen, 2009)
 - 4) Future sports participation and physical activity (Schoemaker et al., 2020)
 - 5) Personal characteristics, including socio-demographics
- The post-race instrument contained eleven questions and is an abbreviated version of the online instrument, divided in four themes:
 - 1) Past sports and running participation, and physical activity (Scheerder & Boen, 2009)
 - 2) Event evaluation (Salien et al., 2018; Scheerder & Boen, 2009)
 - 3) Future sports and running participation, and physical activity (Schoemaker et al., 2020)
 - 4) Personal characteristics, including socio-demographics



3.4. DATA ANALYSES

- 3.4.1. Testing reliability of existing scales
-



- Outliers were corrected by means of z-scores for the open questions in the questionnaire (questions with non-closed answers). Z-scores larger than three or smaller than minus three were omitted from the results (indicated as missing)
- Further, the scales that were used from past research were tested for factorial validity and reliability by means of exploratory factor analyses and Cronbach's Alpha scores (see paragraph 3.4.1.)
- Finally, data are analysed by using descriptive analyses, including frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations
- Analyses are executed on all data (both online and post-race data, for all events of the countries), without using any weight coefficients. The European mean is calculated as mean of the individual country scores



3.4.1. TESTING RELIABILITY OF EXISTING SCALES



- INVOLVEMENT IN RUNNING (Alexandris, 2016; based on Kyle et al., 2004)
 - Based on past research, three involvement factors are expected. However, the exploratory PCA revealed only one factor (Eigenvalue > 1) explaining 59.6% of the variance
 - Therefore, Cronbach's Alpha scores were calculated to test for reliability of original involvement factors
 - Alpha scores were deemed reliable (ranging from 0.77 for self-expression to 0.89 for attraction)
- MOTIVATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RUNNING EVENT (abbreviated version of REP-scale; originally developed by Driver, 1977; 1983 and found reliable and valid by Alexandris et al., 2009; Manfreda et al., 1996)
 - Exploratory PCA revealed four factors (Eigenvalue > 1) explaining 68.2% of the variance. Two items were excluded because of factor loadings of more than 0.4 on multiple factors (see also Table 3.8; O'Rourke & Hatcher, 2013)
 - Alpha scores were deemed reliable (ranging from 0.76 for socialisation to 0.92 for health)



Table 3.8. Exploratory Principal Component Analysis with varimax rotation on motivation to participate in running events (N=7488)

Item	Factor loading			
	Achievement	Health	Competition	Socialisation
To feel a sense of achievement	0.753			
For the thrill of it	0.731			
To improve my self-esteem	0.656	0.340		
To improve my mood	0.650	0.376		
To have fun	0.594			0.400
To compete with myself	0.588		0.411	
To improve my health		0.921		
To get fit		0.902		
To adopt an active lifestyle		0.868		
To earn the respect of my peers			0.811	
Prove to others that I can do it			0.803	
To compete with others			0.723	
To interact with other runners				0.815
To be in a social environment				0.777
To run with friends/family				0.754
Eigenvalue	5.311	1.818	1.721	1.388
Explained variance	35.405	12.117	11.477	9.250
Cronbach's Alpha	0.812	0.924	0.769	0.763

Note. Items in bold are used in further analysis



CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

- [4.1.](#) Socio demographic characteristics
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- This chapter presents the results. Throughout this chapter, the Flemish (Belgian) event runner is compared with its counterparts in four other European countries
 - In the tables, the Flemish runner is always highlighted in red and countries are ordered in an alphabetical order
 - In the figures, the countries are ordered by the size of results
 - The European average is calculated as mean of the individual country scores (and thus no individual weighting of participants is applied)
- When interpreting the results of this chapter, the reader should keep in mind that the figures of a country refer to the data collected on a certain amount of events in that country. These events have their own characteristics (e.g. distance covered on the event, size of the event, etc.) and could therefore influence the results (see paragraph 3.2. Respondents for an overview of the running events in this research).



4.1. SOCIO DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS



- Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 present the socio demographic profiles of event runners for different distances that were covered on the running events
 - GENDER: in general, the share of male participants increases as the distance increases. For all distances, results show similar results between Flanders and the Netherlands
 - AGE: in general, more than half of event participants is middle aged (between 35 and 54 years). Just more than ten percent is older. Flanders has the second lowest percentage of event participants aged between 35 and 54 years (51.1%)
 - EDUCATIONAL STATUS: in general, higher educated individuals outnumber the lower educated individuals on all distances. The lower educated individuals are second most represented among event participants in Flanders (22.5%)
- Table 4.4 presents the total response on the one hand and the response including the covered distances on the other hand. As there is a significant loss of data (11043 respondents vs. 7366 respondents) when including the covered distances, the remainder of the report does not take into account the covered distances when analysing and interpreting the data (this is due to the fact that not every participant entered the covered distance of the event). In addition, only six respondents of Italian events participated in a short distance. Scientifically, it would not be correct make conclusions about six people

Table 4.1. Gender of event runners in different countries (in %)

		Average (N=5984)	Flanders (Belgium) (N=2555)	Greece (N=683)	Italy (N=206)	Lithuania (N=417)	The Netherlands (N=2123)
Short distance (N=1116)	Men	40.0	38.0	55.8	16.7	50.7	38.8
	Women	60.0	62.0	44.2	83.3	49.3	61.2
Medium distance (N=3120)	Men	60.3	55.9	62.4	64.0	62.4	57.0
	Women	39.7	44.1	37.6	36.0	37.6	43.0
Long distance (N=1748)	Men	73.0	70.3	80.6	72.8	69.9	71.3
	Women	27.0	29.7	19.4	27.2	30.1	28.7
Total (N=8406)	Men	62.4	57.9	71.0	67.0	60.7	55.2
	Women	37.6	42.1	29.0	33.0	39.3	44.8

Note. Items in italics: attention is needed as the number of cases is low (see Table 4.4)

Short distance $x \leq 5\text{km}$; Medium distance $5\text{km} < x < 16.2\text{ km}$; Long distance $x \geq 16.2\text{km}$

Socio demographic characteristics



Table 4.2. Age of event runners in different countries (in %)

		Average (N=5973)	Flanders (Belgium) (N=2539)	Greece (N=685)	Italy (N=210)	Lithuania (N=418)	The Netherlands (N=2121)
Short distance (N=1112)	18-34 years	38.3	33.6	45.1	<i>0.0</i>	70.5	42.2
	35-54 years	51.3	54.4	42.6	83.3	28.2	47.9
	55-74 years	10.5	12.0	12.3	<i>16.7</i>	1.3	9.9
Medium distance (N=3120)	18-34 years	37.0	36.6	32.7	12.8	70.7	32.5
	35-54 years	50.6	50.2	56.7	67.9	24.8	53.5
	55-74 years	12.3	13.2	10.7	19.2	4.5	14.0
Long distance (N=1748)	18-34 years	32.6	37.4	20.9	23.0	58.1	23.6
	35-54 years	55.2	52.1	68.1	56.3	40.4	59.2
	55-74 years	12.2	10.5	11.0	20.6	1.5	17.2
Total (N=8388)	18-34 years	35.5	36.5	21.9	19.2	66.5	33.2
	35-54 years	52.3	51.1	66.0	60.3	31.1	53.2
	55-74 years	12.2	12.4	12.1	20.5	2.4	13.6

Note. Items in italics: attention is needed as the number of cases is low (see Table 4.4)

Short distance $x \leq 5\text{km}$; Medium distance $5\text{km} > x < 16.2\text{ km}$; Long distance $x \geq 16.2\text{km}$



Table 4.3. Educational status of event runners in different countries (in %)

		Average (N=5910)	Flanders (Belgium) (N=2548)	Greece (N=654)	Italy (N=202)	Lithuania (N=410)	The Netherlands (N=2096)
Short distance (N=1078)	Secondary educ. or lower	24.6	20.6	22.5	<i>50.0</i>	16.3	13.4
	Higher educ.	75.4	79.4	77.5	<i>50.0</i>	83.7	86.6
Medium distance (N=3104)	Secondary educ. or lower	21.2	21.9	7.9	51.3	16.3	8.6
	Higher educ.	78.8	78.1	92.1	48.7	83.7	91.4
Long distance (N=1728)	Secondary educ. or lower	23.0	24.5	14.3	50.8	15.7	9.4
	Higher educ.	77.0	75.5	85.7	49.2	84.3	90.6
Total (N=8229)	Secondary educ. or lower	22.6	22.5	13.5	51.0	16.1	9.9
	Higher educ.	77.4	77.5	86.5	49.0	83.9	90.1

Note. Items in italics: attention is needed as the number of cases is low (see Table 4.4)

Short distance $x \leq 5\text{km}$; Medium distance $5\text{km} < x < 16.2 \text{ km}$; Long distance $x \geq 16.2\text{km}$



Table 4.4. Total response and response according to covered distances (N)

		Total	Flanders (Belgium)	Greece	Italy	Lithuania	The Netherlands
Response according to covered distances	Short distance	1412	311	226	6	149	720
	Medium distance	3756	1866	212	105	133	1440
	Long distance	2198	771	524	154	136	613
	SUM (RC)	7366	2948	962	265	418	2773
Total response	SUM (TR)	11043	3016	4464	315	418	2830
Loss of data	RC – TC	-3677	-68	-3502	-50	0	-57

Short distance $x \leq 5\text{km}$; Medium distance $5\text{km} > x < 16.2 \text{ km}$; Long distance $x \geq 16.2\text{km}$



4.2. SPORTS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BEHAVIOUR

- [4.2.1.](#) Popularity of sport
- [4.2.2.](#) Frequency sports participation
- [4.2.3.](#) Physical activity behaviour



4.2.1. POPULARITY OF SPORT



- In general, cycling and fitness are the most popular sports among event runners in all countries (31.1% and 30.9% respectively for the countries on average). Cycling, swimming and walking are very popular in Flanders, compared to the other countries. On the other hand, Table 4.5 shows that the lowest share of event runners that is only active in running is to be found in Flanders



Table 4.5. Participation in sports besides running during the past twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

	Average (N=10168)	Flanders (Belgium) (N=2141)	Greece (N=4464)	Italy (N=315)	Lithuania (N=418)	The Netherlands (N=2830)
Cycling sports	31.1	49.0	22.0	15.2	35.2	33.9
Fitness	30.9	28.4	35.3	17.1	33.7	40.0
Swimming sports	10.6	25.0	4.3	4.1	7.2	12.6
Football	7.9	8.5	7.7	6.0	8.6	8.6
Walking sports	4.1	12.6	3.0	0.0	2.6	2.6
Body exercises	2.4	4.0	2.2	0.0	2.6	3.2
Winter sports	1.3	3.0	0.9	0.3	1.2	1.0
Martial arts	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.6	1.7	0.7
Climbing sports	0.9	1.7	0.9	1.3	0.0	0.6
Dancing sports	0.8	1.1	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.8
Other sports	23.3	18.1	25.9	22.2	31.8	18.5
Participates only in running	24,2	16.2	25.1	37.3	22.5	19.8

Question: Which sports did you practise during the past twelve months, besides running? (*multiple answers*)



4.2.2. FREQUENCY SPORTS PARTICIPATION

Frequency sports participation



- Event runners are on average (just more than) four times per week active in sports. The frequency of sports participation of Flemish event runners is lower compared to those in Greece, Italy and Lithuania, but higher than those in the Netherlands (Table 4.6)

Table 4.6. Average number of times sports active per week during the past twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

Times per week sports active	Average (N=6528)	Flanders (Belgium) (N=1556)	Greece (N=2515)	Italy (N=137)	Lithuania (N=246)	The Netherlands (N=2074)
Mean	4.1	3.8	4.4	4.4	4.4	3.5
Standard deviation	/	2.2	2.2	2.8	3.4	2.2

Question: How many times per week, on average, did you practise sports (including running) during the past twelve months?



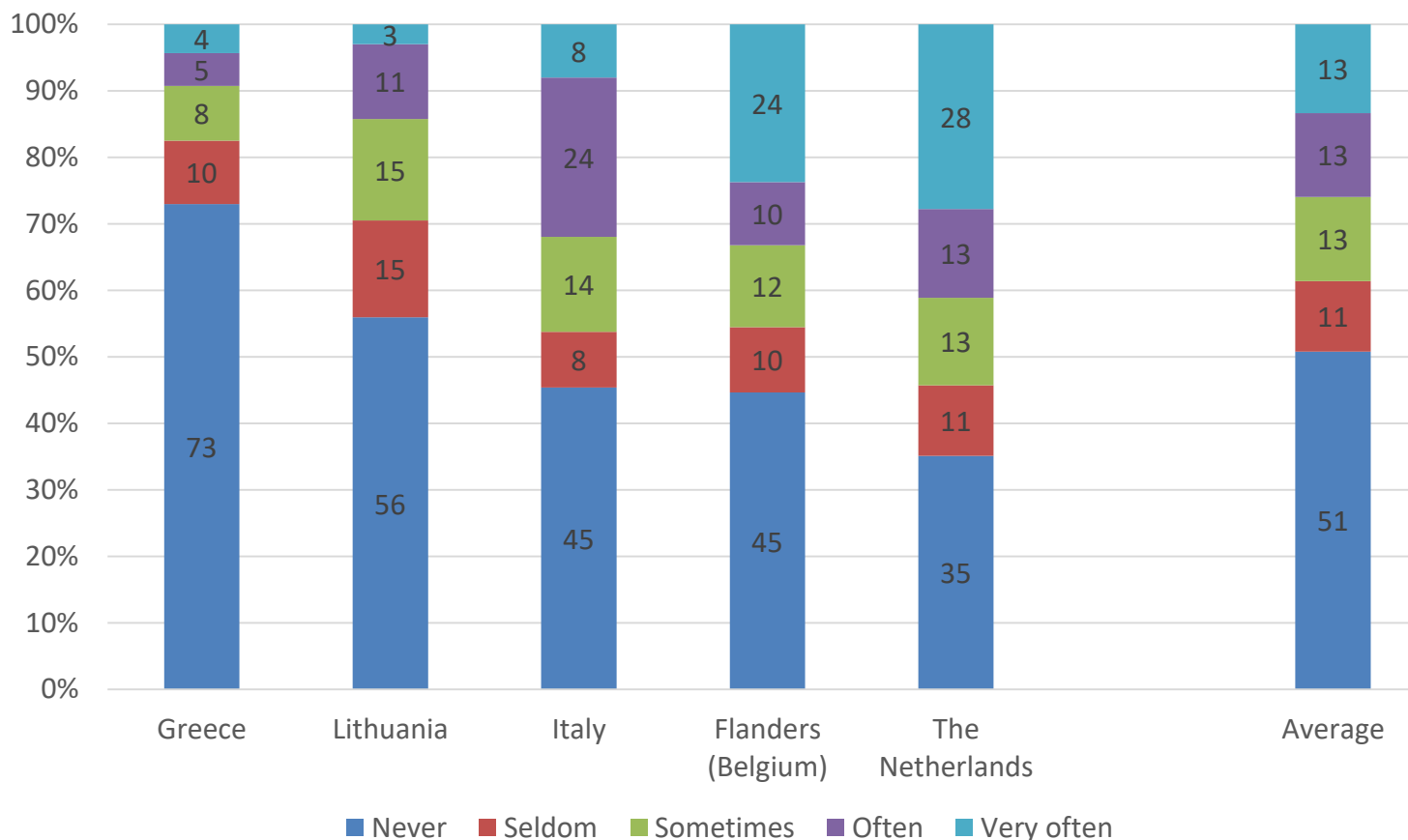
4.2.3. PHYSICAL ACITIVITY BEHAVIOUR



- Participants were asked to what extent they undertook several activities to be physically active in the past twelve months. Five activities were proposed:
 - Cycling to/from work (Figure 4.1)
 - Walking to/from work (Figure 4.2)
 - A cycling tour made in your free time (Figure 4.3)
 - A walk made in your free time (Figure 4.4)
 - Dancing (in your free time, not in club) (Figure 4.5)
- In general, around half of event runners in Europe never walk or take a bike to/from work. This number is slightly lower for cycling to/from work and a lot higher for walking to/from work among Flemish event runners. More than 70 percent of Flemish event runners never walks to/from work, which is much higher compared to the other countries
- Only a quarter and six percent of event runners in Europe never cycle or walk in their free time respectively. Flemish event runners score below the average for cycling and above the average for walking. Ten percent of event runners never take a walk in their free time, which is highest compared to the other countries
- More than 50 percent of event runners in Europe never dance. The Flemish event runners has the second highest number, after the Greek event runner



Figure 4.1. Frequency of cycling to/from work in the past twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

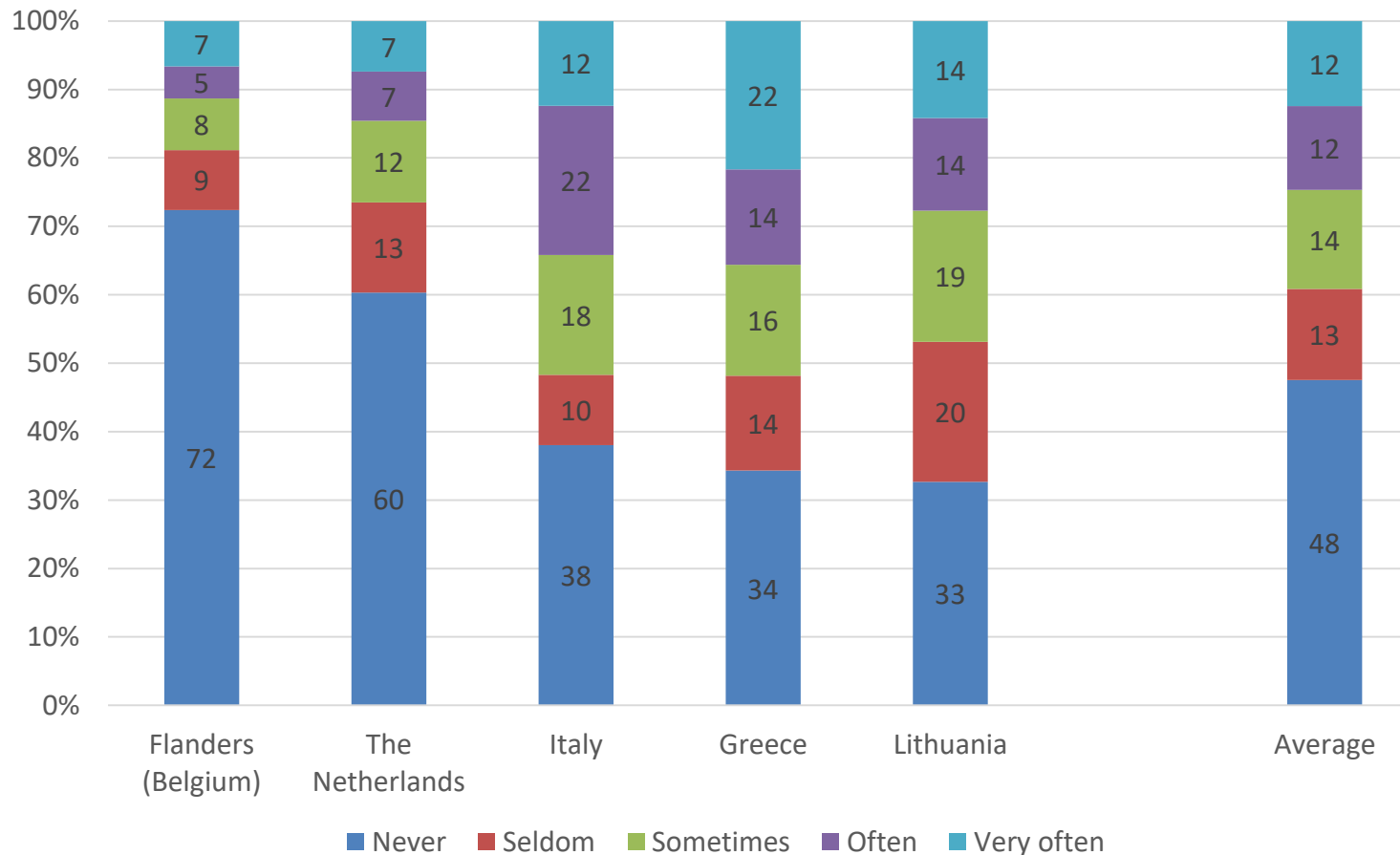


N(Flanders) = 2713; N(Greece) = 3048; N(Italy) = 238; N(Lithuania) = 302; N(The Netherlands) = 2397; N(Average) = 8698

Question: Besides sport, there are other activities which are (also) meant as a way to be physically active in general or for pleasure. How often did you undertake the following activities during the past twelve months?



Figure 4.2. Frequency of walking to/from work in the past twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

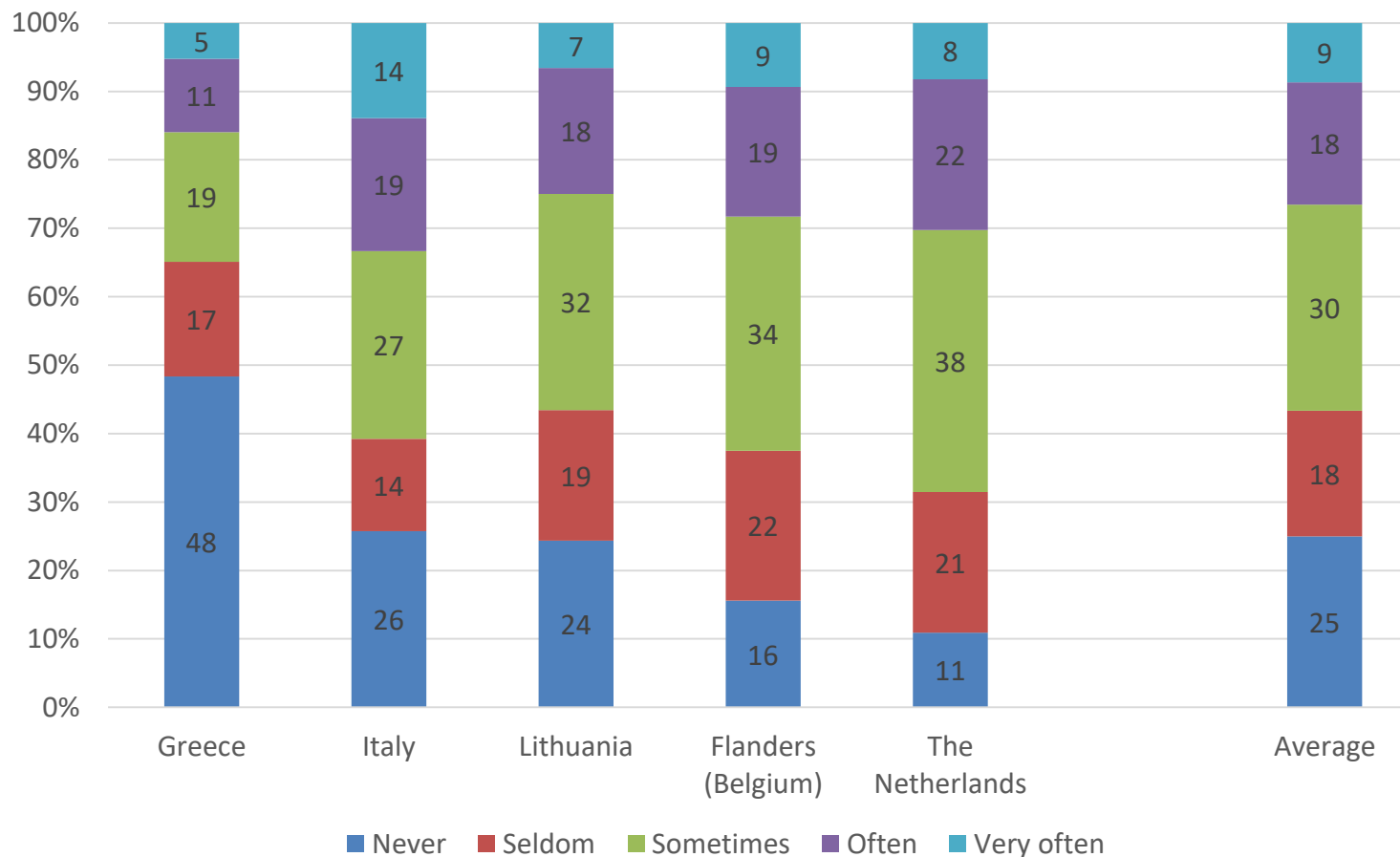


N(Flanders) = 2696; N(Greece) = 3204; N(Italy) = 234; N(Lithuania) = 303; N(The Netherlands) = 2391; N(Average) = 8828

Question: Besides sport, there are other activities which are (also) meant as a way to be physically active in general or for pleasure. How often did you undertake the following activities during the past twelve months?



Figure 4.3. Frequency of making a cycling tour in the free time in the past twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

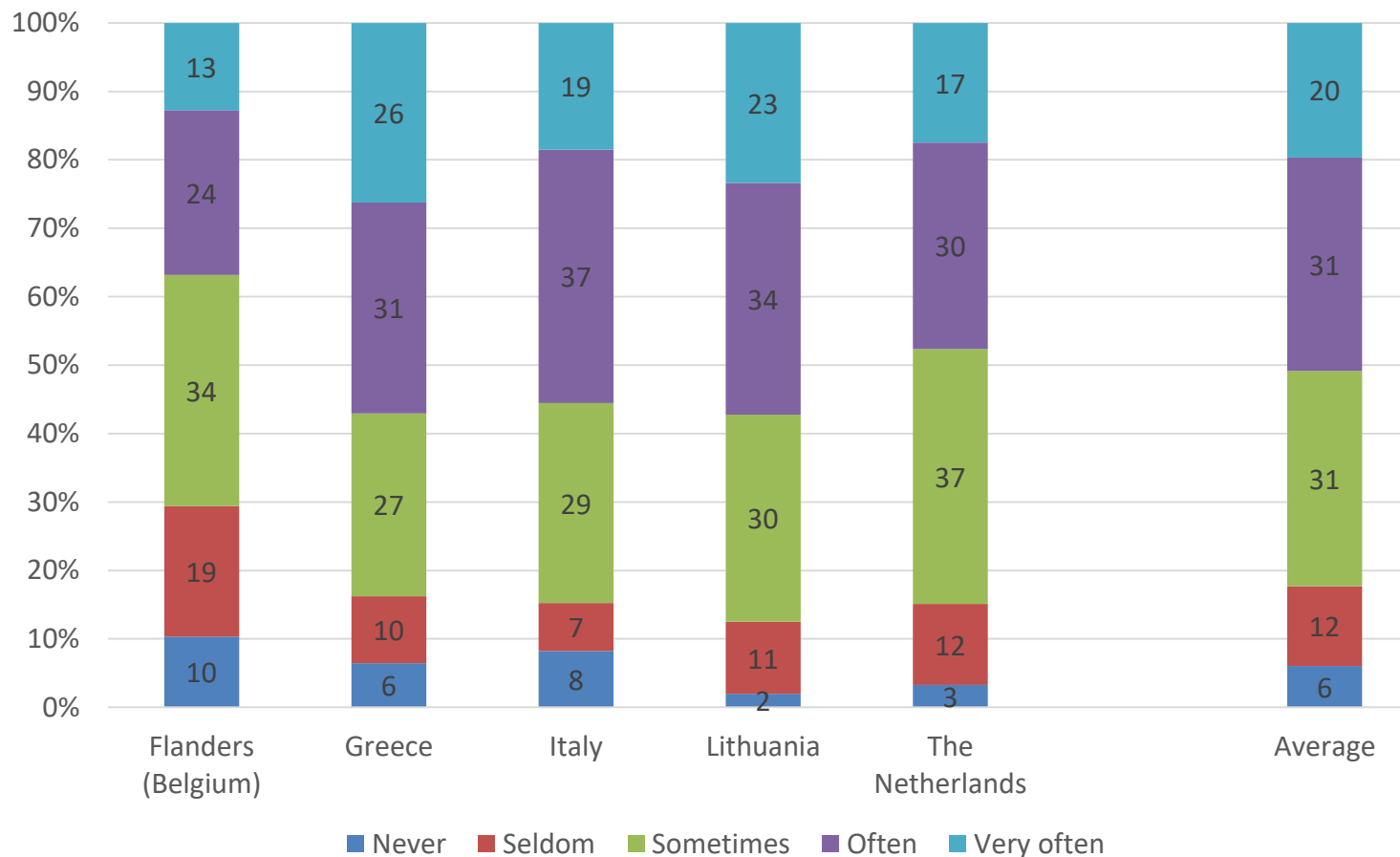


N(Flanders) = 2722; N(Greece) = 3105; N(Italy) = 237; N(Lithuania) = 304; N(The Netherlands) = 2399; N(Average) = 8767

Question: Besides sport, there are other activities which are (also) meant as a way to be physically active in general or for pleasure. How often did you undertake the following activities during the past twelve months?



Figure 4.4. Frequency of making a walk in the free time in the past twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

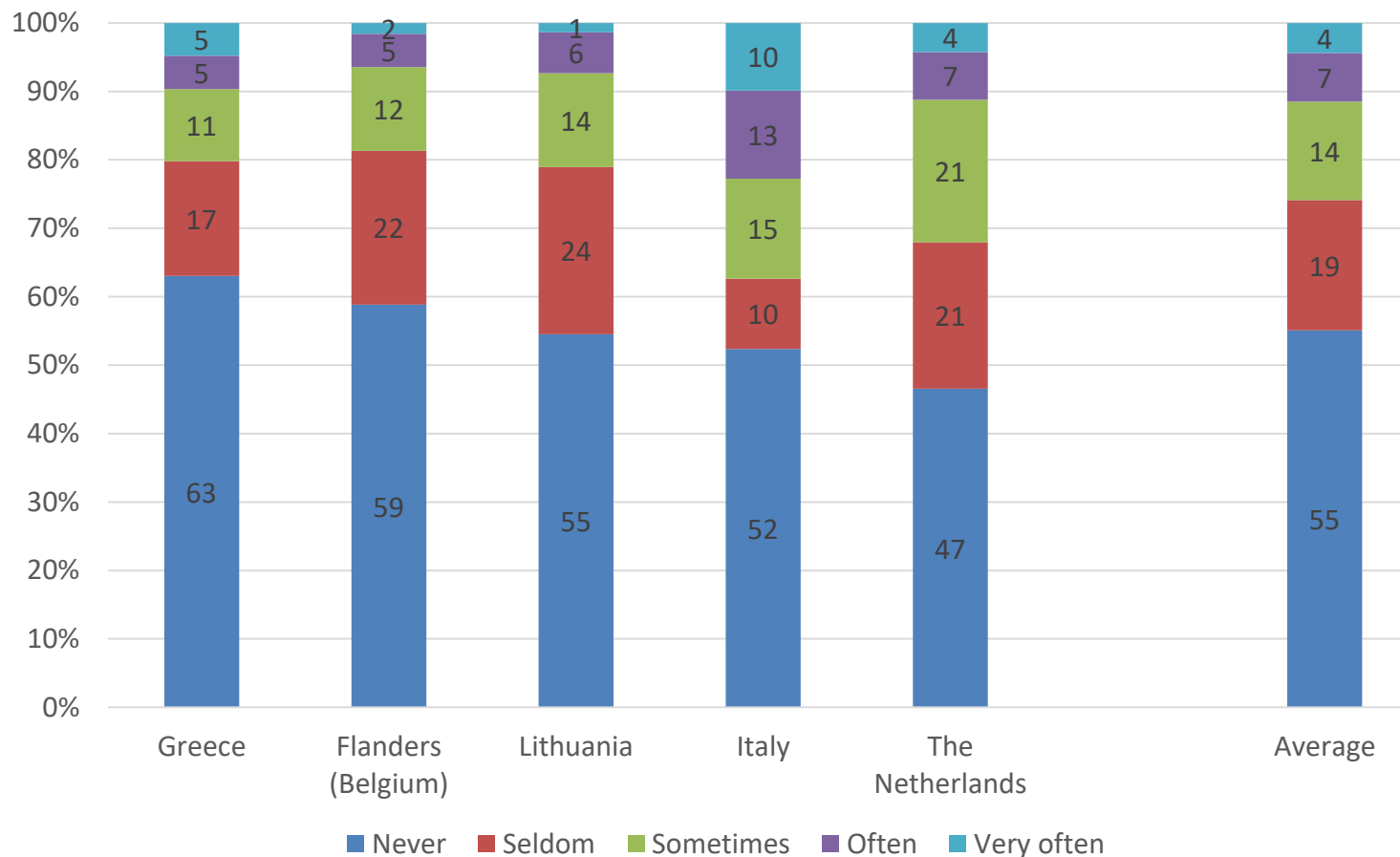


N(Flanders) = 2722; N(Greece) = 3362; N(Italy) = 243; N(Lithuania) = 304; N(The Netherlands) = 2444; N(Average) = 9075

Question: Besides sport, there are other activities which are (also) meant as a way to be physically active in general or for pleasure. How often did you undertake the following activities during the past twelve months?



Figure 4.5. Frequency of dancing (in the free time, not in a club) in the past twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 1827; N(Greece) = 3078; N(Italy) = 233; N(Lithuania) = 299; N(The Netherlands) = 2385; N(Average) = 7822

Question: Besides sport, there are other activities which are (also) meant as a way to be physically active in general or for pleasure. How often did you undertake the following activities during the past twelve months?



4.3. RUNNING BEHAVIOUR

- [4.3.1.](#) Frequency of running
- [4.3.2.](#) Running location
- [4.3.3.](#) Context
- [4.3.4.](#) Event participation



4.3.1. FREQUENCY OF RUNNING



- Event runners ran on average (just less than) three times per week in the past twelve months (Table 4.7). In addition, more than half of the participants (57%) indicated they ran more often in the past twelve months, compared to three years ago (with 25% running as often as before; Figure 4.6). As is the case for the frequency of general sports participation, the Flemish event runner participates less in running compared to those in Greece, Italy and Lithuania, but more than those in the Netherlands. In addition, the Flemish event runner also participated more in running in the past twelve months, compared to three years ago (64%) when compared with Lithuania (45%) , Italy (54%) and the Netherlands (57%)

Table 4.7. Average number of times active in running per week during the past twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

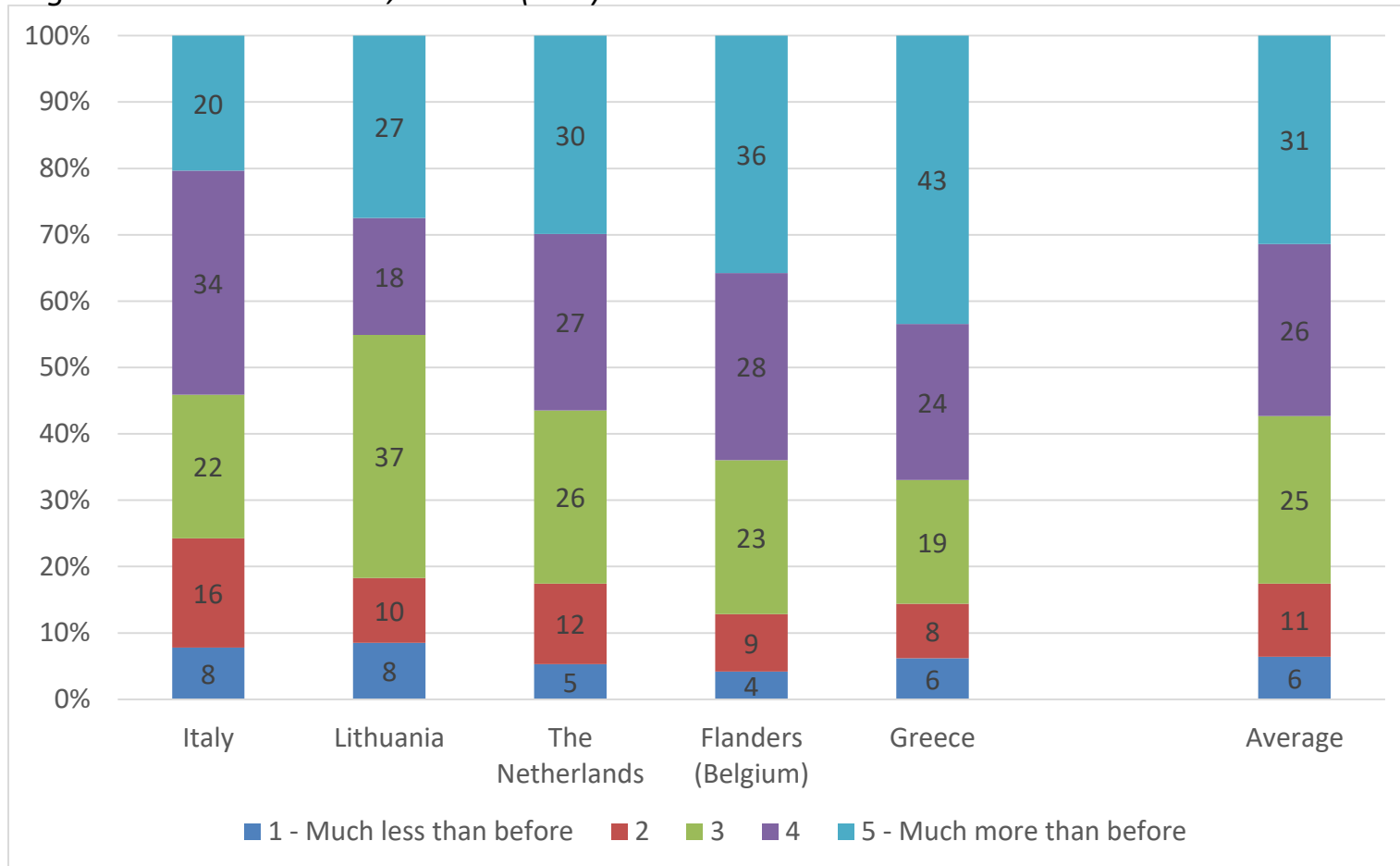
Times per week active in running	Average (N=8426)	Flanders (Belgium) (N=1835)	Greece (N=3490)	Italy (N=246)	Lithuania (N=300)	The Netherlands (N=2555)
Mean	2.9	2.5	3.2	3.6	3.0	2.3
Standard deviation	/	1.8	1.8	2.2	1.7	2.1

Question: How many times per week, on average, did you run during the past twelve months?

Frequency of running



Figure 4.6. Frequency of running participation compared to three years ago event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 1851; N(Greece) = 3505; N(Italy) = 231; N(Lithuania) = 306; N(The Netherlands) = 2504; N(Average) = 8397

Question: If you compare your running training during the past twelve months with that of three years ago, did you run more or less often than before?



4.3.2. RUNNING LOCATION



- Running on public roads and in nature are popular locations to run (Table 4.8). More than half of event runners participate in running in one of these two locations on average (55.4% and 52.3% respectively). Running in nature is the most popular location among Flemish event runners. In addition, Flemish event runners also run more in nature, compared to their European counterparts. On the other hand, the athletics track and treadmill were rather unpopular locations to run for Flemish event runners (as was the case for Dutch event runners), compared to other European event runners

Table 4.8. Location to run during the past twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

	Average (N=10168)	Flanders (Belgium) (N=2141)	Greece (N=4464)	Italy (N=315)	Lithuania (N=418)	The Netherlands (N=2830)
In an urban area (e.g. on public roads)	55.4	58.1	52.0	58.1	46.4	62.4
In a forest/ a park/ nature	52.3	67.0	32.5	46.0	53.6	62.4
On an athletics track (both indoor and outdoor, etc.)	21.5	13.4	35.0	28.3	20.6	10.2
On a treadmill	13.8	10.8	17.0	18.4	13.4	9.3
Other location	1.3	2.5	0.2	2.9	0.0	0.9

Question: Where did you typically run during the past twelve months? (*multiple answers*)

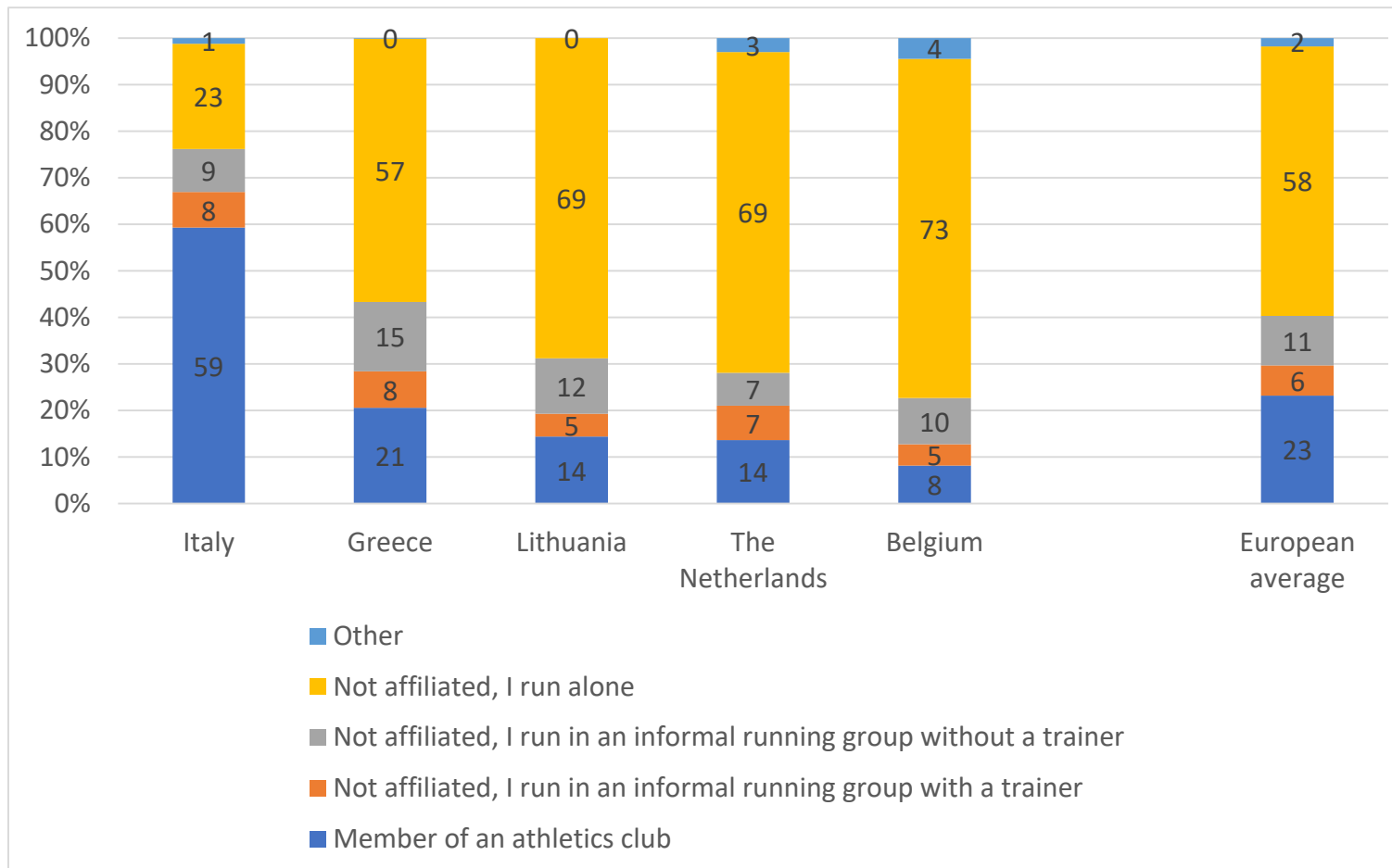


4.3.3. CONTEXT



- On average, most event runners run alone (58%). The second most important context to run is the athletics club (23%) (Figure 4.7). In all but one country (Italy), running alone is the most popular context to run among event runners. In Italy, most event runners participate in running as a member of an athletics club. Flanders has the highest share of event runners running alone and the lowest share running as a member of an athletics club, compared to the other countries (73% and 8% respectively)

Figure 4.7. Context to run during the past twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 1855; N(Greece) = 3466; N(Italy) = 248; N(Lithuania) = 285; N(The Netherlands) = 2503; N(Average) = 8357

Question: In what context do you run? (*most applicable answer*)



4.3.4. EVENT PARTICIPATION



- On average, event runners participated in more than six running events in the past twelve months (Table 4.9). Mainly the urban running events (such as a city run or local jogging) are popular (64.8%; Table 4.10). Flemish event runners participated in five running events in the past twelve months, which is the second lowest (after four running events among Dutch event runners). Compared with the other countries, nature running events are quite popular in Flanders (as well as in Italy)
- Finishing times seem to be rather important for event runners. For 52 percent of event runners, the finishing time is important. For 21 percent of event runners the finishing time is unimportant (and 27% is indifferent; Figure 4.8). The finishing times are more important for Flemish event runners compared to Greek or Italian event runners

Table 4.9. Participation in running events during the past twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

Average number of running events	Average (N=9111)	Flanders (Belgium) (N=2691)	Greece (N=3398)	Italy (N=225)	Lithuania (N=295)	The Netherlands (N=2502)
Mean	6.3	5.1	5.4	10.3	6.7	3.8
Standard deviation	/	5.3	5.1	7.9	6.3	4.3

Question: How many running events did you participate in during the past twelve months?



Table 4.10. Popularity of different running events during the past twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

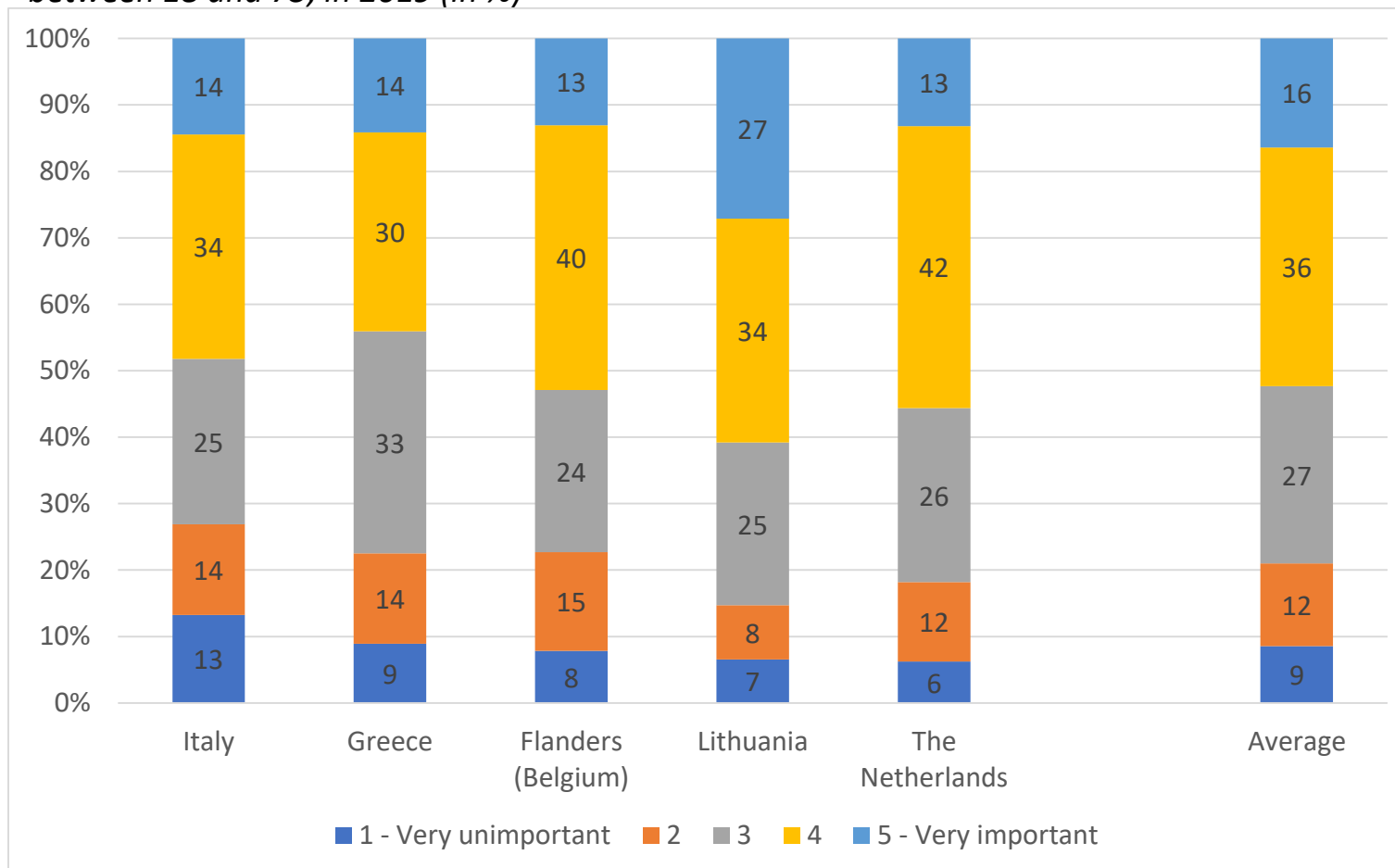
	Average (N=10168)	Flanders (Belgium) (N=2141)	Greece (N=4464)	Italy (N=315)	Lithuania (N=418)	The Netherlands (N=2830)
Urban running events ¹	64,8	67,1	65,3	69,2	60,3	62,2
Nature running events ²	25,2	32,1	20,4	33,3	20,8	19,3
Theme running events ³	17,4	11,6	11,0	32,7	23,7	8,1
Ultra running events ⁴	4,8	3,4	4,7	12,4	1,7	1,8
None of the above	9,6	10,6	7,8	2,9	5,5	21,2

Note. ¹ city run, urban trail, local jogging, etc.; ² obstacle run, beach run, trail run, cross country, etc.; ³ ladies run, color run, santa run, etc.; ⁴ distance longer than marathon

Question: Which types of running events did you participate in during the past twelve months? (*multiple answers*)



Figure 4.8. The importance of finishing times for running events among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 1859; N(Greece) = 3541; N(Italy) = 249; N(Lithuania) = 306; N(The Netherlands) = 2486; N(Average) = 8441

Question: To what extent is your finishing time in a running event important for you?



4.4. INVOLVEMENT IN RUNNING

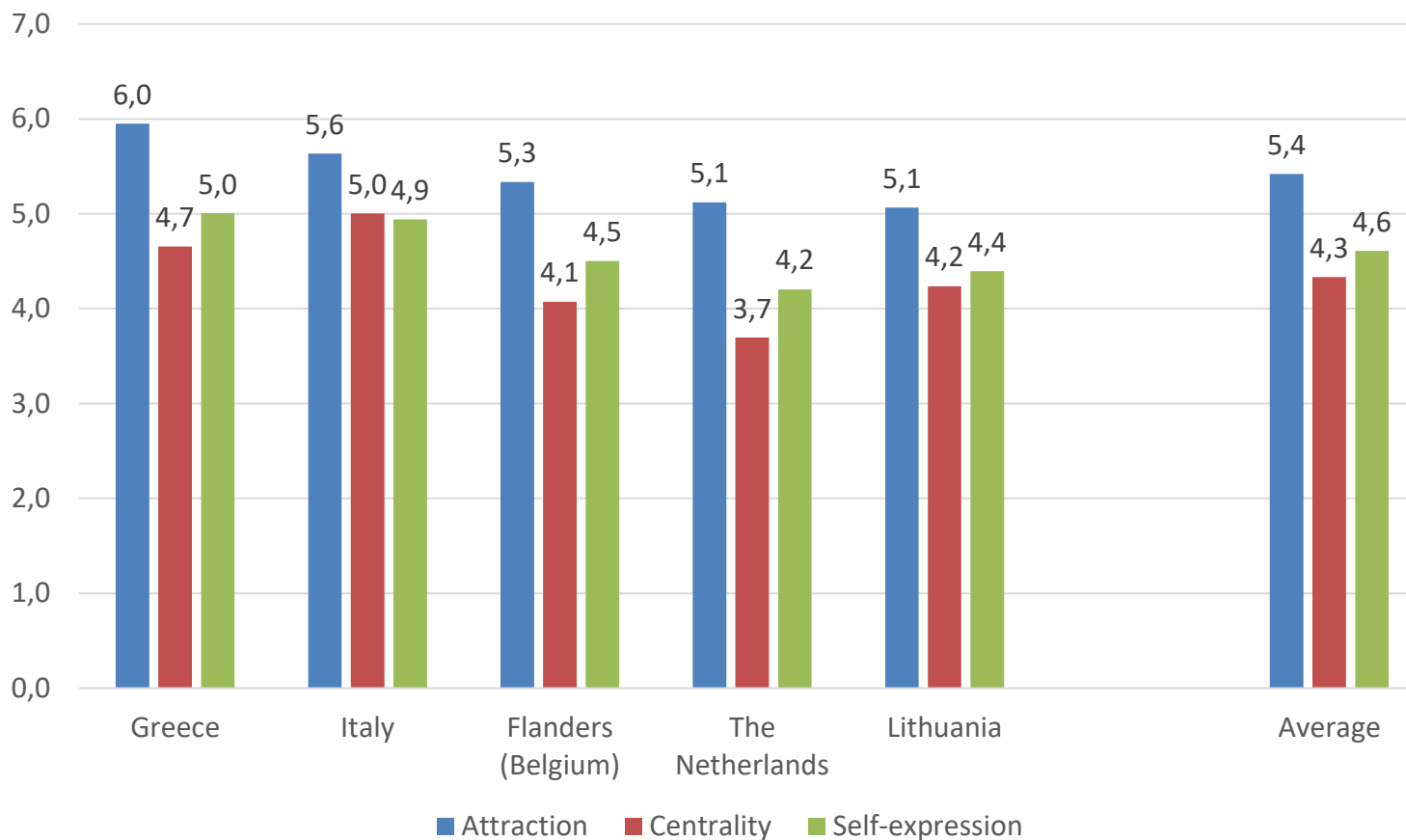
Involvement in running



- In general, runners are (rather) involved in running (with average scores of the three aspects of involvement above 4). Attraction is the most important aspect (5.4 on a scale from 1 to 7), meaning event runners feel attracted to running. Centrality (placing running at the center of life) has the lowest score, but still above average. Greek even runners are very involved in running, Lithuanian and Dutch runners are the least involved in running. Flemish event runners score on average



Figure 4.9. Involvement in running among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (score on 7-point Likert scale)



N(Flanders) = 1855; N(Greece) = 3533; N(Italy) = 247; N(Lithuania) = 305; N(The Netherlands) = 2501; N(Average) = 8441

Question: Please indicate your agreement with each statement below. (9 statements)



4.5. EVENT PREPARATION

- [4.5.1.](#) Physical behaviour
- [4.5.2.](#) Healthy behaviour



4.5.1. PHYSICAL BEHAVIOUR



- More than half of the event runners increased the frequency and/or duration of sports participation before the event. These event runners increased their sports participation for eight to nine weeks before the event and were on average six hours per week sports active (Table 4.11). Just more than half of the Flemish event runners increased the frequency and/or duration of sports participation before the event which is lower, compared to Greek and Italian event runners. The Flemish event runners that increased the sports participation did so for almost eleven weeks before the event, which is the same as Greek event runners and much more than event runners in other countries. Although Flemish event runners increased the sports participation for a longer period before the event, compared to their European counterparts, those that increased their sports participation were active in sport for only five hours. This is higher compared to Dutch event runners, but lower compared to Italian, Greek and Lithuanian event runners
- Almost fifty percent (48%) of event runners indicated that participation in the running event did not have an influence on the frequency of sports participation. For four out of ten (41%) event runners, participation in the running event did have a (rather) positive influence on sports participation. Eleven percent indicated they would have been more sports active if they were not participating in the event (Figure 4.10). More than half of the Flemish event runners indicated they would have been less sports active if they were not participating in the event (55%), denoting a positive influence of the running event. This percentage is much higher compared to Lithuanian, Greek and Dutch event runners and about the same compared to the Italian counterparts



Table 4.11. Physical event preparation among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019

	Average	Flanders (Belgium)	Greece	Italy	Lithuania	The Netherlands
Increased frequency and/or duration of sports participation before event (in %)*	56.8	53.4	74.2	61.5	48.4	46.7
Average number of weeks increased sports participation before event**						
Mean	8.5	10.7	10.8	5.8	6.5	8.6
Standard deviation	/	8.3	8.0	3.7	8.9	7.5
Average hours per weeks sports active in preparation period before event***						
Mean	5.7	4.9	6.4	7.1	5.8	4.2
Standard deviation	/	2.8	3.6	3.3	2.9	2.9

* N(Flanders) = 1983; N(Greece) = 3525; N(Italy) = 247; N(Lithuania) = 306; N(The Netherlands) = 2471; N(Average) = 8532

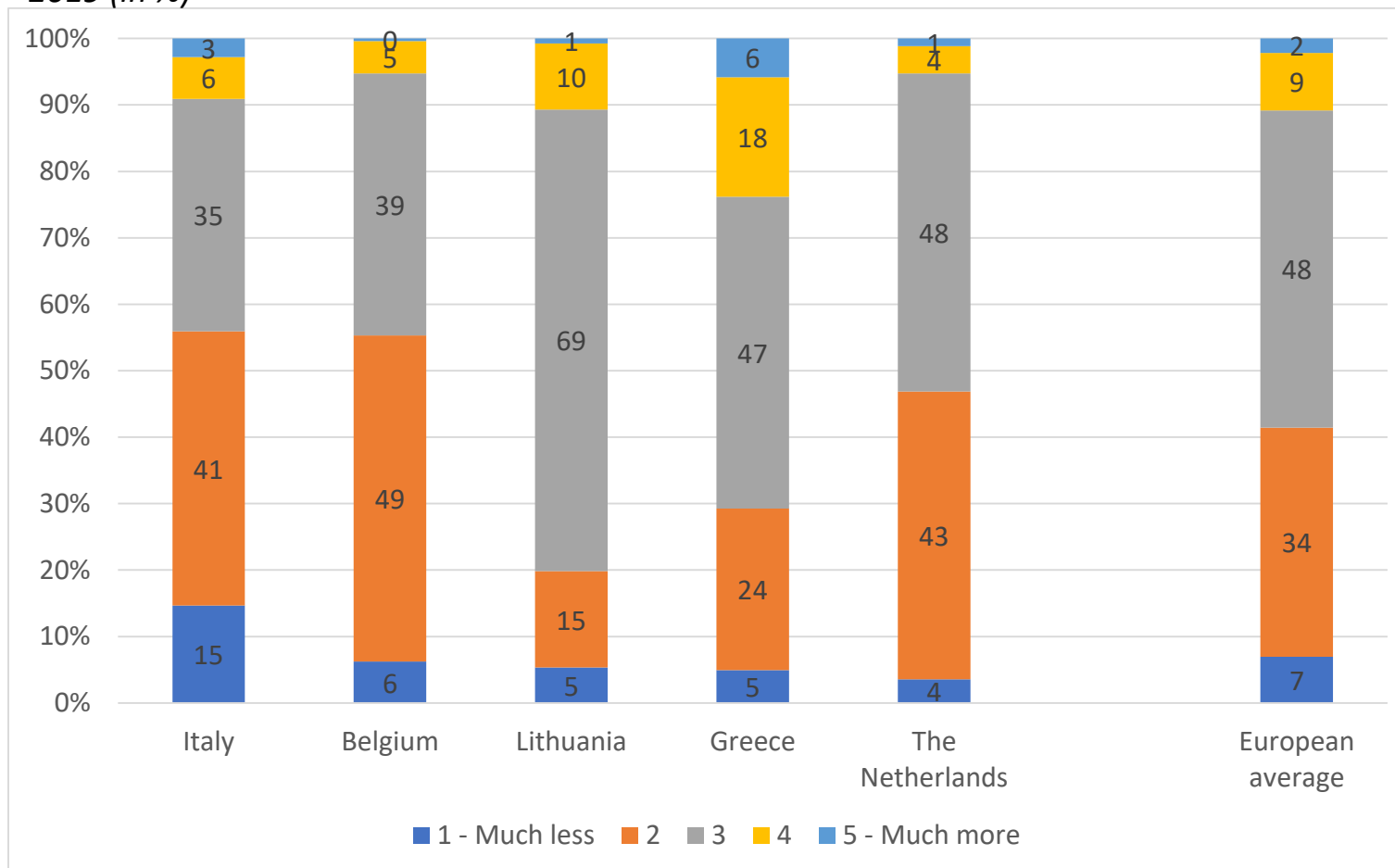
** N(Flanders) = 1040; N(Greece) = 2496; N(Italy) = 144; N(Lithuania) = 131; N(The Netherlands) = 1115; N(Average) = 4926

*** N(Flanders) = 1021; N(Greece) = 2456; N(Italy) = 144; N(Lithuania) = 130; N(The Netherlands) = 1112; N(Average) = 4863

Question: *Did you increase the frequency and/or duration of your sport participation during the period before the event, because of your participation in the event?; **Please indicate the number of weeks you prepared for the event by increasing your sport participation.; ***How many hours a week did you practice sports during this preparation period, on average?



Figure 4.10. Physical event preparation among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 994; N(Greece) = 2520; N(Italy) = 143; N(Lithuania) = 131; N(The Netherlands) = 1122; N(Average) = 4910

Question: How much would you have participated in sports during this event preparation period if you were not participating in the event?



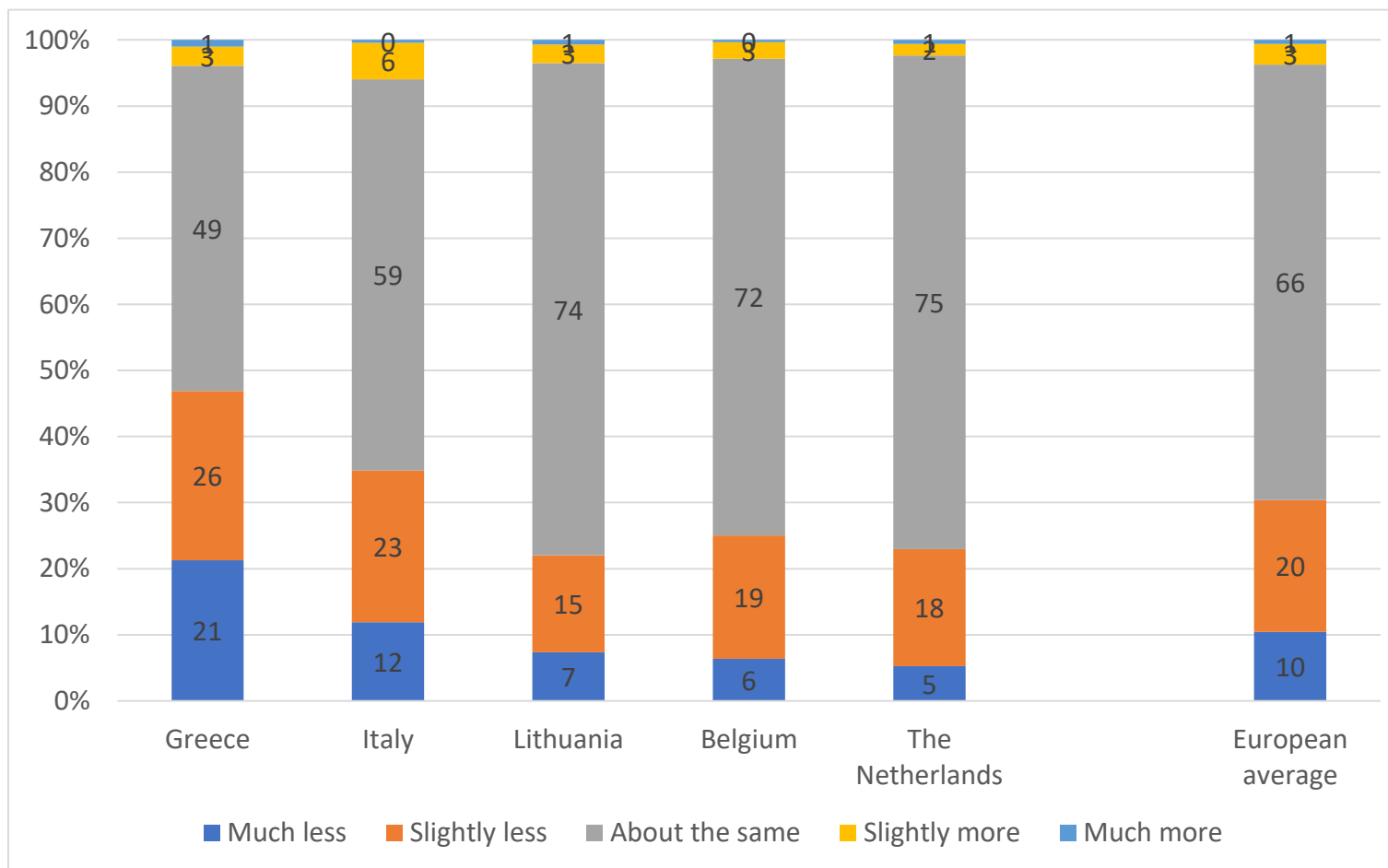
4.5.2. HEALTHY BEHAVIOUR



- Participants were asked to what extent the running event had an influence on their eating, drinking and smoking behaviour during the event preparation period. Five activities were proposed:
 - Eating fat and/or sugar and/or salt (Figure 4.11)
 - Drinking alcohol (Figure 4.12)
 - Smoking (Figure 4.13)
- In general, the running event had no impact on healthy behaviour. 66, 54, and 56 percent of event runners ate, drank and smoked about the same respectively (denoting no influence of the running event). For 30, 45 and 43 percent of event runners the event had a positive influence on the eating, drinking and smoking behaviour respectively as they indicated to eat and drink less unhealthy and smoke less (denoting a positive influence of the running event)
- Compared to their Greek, Italian and Lithuanian counterparts, more Flemish event runners indicated that participation in the running event had no influence on eating, drinking and smoking behaviour. In addition, the Flemish event runners showed one of the least positive influences of the event on healthy behaviour



Figure 4.11. The frequency of eating less/more fat and/or sugar and or salt during the event preparation as a result of participation in the event among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

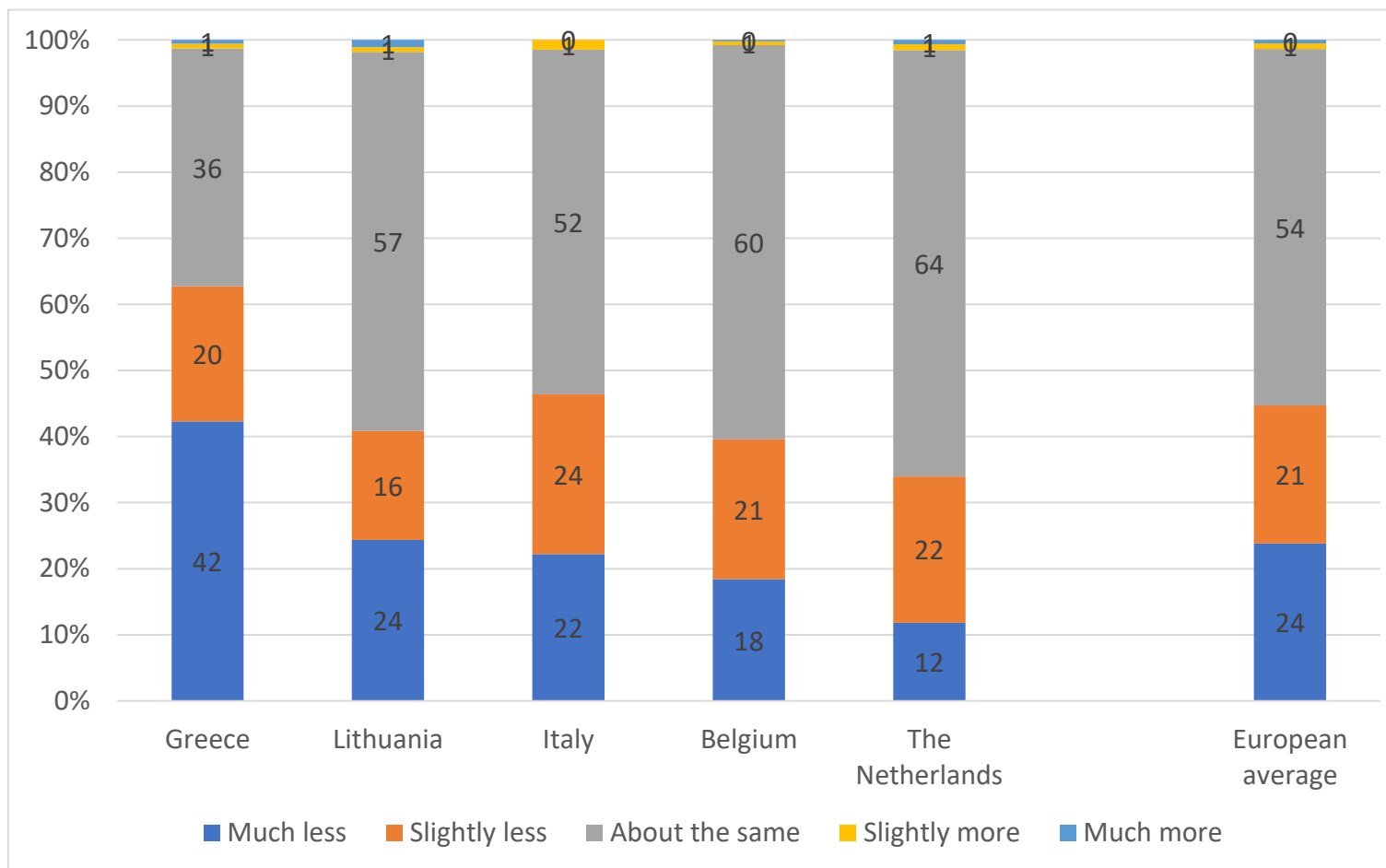


N(Flanders) = 1830; N(Greece) = 3418; N(Italy) = 235; N(Lithuania) = 286; N(The Netherlands) = 2428; N(Average) = 8197

Question: Please indicate the extent to which you ate less fat and/or sugar during the event preparation period as a result of your preparation for the event.



Figure 4.12. The frequency of drinking less/more alcohol during the event preparation as a result of participation in the event among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

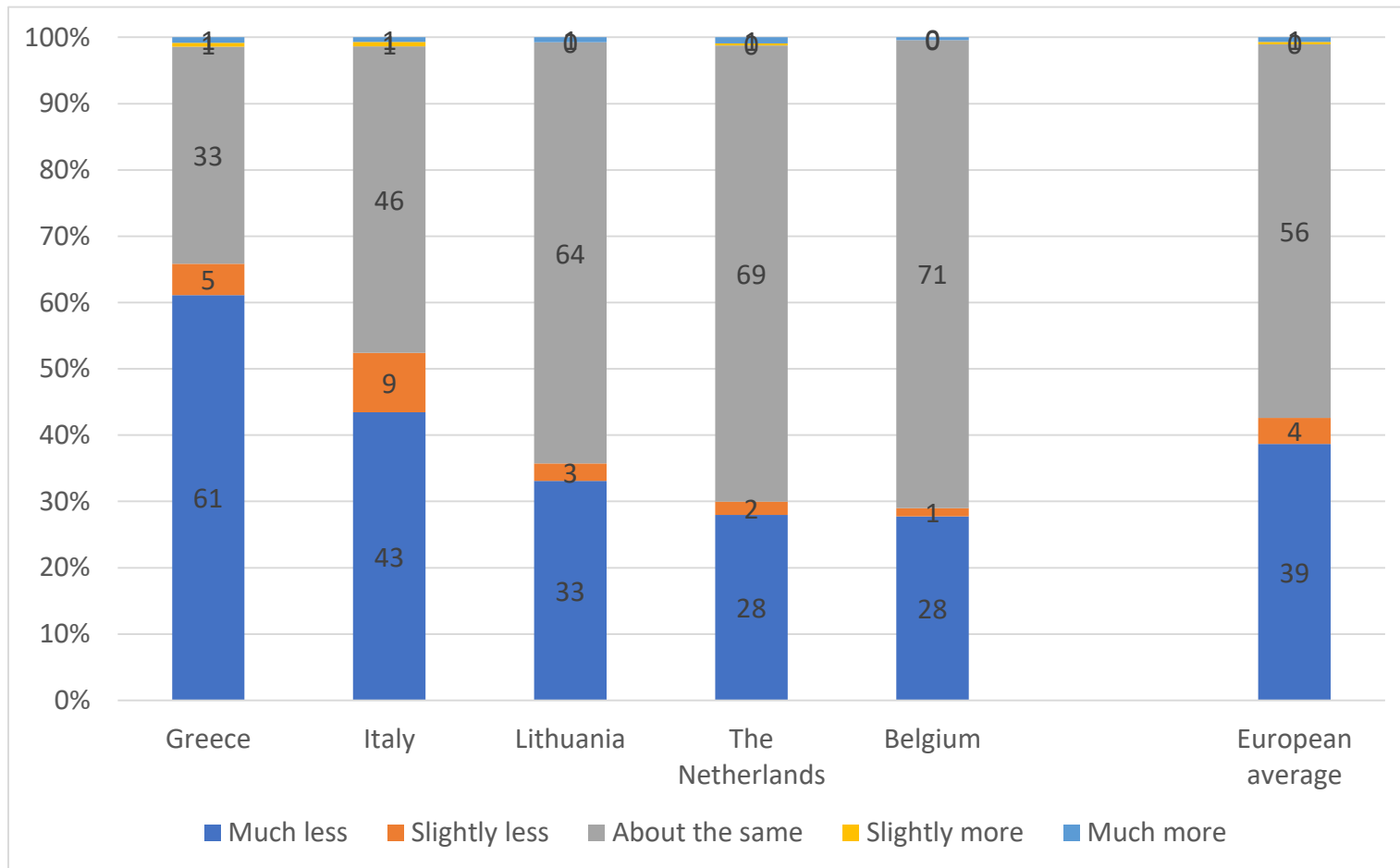


N(Flanders) = 1796; N(Greece) = 3280; N(Italy) = 207; N(Lithuania) = 279; N(The Netherlands) = 2391; N(Average) = 7953

Question: Please indicate the extent to which you drank less alcohol during the event preparation period as a result of your preparation for the event.



Figure 4.13. The frequency of smoking during the event preparation as a result of participation in the event among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 1410; N(Greece) = 2722; N(Italy) = 145; N(Lithuania) = 266; N(The Netherlands) = 2007; N(Average) = 6550

Question: Please indicate the extent to which you smoked less during the event preparation period as a result of your preparation for the event.

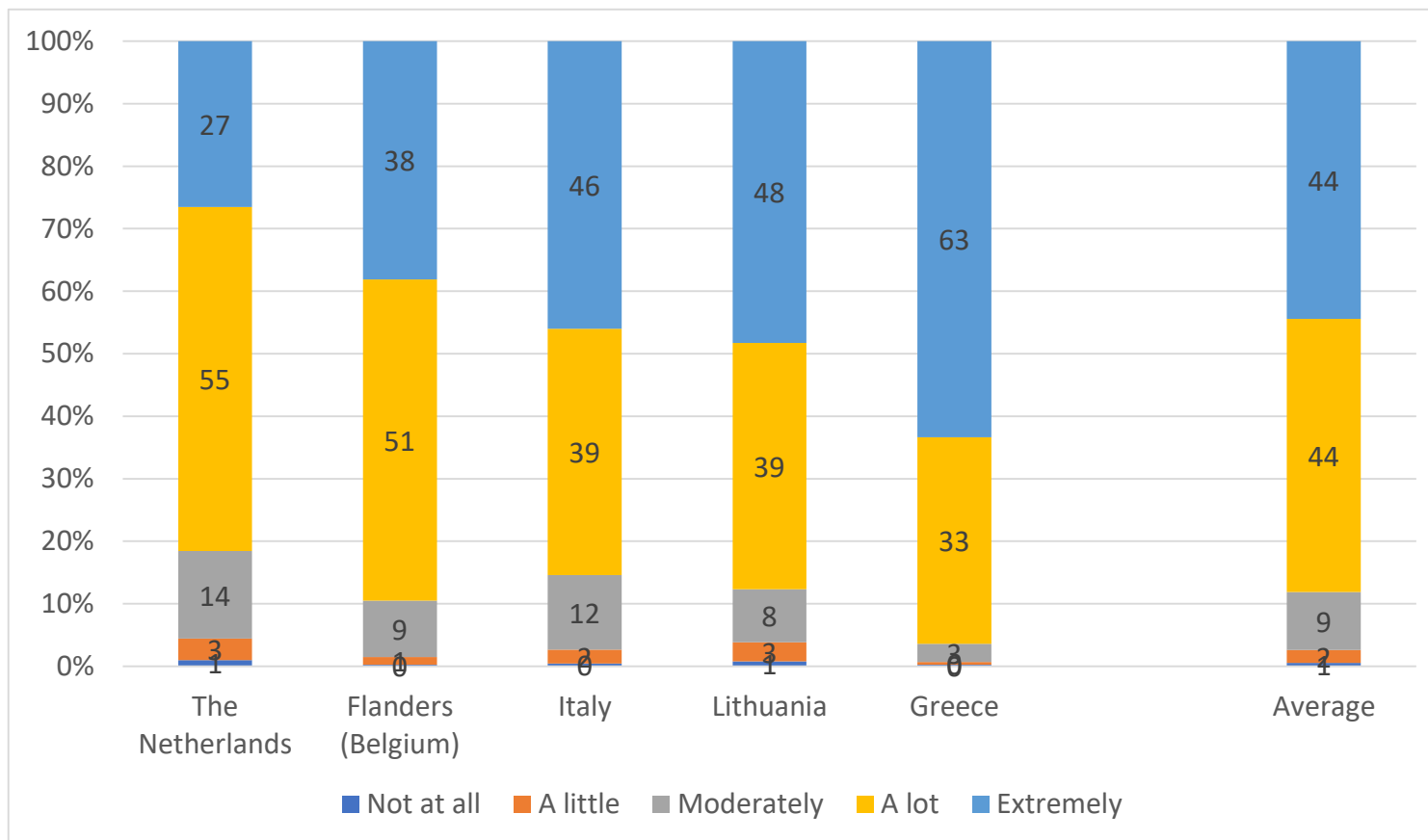


4.6. EMOTIONS



- Figures 4.14 until 4.17 present to what extent the event runners experience the emotions 'positive', 'happy', 'afraid' and 'joyful' respectively. In general, event runners feel rather positive with 88, 81 and 73 percent of event runners experiencing the emotions positive, happy and joyful respectively. Eight out of ten event runners are not afraid when thinking about their participation in the running event
- 84 percent of Flemish event runners experience 'happy' emotions. This is higher than Dutch and Italian event runners, but less than Greek event runners. Further, 88 percent of Flemish event runners are not afraid when thinking about their participation in the running event. This is higher than Lithuanian, Italian and Greek event runners, but less than Dutch event runners

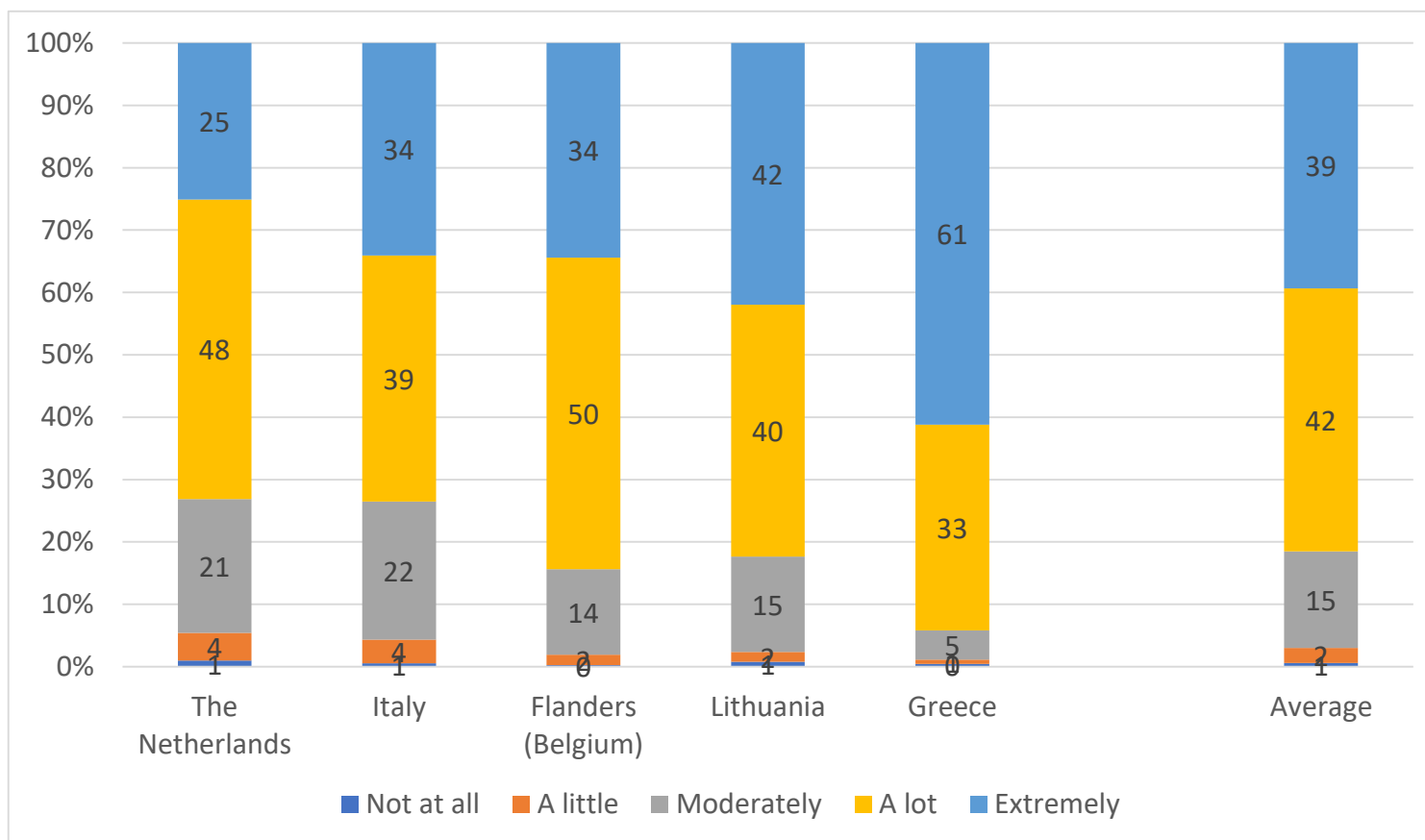
Figure 4.14. Experiencing the emotion ‘positive’ when thinking about participation in the running event among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 1890; N(Greece) = 3280; N(Italy) = 226; N(Lithuania) = 259; N(The Netherlands) = 2364; N(Average) = 8019

Question: Please rate how much you feel each of the following emotions at this moment when thinking about your participation in the event. (12 emotions)

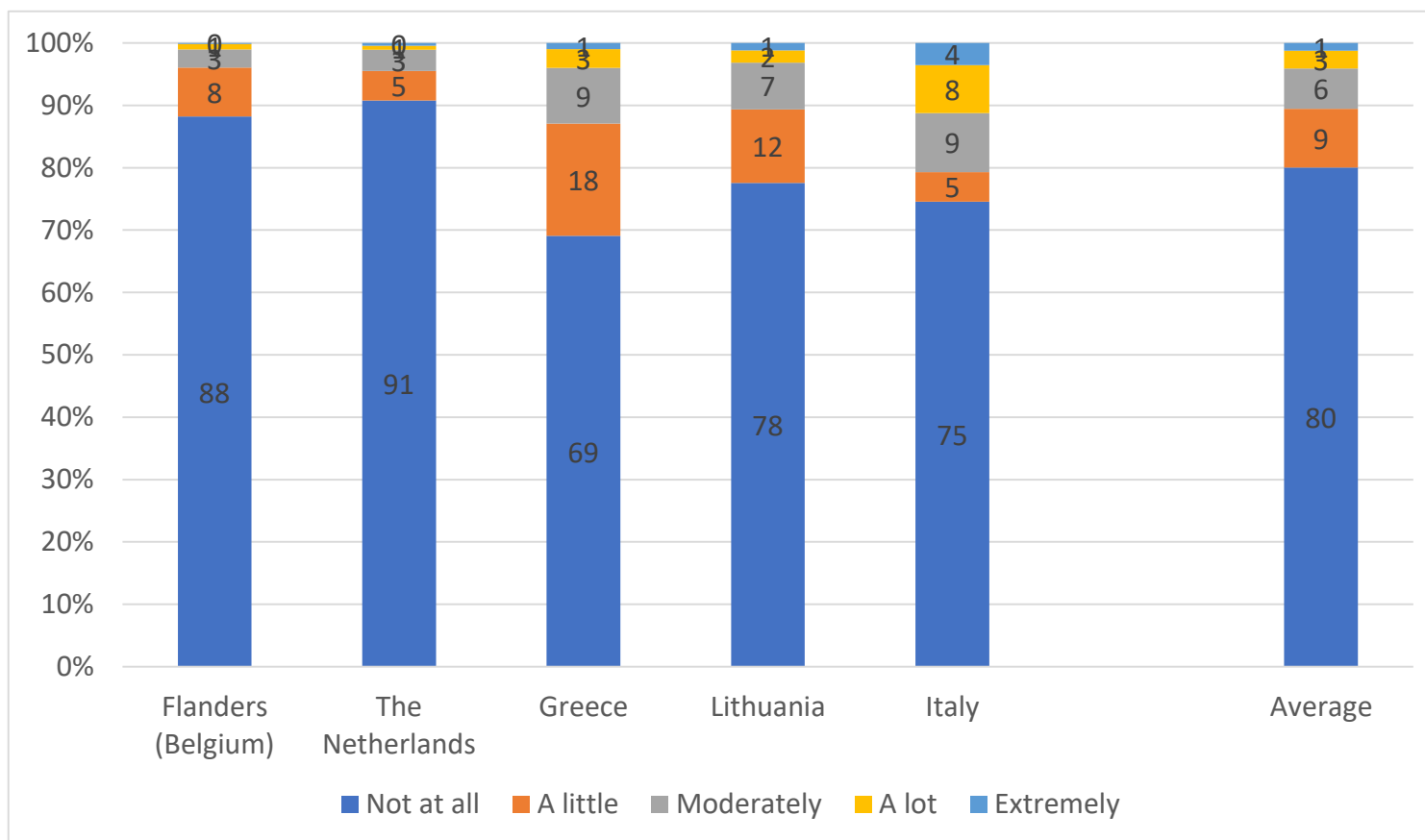
Figure 4.15. Experiencing the emotion ‘happy’ when thinking about participation in the running event among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 1866; N(Greece) = 3225; N(Italy) = 185; N(Lithuania) = 255; N(The Netherlands) = 2319; N(Average) = 7850

Question: Please rate how much you feel each of the following emotions at this moment when thinking about your participation in the event. (12 emotions)

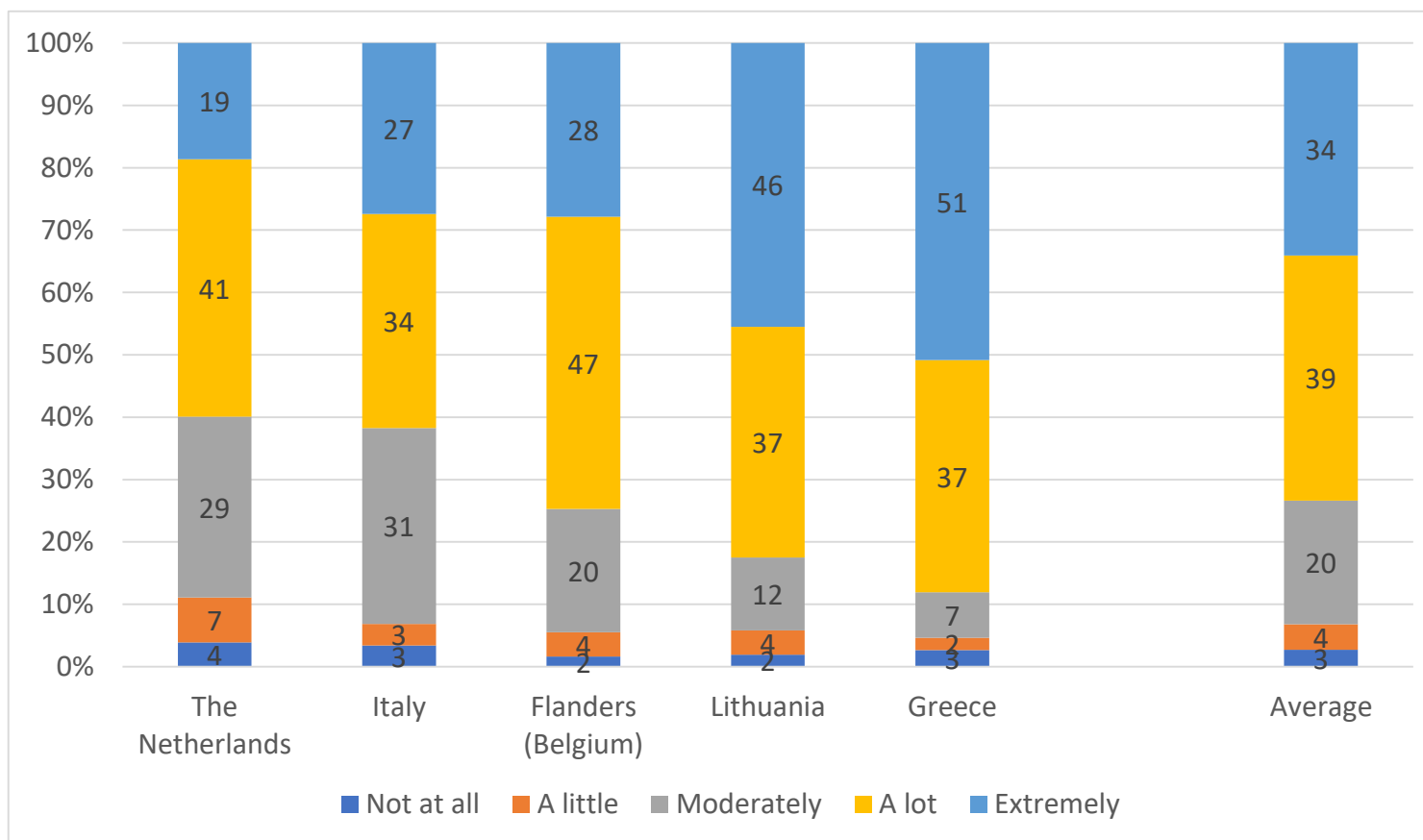
Figure 4.16. Experiencing the emotion 'afraid' when thinking about participation in the running event among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 1856; N(Greece) = 3171; N(Italy) = 169; N(Lithuania) = 254; N(The Netherlands) = 2307; N(Average) = 7757

Question: Please rate how much you feel each of the following emotions at this moment when thinking about your participation in the event. (12 emotions)

Figure 4.17. Experiencing the emotion ‘joyful’ when thinking about participation in the running event among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 1858; N(Greece) = 3196; N(Italy) = 175; N(Lithuania) = 257; N(The Netherlands) = 2304; N(Average) = 7790

Question: Please rate how much you feel each of the following emotions at this moment when thinking about your participation in the event. (12 emotions)



4.7. MOTIVATION



- In general, the most important motive for event runners to participate in running events is to feel a sense of achievement (participate to feel sensation and excitement; score 3.4 on a scale from 1 to 5; Table 4.12). Another important motive is socialisation (to interact with friends and other runners). On average, competition is the least important motive for event runners (score of 2.5 on a scale from 1 to 5). Achievement is the most important motive as well for Flemish event runners, just as is the case for competition as least important motive. The most important motive for Italian event runners is socialisation (for all other countries, this is achievement)



Table 4.12. Motivation to participate in the event among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (score on 5-point Likert scale)

Event motivations		Average (N=7931)	Flanders (Belgium) (N=1889)	Greece (N=3248)	Italy (N=223)	Lithuania (N=263)	The Netherlands (N=2308)
Health	Mean	3.0	2.9	3.3	3.5	2.8	2.6
	Standard deviation	/	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.2
Socialisation	Mean	3.1	2.9	3.2	3.6	3.1	2.7
	Standard deviation	/	1.1	1.2	1.0	1.2	1.1
Competition	Mean	2.5	2.5	2.2	3.0	2.7	2.1
	Standard deviation	/	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.1	1.0
Achievement	Mean	3.4	3.1	3.9	3.5	3.6	2.9
	Standard deviation	/	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0

Question: Please indicate the extent to which the following aspects were a reason for you to participate in the event. (17 motivations)



4.8. EVENT EVALUATION



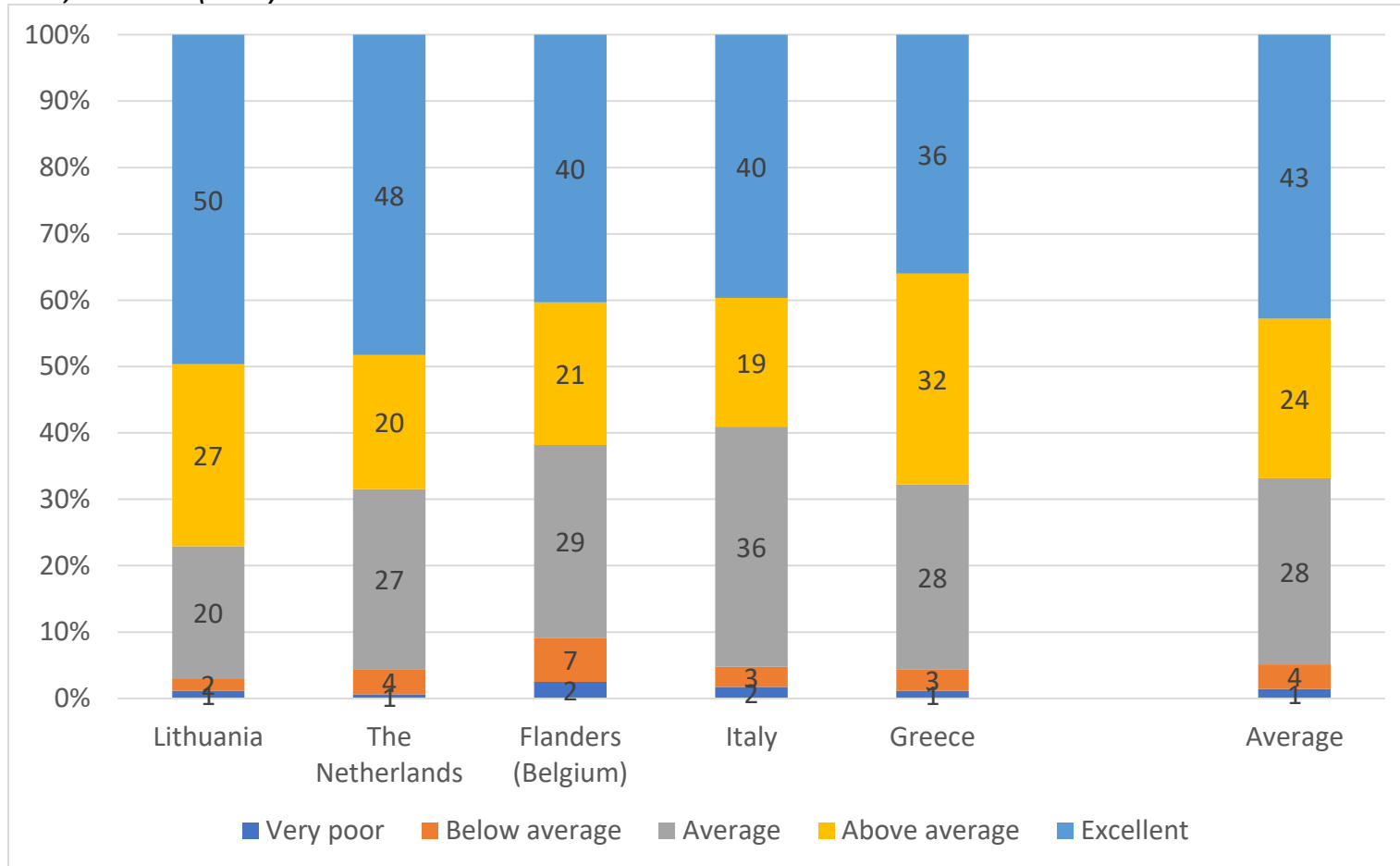
- Participants were asked to indicate their satisfaction on several aspects of the running event. Twelve statements were proposed, and some are discussed on the next pages:
 - Travel time to the event (Figure 4.18)
 - Registration procedure (Figure 4.19)
 - Atmosphere during the event (Figure 4.20)
 - Value for money (Figure 4.21)
 - Time and distance measurement during event (Figure 4.22)
 - Number of toilets (Figure 4.23)
 - Number of drinking points (Figure 4.24)
 - Entertainment (Figure 4.25)
 - Number of spectators (Figure 4.26)
 - The start of the event in general (Figure 4.27)
 - Your personal performance on the event (Figure 4.28)
 - The event as a whole (Figure 4.29)



- On average, running event participants are most satisfied on the atmosphere during the event (83%), the registration procedure (79%), and the time and distance measurement (71%). Event runners are least satisfied on the number of toilets (48% is satisfied)
- Greek event runners are most satisfied (93%) and Italian event runners are least satisfied (76%) on the atmosphere during the event. Flemish event runners have an average score (83%)
- As regards the registration procedure, Lithuanian event runners are most satisfied (88%), shortly followed by the Flemish event runners (85%). Italian event runners are least satisfied by the registration procedures (64%)
- As regards satisfaction for the time and distance measurement, Flemish event runners have an average score (71%). They score higher compared to their Italian (59%) and lower compared to their Greek (86%) counterparts



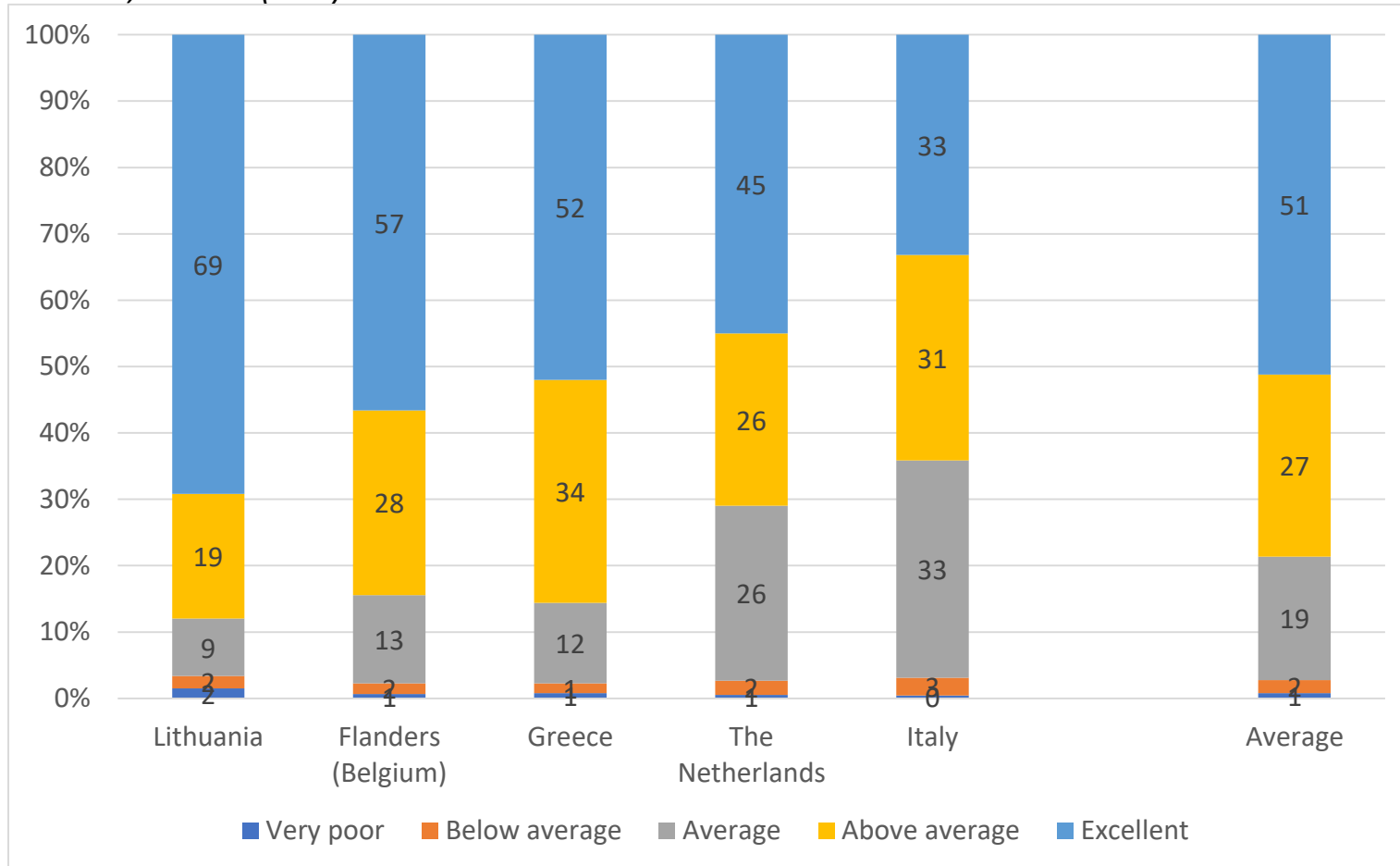
Figure 4.18. Satisfaction of travel time to event among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 2650; N(Greece) = 3124; N(Italy) = 232; N(Lithuania) = 266; N(The Netherlands) = 2391; N(Average) = 8663

Question: Please rate the following aspects of the event. (12 statements)

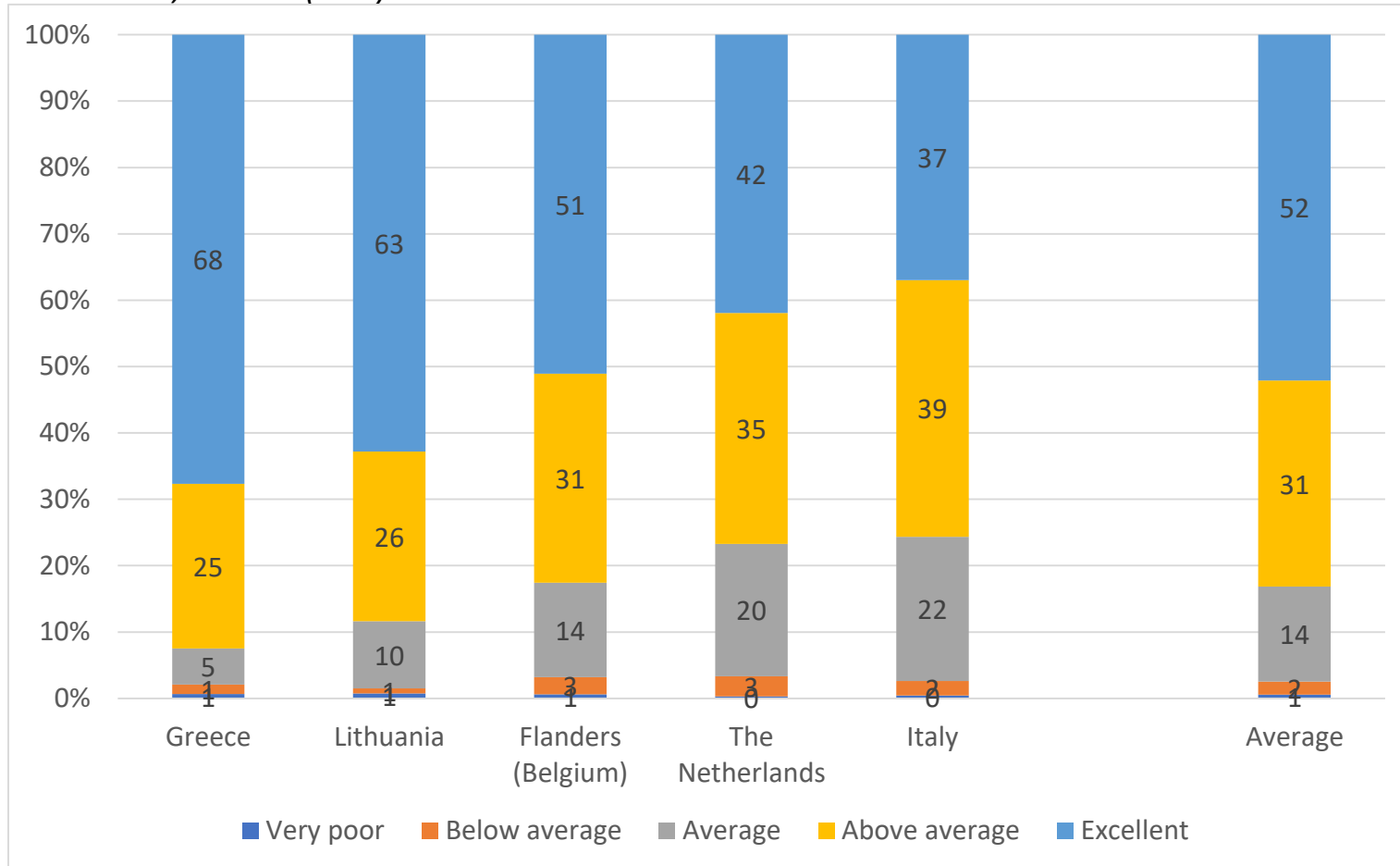
Figure 4.19. Satisfaction of registration procedure among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 2639; N(Greece) = 3247; N(Italy) = 226; N(Lithuania) = 266; N(The Netherlands) = 2397; N(Average) = 8775

Question: Please rate the following aspects of the event. (12 statements)

Figure 4.20. Satisfaction of atmosphere during the event among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

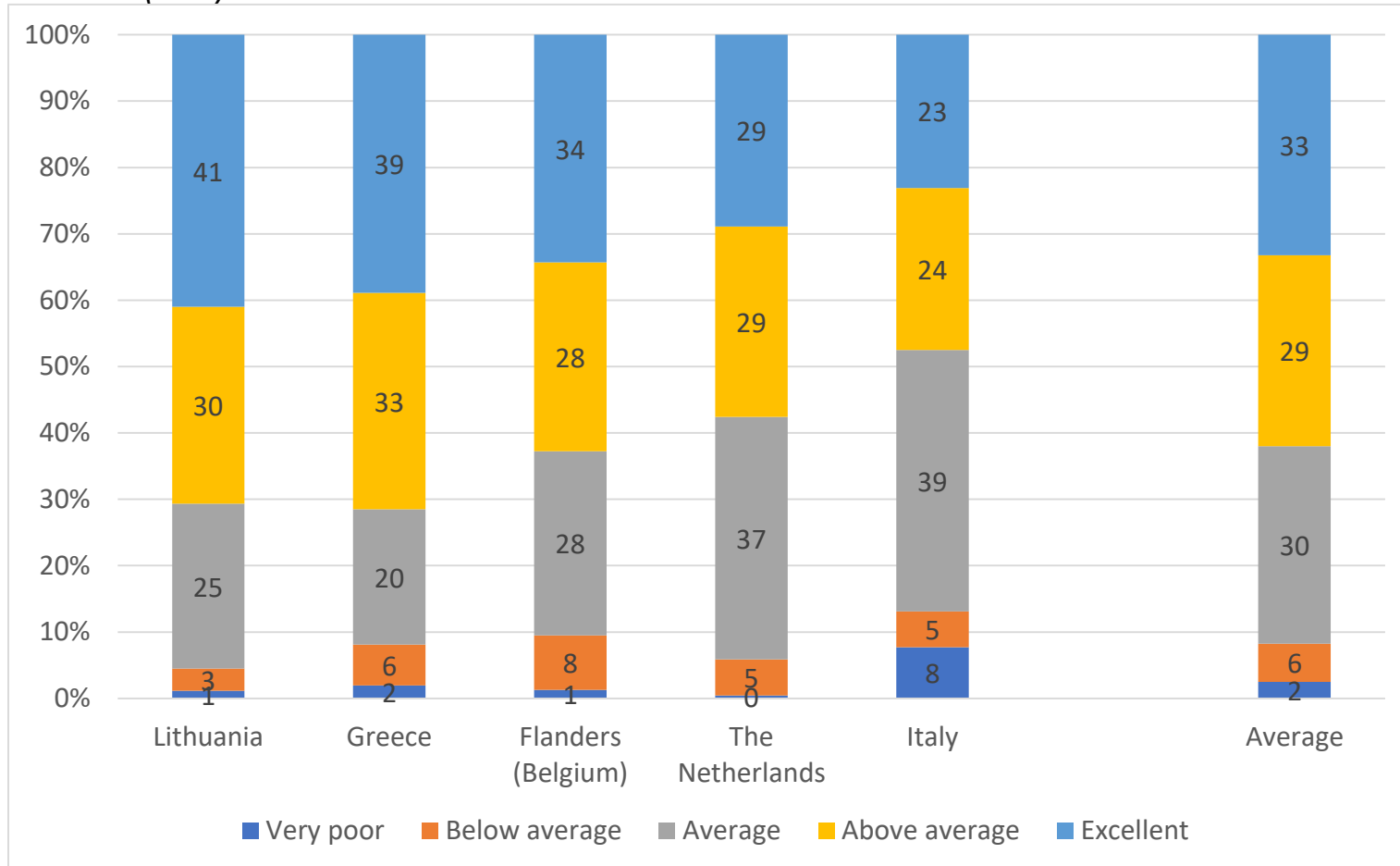


N(Flanders) = 2649; N(Greece) = 3255; N(Italy) = 230; N(Lithuania) = 266; N(The Netherlands) = 2398; N(Average) = 8798

Question: Please rate the following aspects of the event. (12 statements)



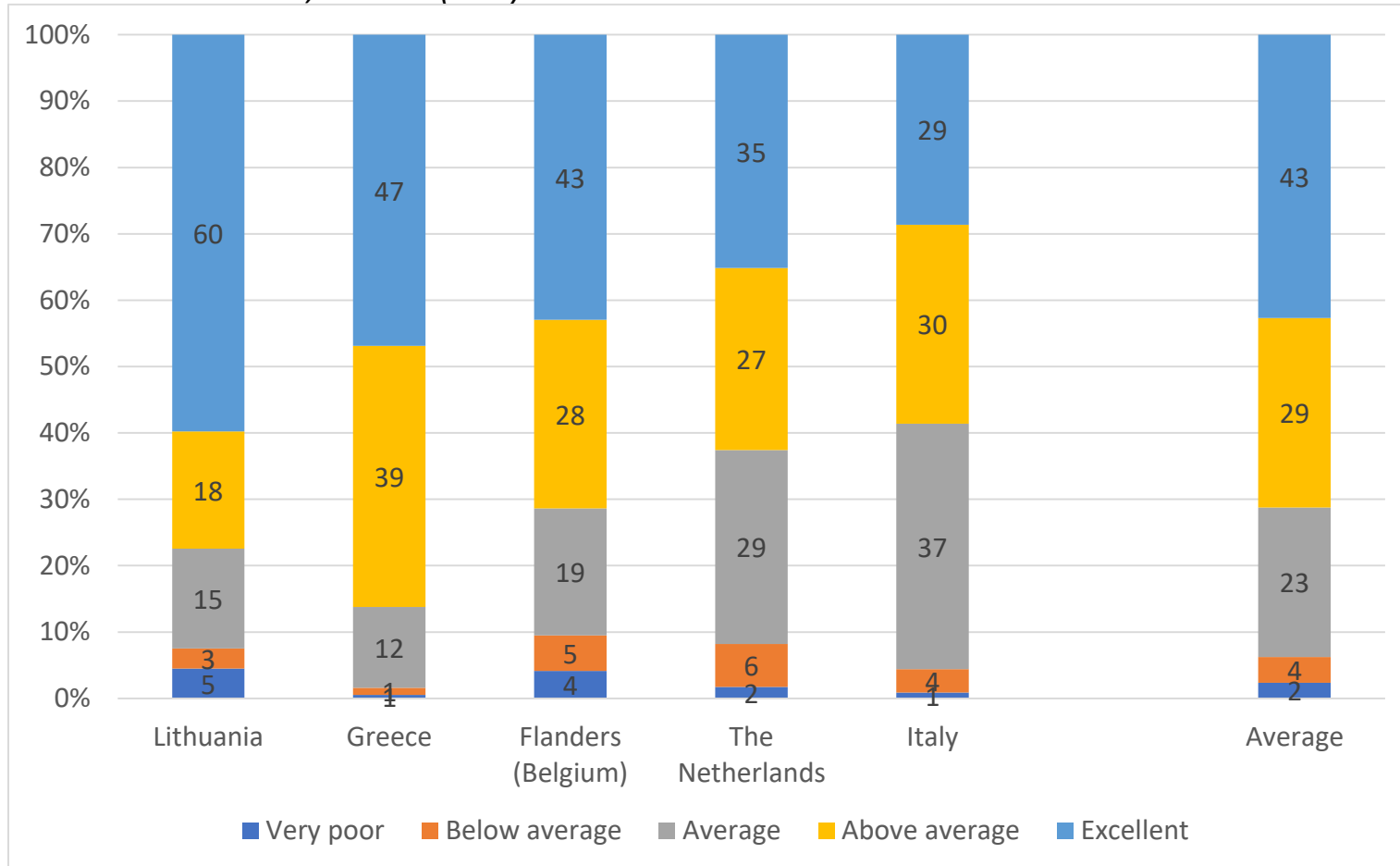
Figure 4.21. Satisfaction of value for money among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 2644; N(Greece) = 3255; N(Italy) = 221; N(Lithuania) = 266; N(The Netherlands) = 2394; N(Average) = 8780

Question: Please rate the following aspects of the event. (12 statements)

Figure 4.22. Satisfaction of time and distance measurement among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

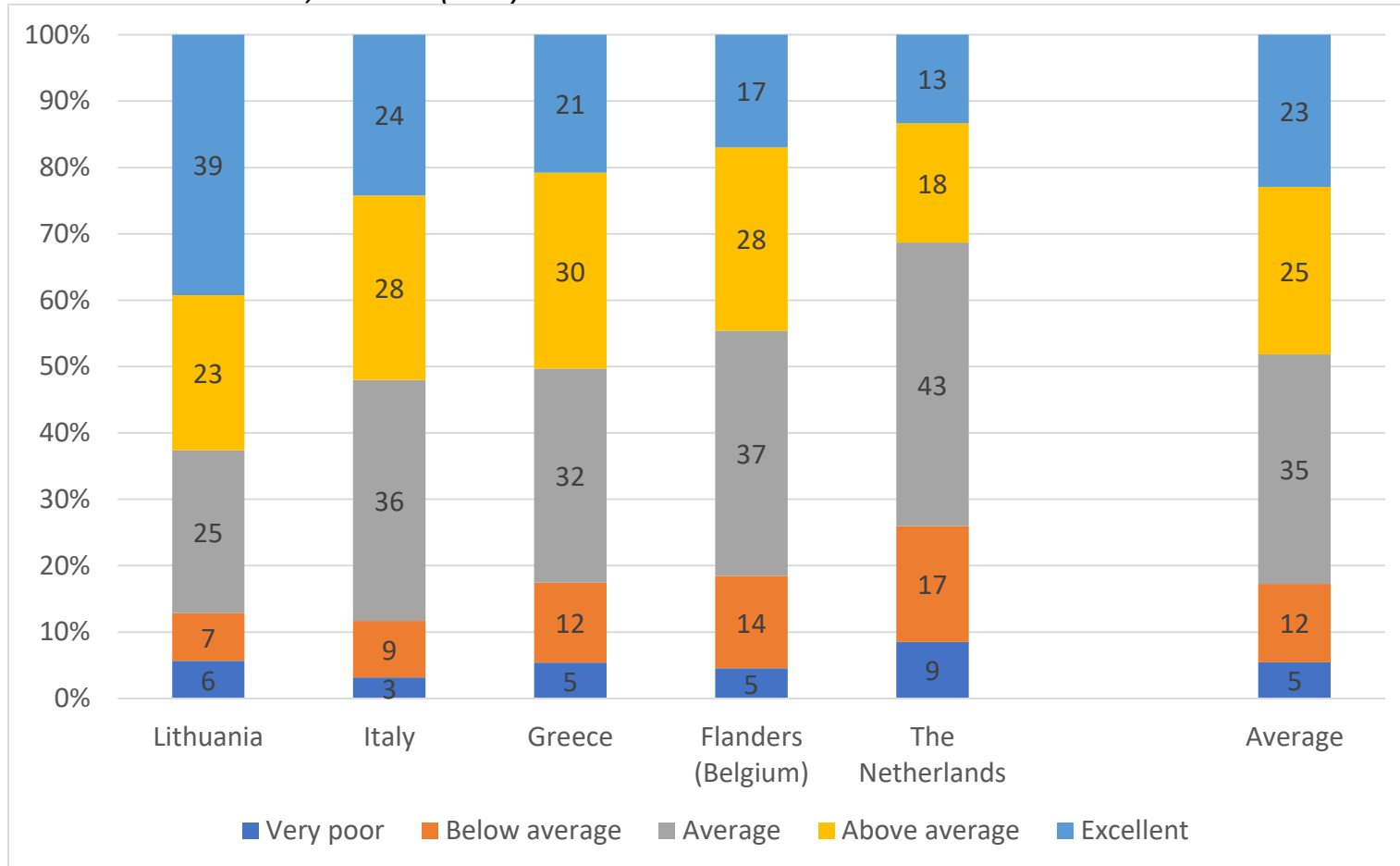


N(Flanders) = 2635; N(Greece) = 3237; N(Italy) = 227; N(Lithuania) = 266; N(The Netherlands) = 2390; N(Average) = 8755

Question: Please rate the following aspects of the event. (12 statements)



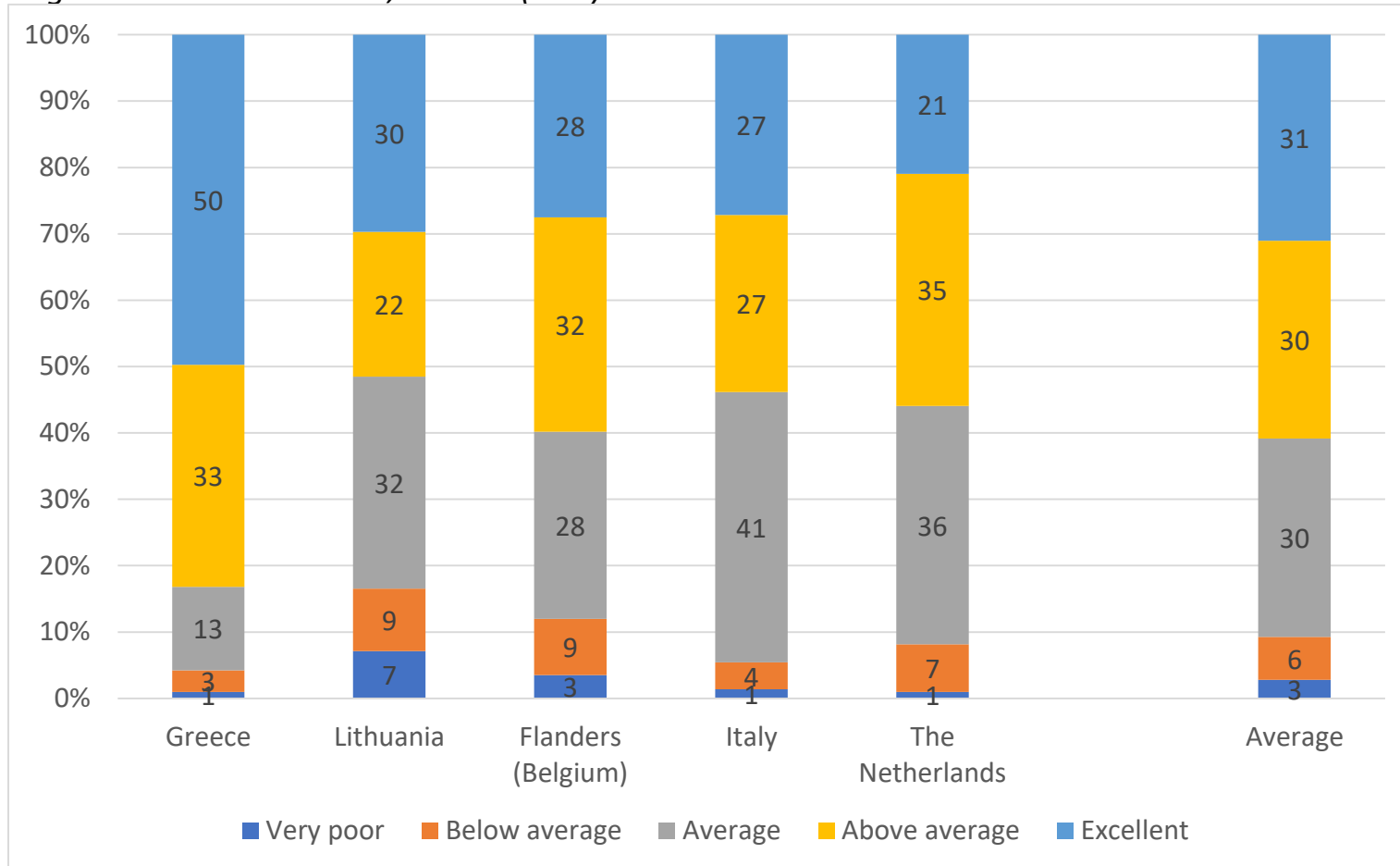
Figure 4.23. Satisfaction of number of toilets on the event among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 1771; N(Greece) = 3199; N(Italy) = 223; N(Lithuania) = 265; N(The Netherlands) = 2359; N(Average) = 7817

Question: Please rate the following aspects of the event. (12 statements)

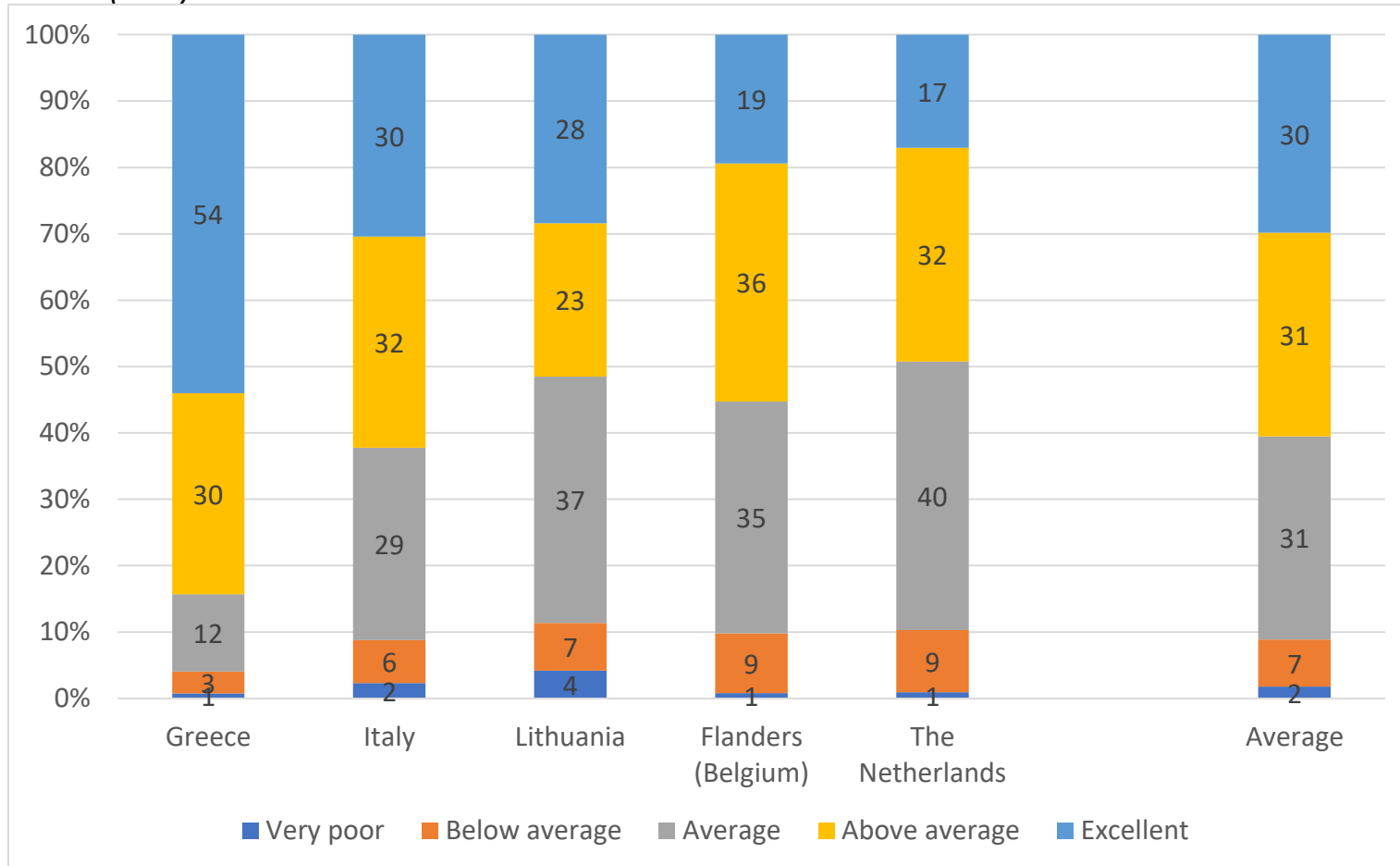
Figure 4.24. Satisfaction of number of drinking points on the event among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 1776; N(Greece) = 3242; N(Italy) = 221; N(Lithuania) = 266; N(The Netherlands) = 2384; N(Average) = 7889

Question: Please rate the following aspects of the event. (12 statements)

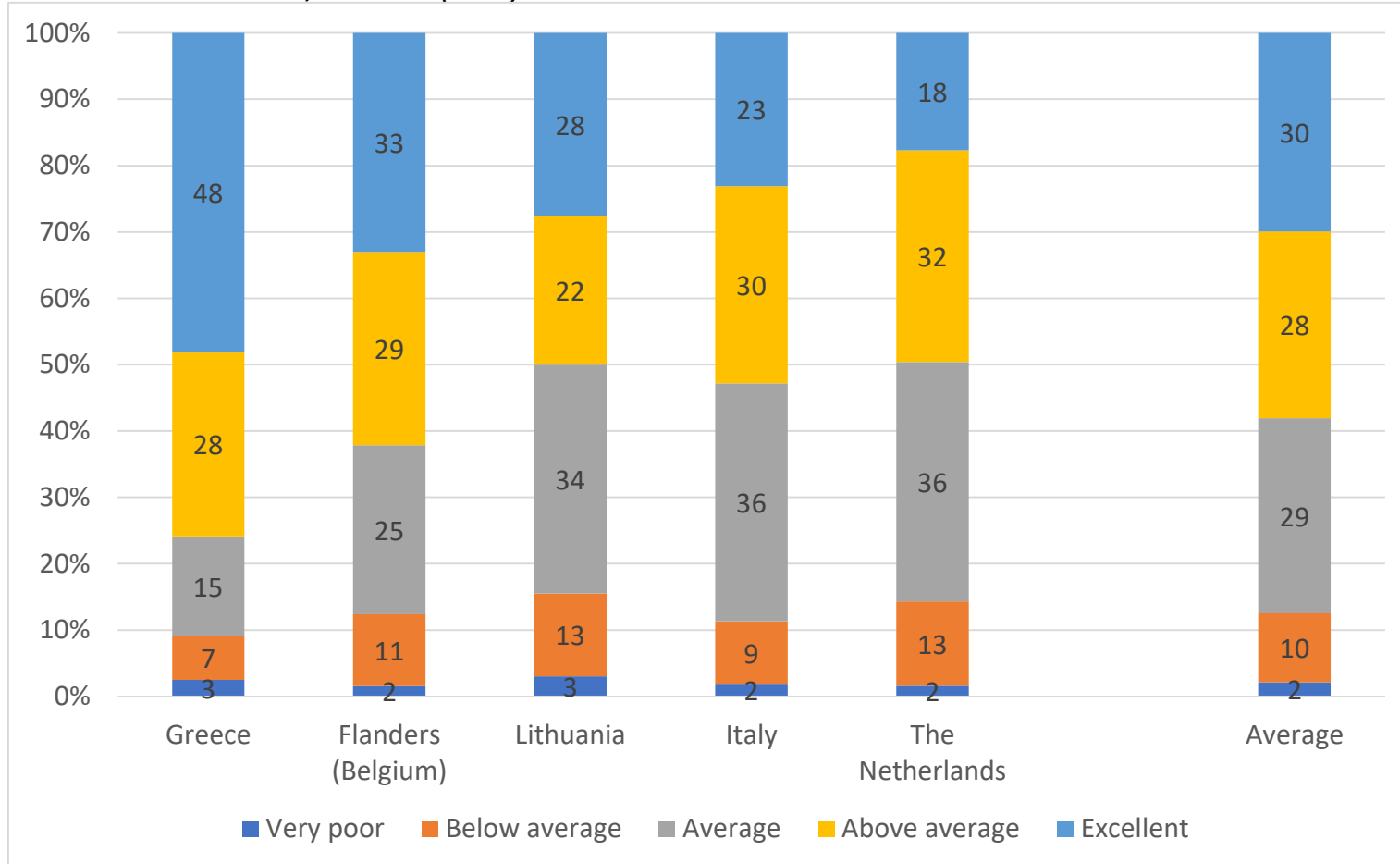
Figure 4.25. Satisfaction of entertainment among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 1773; N(Greece) = 3247; N(Italy) = 217; N(Lithuania) = 264; N(The Netherlands) = 2387; N(Average) = 7888

Question: Please rate the following aspects of the event. (12 statements)

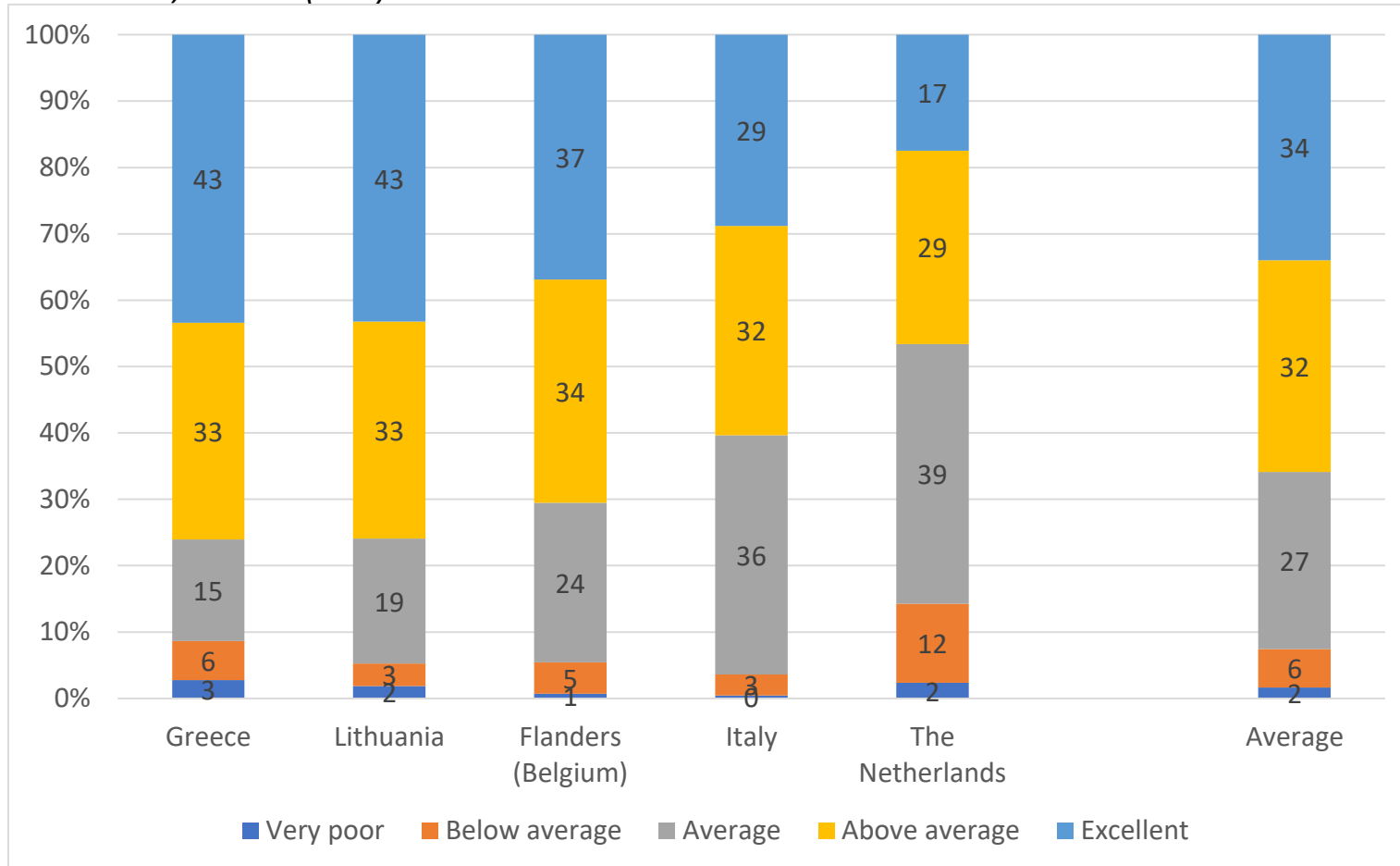
Figure 4.26. Satisfaction of number of spectators during the event among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 2643; N(Greece) = 3235; N(Italy) = 212; N(Lithuania) = 264; N(The Netherlands) = 2384; N(Average) = 8738

Question: Please rate the following aspects of the event. (12 statements)

Figure 4.27. Satisfaction of start of the event in general among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

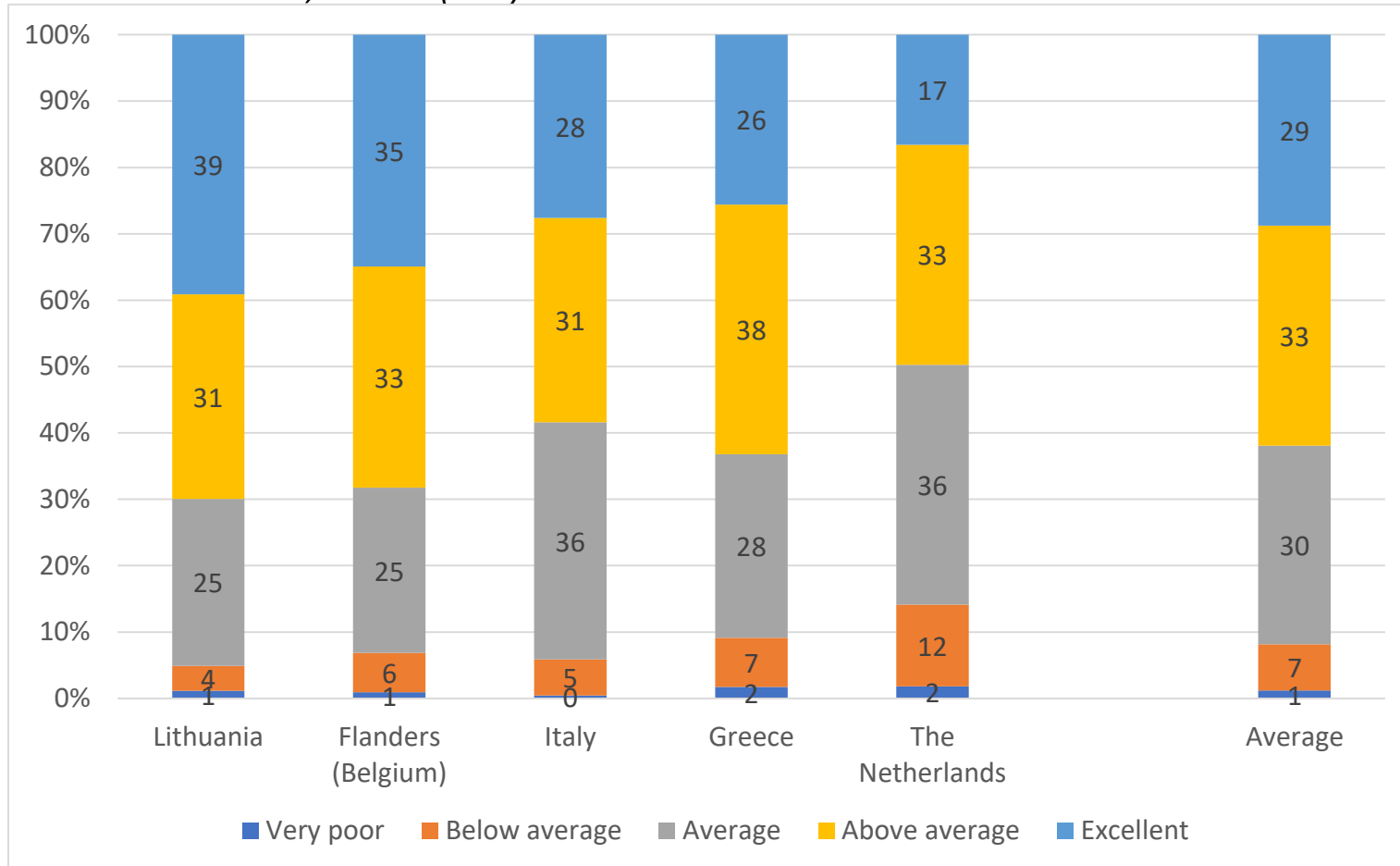


N(Flanders) = 2641; N(Greece) = 3253; N(Italy) = 222; N(Lithuania) = 266; N(The Netherlands) = 2391; N(Average) = 8773

Question: Please rate the following aspects of the event. (12 statements)



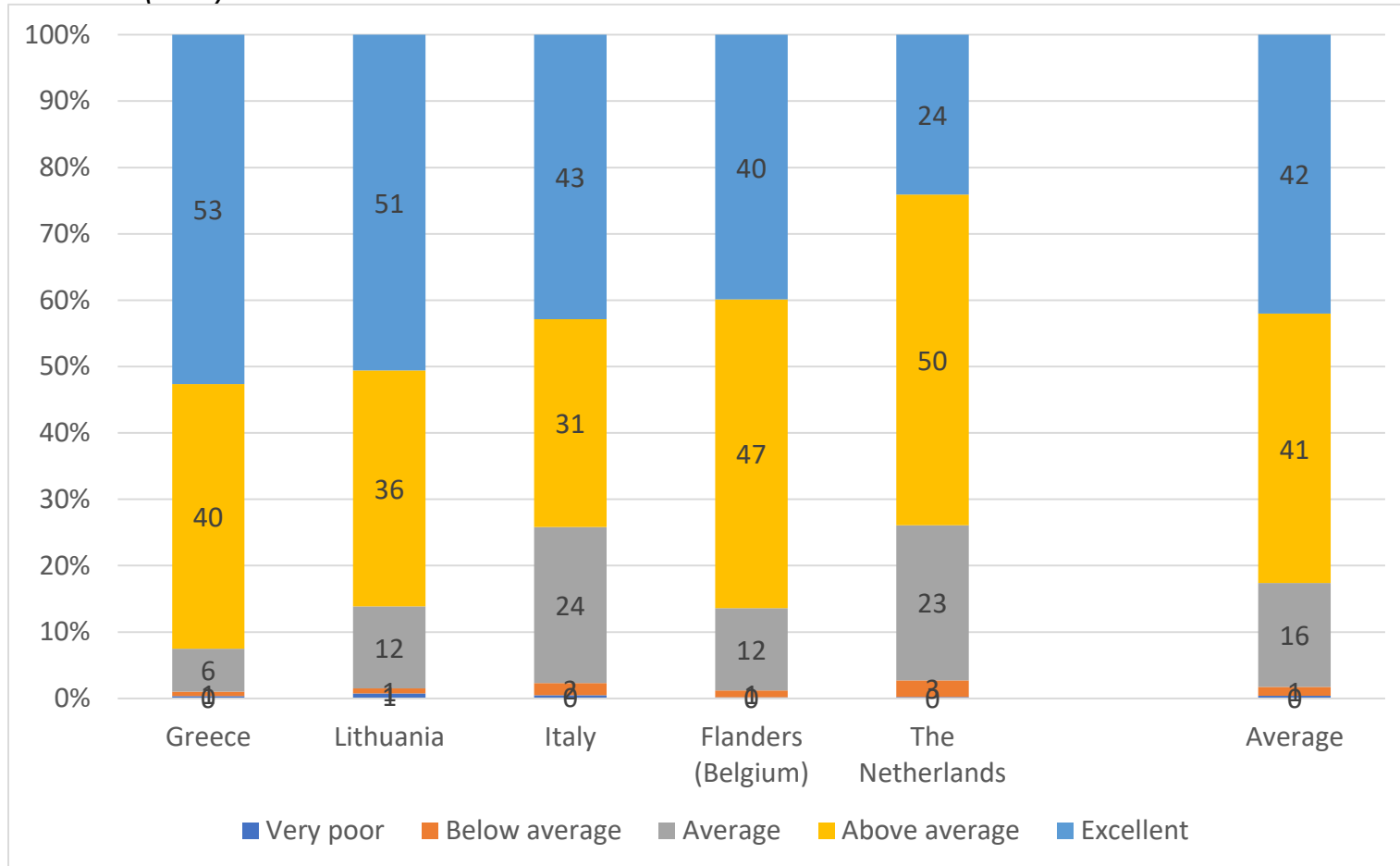
Figure 4.28. Satisfaction of personal performance on the event among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 2646; N(Greece) = 3252; N(Italy) = 221; N(Lithuania) = 266; N(The Netherlands) = 2387; N(Average) = 8772

Question: Please rate the following aspects of the event. (12 statements)

Figure 4.29. Satisfaction of event as a whole among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 2644; N(Greece) = 3253; N(Italy) = 217; N(Lithuania) = 267; N(The Netherlands) = 2390; N(Average) = 8771

Question: Please rate the following aspects of the event. (12 statements)

4.9. SPORTIVE AND HEALTH LEGACY

- [4.9.1.](#) Sportive behaviour
- [4.9.2.](#) Physical activity behavior
- [4.9.3.](#) Healthy behaviour
- [4.9.4.](#) Repeated event participation



4.9.1. SPORTIVE BEHAVIOUR



- On average, event runners expect to participate in sport and running four (4.1) and three times (3.1) per week respectively during the next twelve months (Table 4.13 and 4.14). Flemish event runners expect to sport (3.7) and run (2.6) less often. This is slightly higher compared to the Dutch runners, but lower compared to Italian, Greek and Lithuanian runners
- Figures 4.30 and 4.31 show there is almost no difference between the influence on future sports or running behaviour. In general, 23 percent of event runners indicate that this future sports and running participation is affected to a large extent by participating in the running event. For the biggest part, there is no influence. For Flemish and Dutch event runners there is more likely to be none or a small influence. For Greek event runners, the running event has a more direct influence on both future running and sports participation

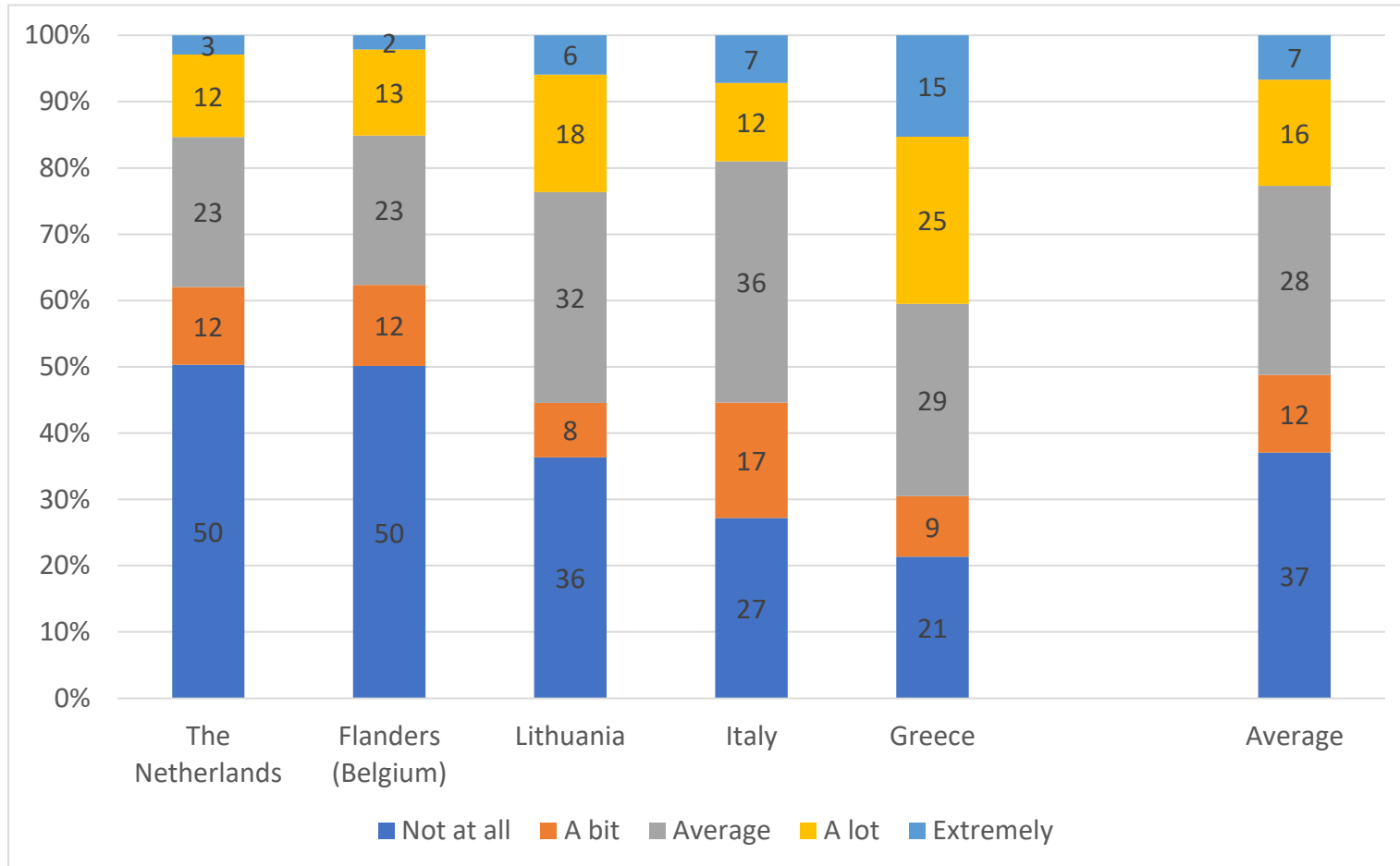


Table 4.13. *Sportive legacy (future sports participation) among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019*

Average number of times expected to practice sport in future	Average (N=7091)	Flanders (Belgium) (N=1632)	Greece (N=2823)	Italy (N=207)	Lithuania (N=222)	The Netherlands (N=2207)
Mean	4.1	3.7	4.4	4.2	4.5	3.5
Standard deviation	/	2.2	2.0	1.8	2.0	2.0

Question: How many times per week do you expect to practice sports (including running) during the next twelve months, on average?

Figure 4.30. Influence of participation in event on sportive legacy (future sports participation) among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 1634; N(Greece) = 2789; N(Italy) = 195; N(Lithuania) = 220; N(The Netherlands) = 2212; N(Average) = 7050

Question: To what extent is this frequency of sport participation influenced by your participation in the event?



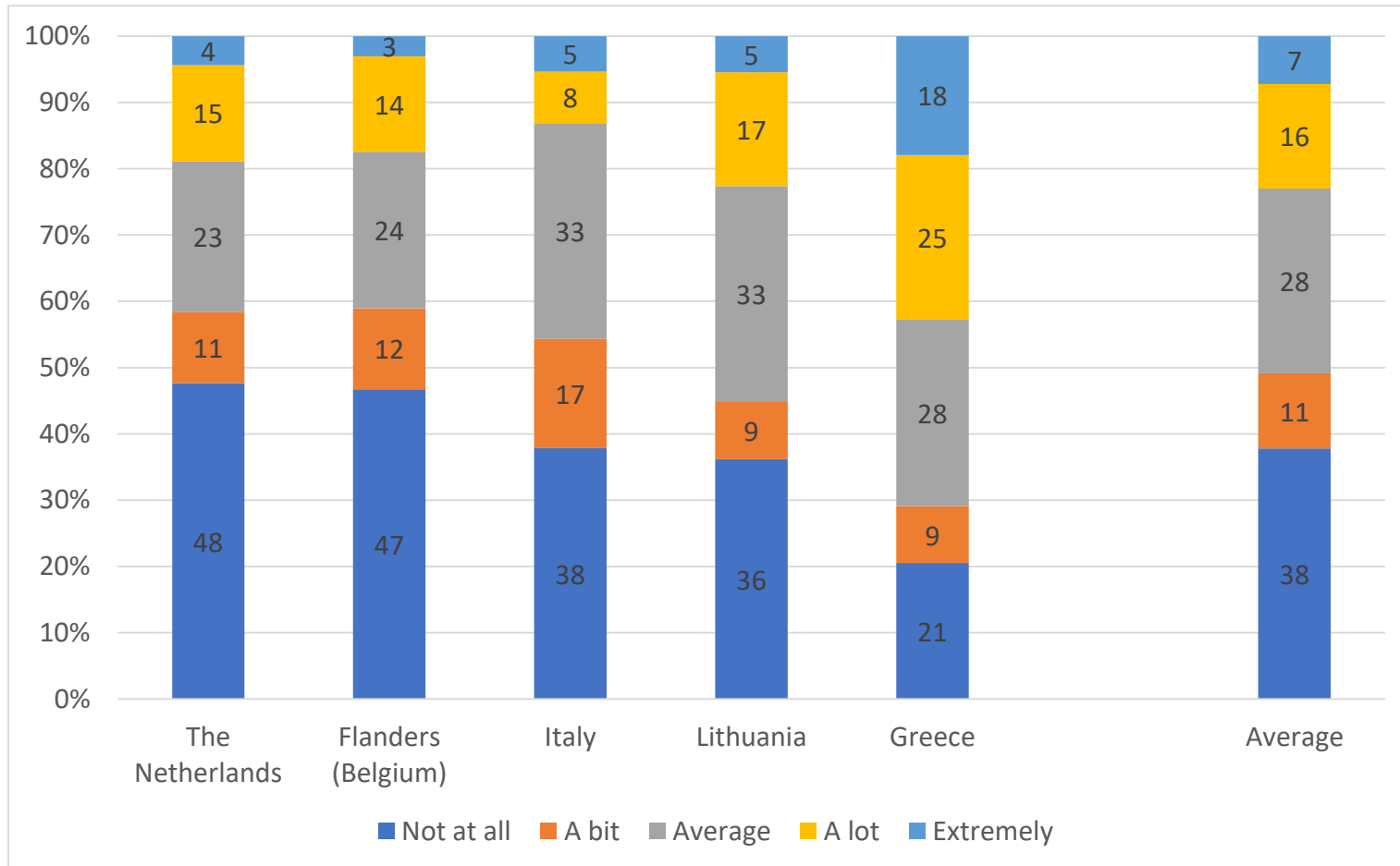
Table 4.14. *Sportive legacy (future running participation) among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019*

Average number of times expected to run in future	Average (N=7431)	Flanders (Belgium) (N=1695)	Greece (N=3078)	Italy (N=212)	Lithuania (N=220)	The Netherlands (N=2226)
Mean	3.1	2.6	3.4	3.6	3.4	2.4
Standard deviation	/	1.5	1.7	1.6	1.7	1.8

Question: How many times per week do you expect to run during the next twelve months, on average?



Figure 4.31. Influence of participation in event on sportive legacy (future running participation) among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 1701; N(Greece) = 3065; N(Italy) = 206; N(Lithuania) = 221; N(The Netherlands) = 2241; N(Average) = 7434

Question: To what extent is this frequency of running positively influenced by your participation in the event?



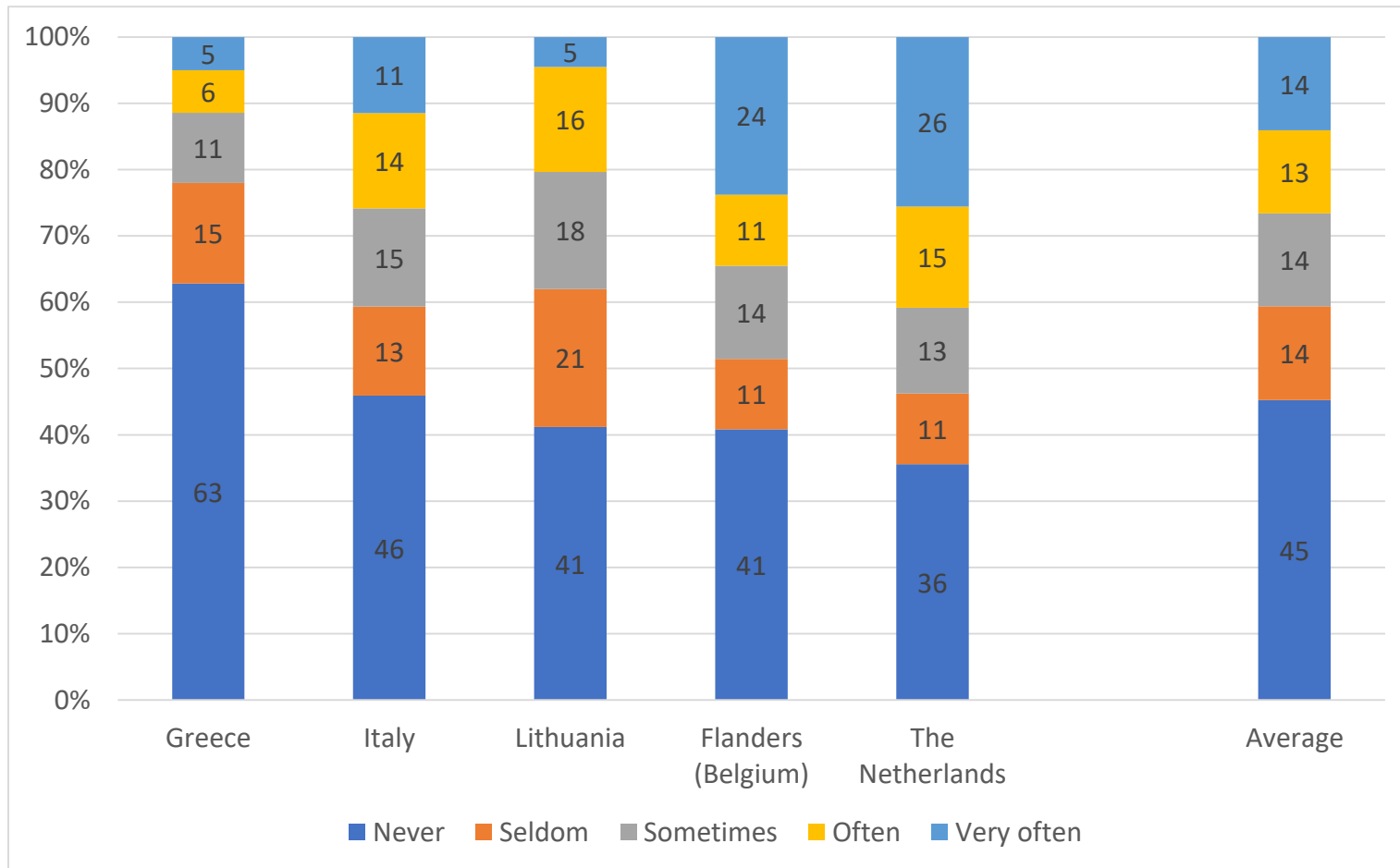
4.9.2. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BEHAVIOUR



- Just as was the case for the period before the running event, participants were asked to what extent they expect to undertake several activities to be physically active in the next twelve months. The same five activities as earlier were proposed:
 - Cycling to/from work (Figure 4.32)
 - Walking to/from work (Figure 4.33)
 - A cycling tour made in your free time (Figure 4.34)
 - A walk made in your free time (Figure 4.35)
 - Dancing (in your free time, not in club) (Figure 4.36)
- In general, around half of event runners in Europe never walk or take a bike to/from work (45%). This number is slightly lower for cycling to/from work and a lot higher for walking to/from work among Flemish event runners. More than 70 percent of Flemish event runners never walks to/from work, which is much higher compared to the other countries
- Only one fifth (21%) and six percent of event runners in Europe never cycle or walk in their free time respectively. Flemish event runners score below the average for cycling and above the average for walking. More than ten percent of event runners never take a walk in their free time, which is highest compared to the other countries
- More than 50 percent of event runners in Europe never dance. The Flemish event runners has the highest number, together with Greek event runners (57%)
- These numbers are quite the same as those in Figures 4.1 until 4.5 (measuring the frequency in the past twelve months). This indicates that the running event did not have much difference as regards physical activity behaviour



Figure 4.32. Frequency of cycling to/from work in the next twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

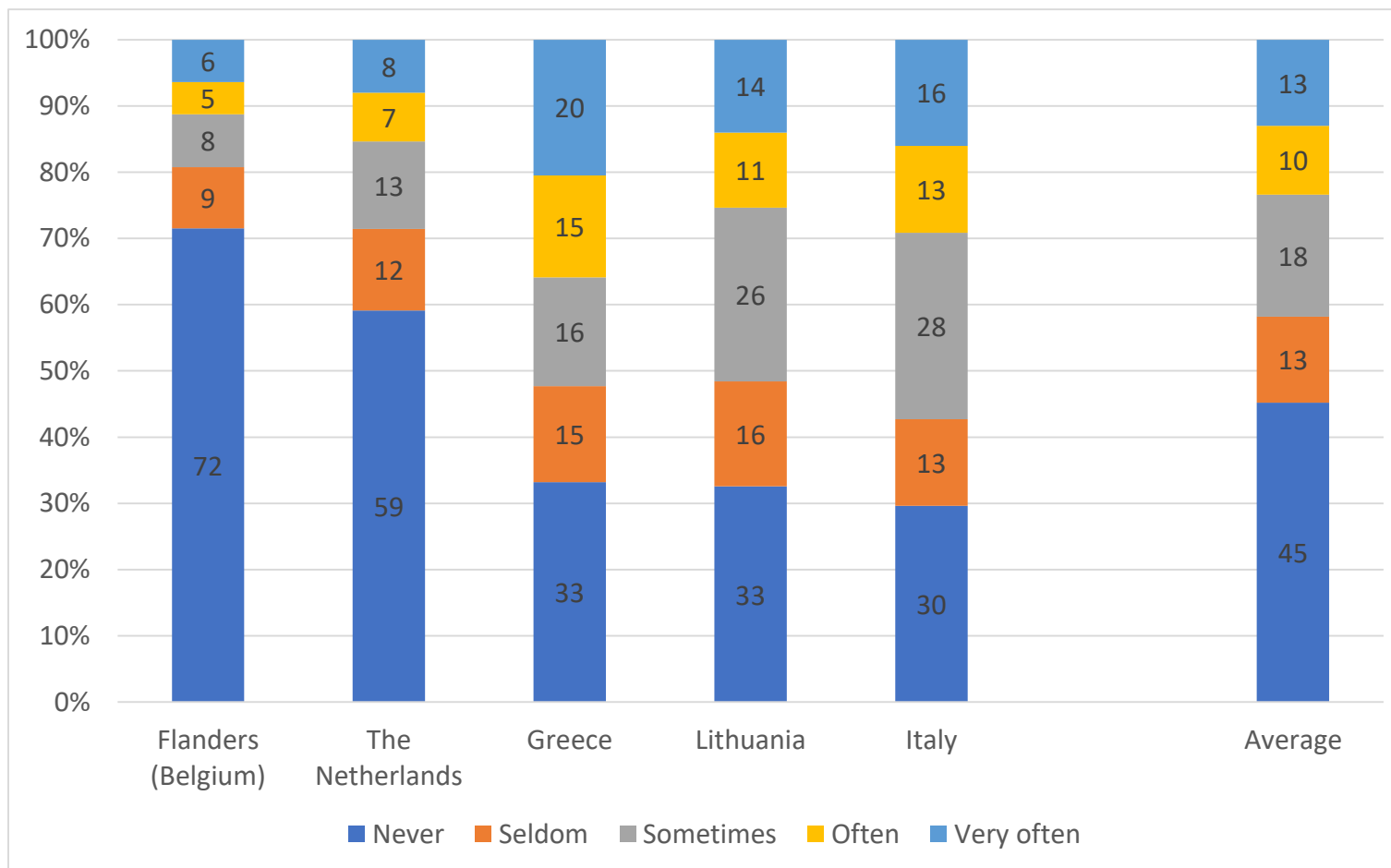


N(Flanders) = 2561; N(Greece) = 2910; N(Italy) = 209; N(Lithuania) = 221; N(The Netherlands) = 2157; N(Average) = 8058

Question: Besides sport there are other activities which are (also) meant as a way to be physically active in general or for pleasure. How often do you expect to undertake the following activities during the next twelve months?



Figure 4.33. Frequency of walking to/from work in the next twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

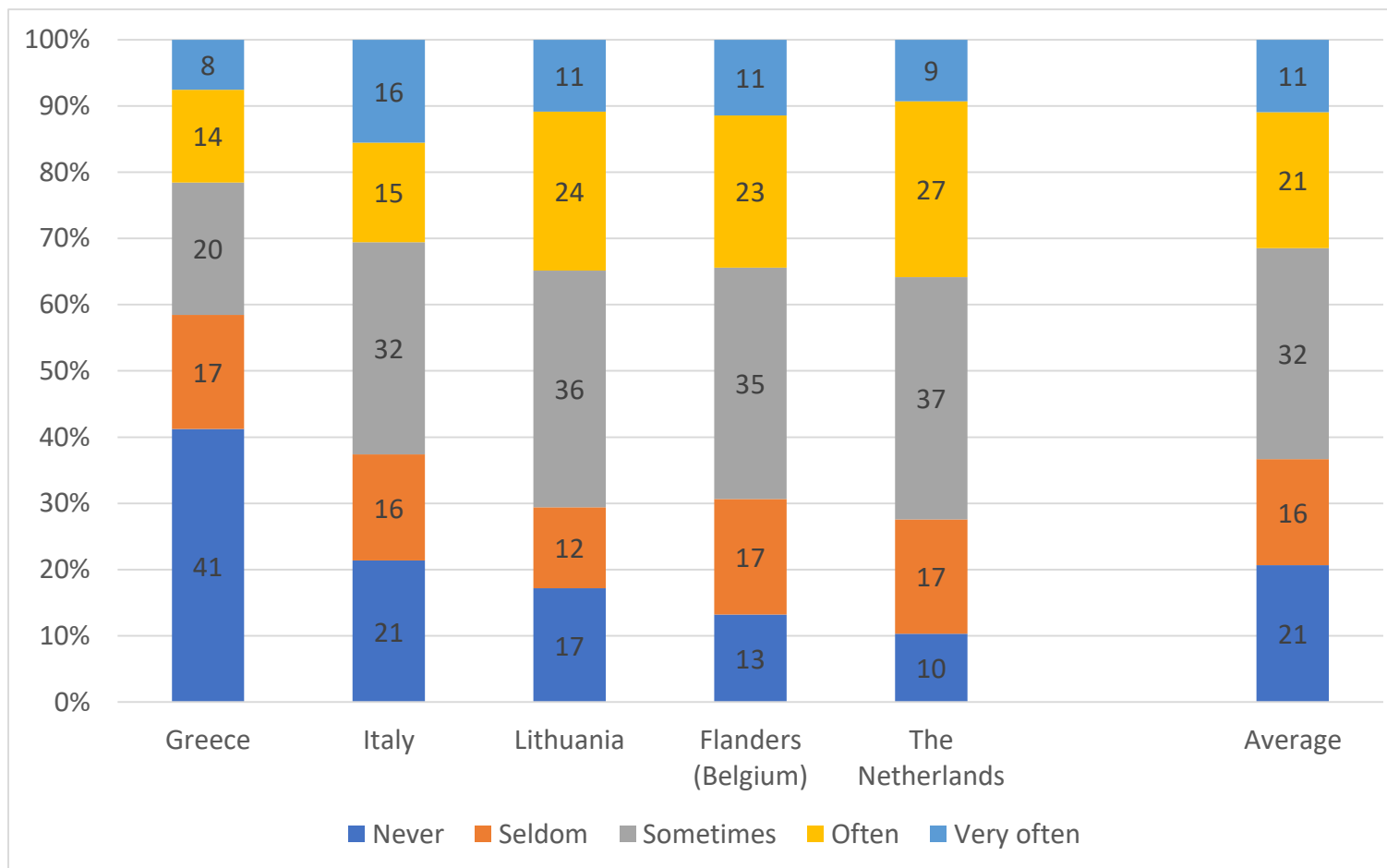


N(Flanders) = 2555; N(Greece) = 2983; N(Italy) = 206; N(Lithuania) = 221; N(The Netherlands) = 2155; N(Average) = 8120

Question: Besides sport there are other activities which are (also) meant as a way to be physically active in general or for pleasure. How often do you expect to undertake the following activities during the next twelve months?



Figure 4.34. Frequency of a cycling tour in the free time in the next twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

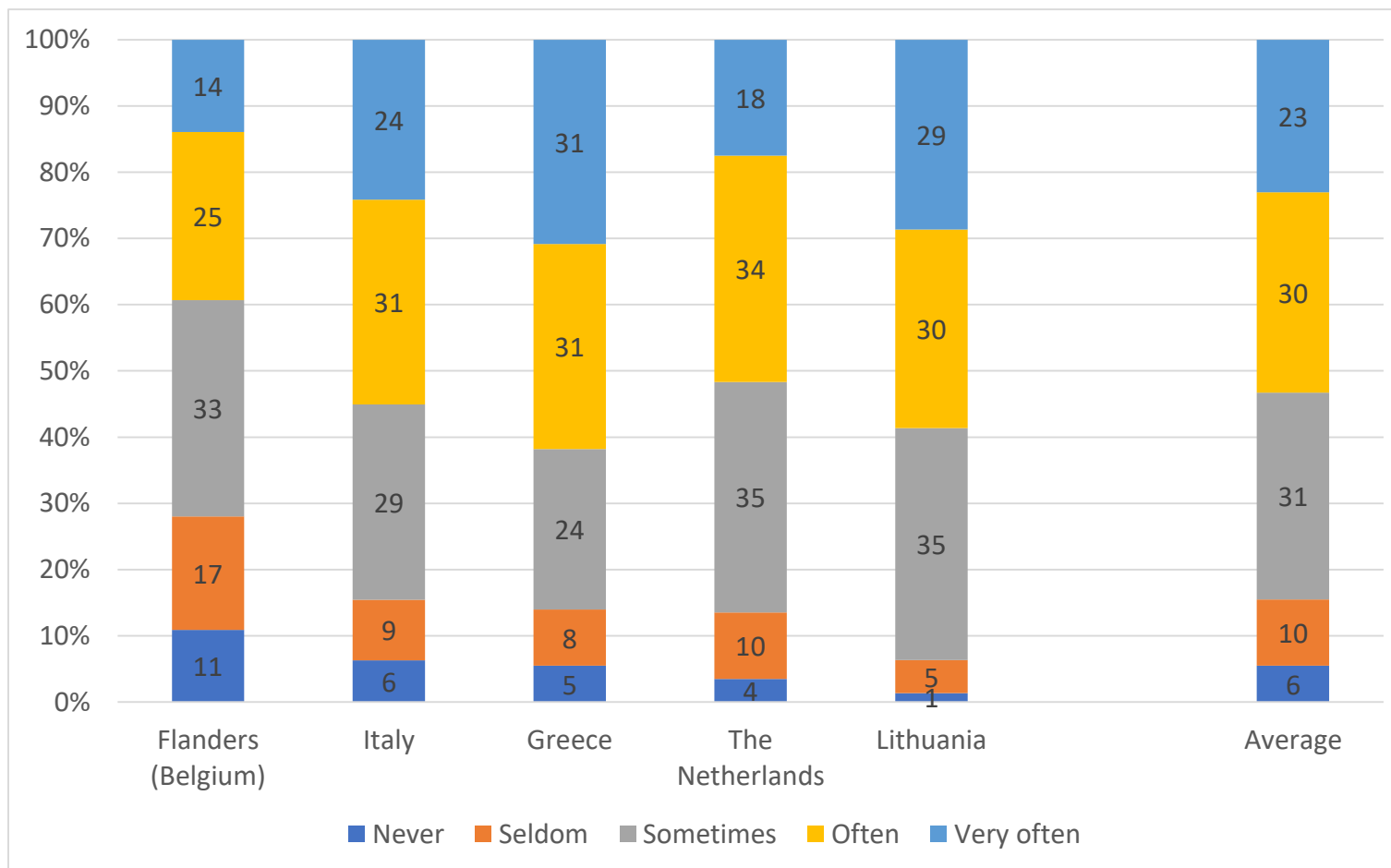


N(Flanders) = 2568; N(Greece) = 2916; N(Italy) = 206; N(Lithuania) = 221; N(The Netherlands) = 2160; N(Average) = 8071

Question: Besides sport there are other activities which are (also) meant as a way to be physically active in general or for pleasure. How often do you expect to undertake the following activities during the next twelve months?



Figure 4.35. Frequency of a walk in the free time in the next twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

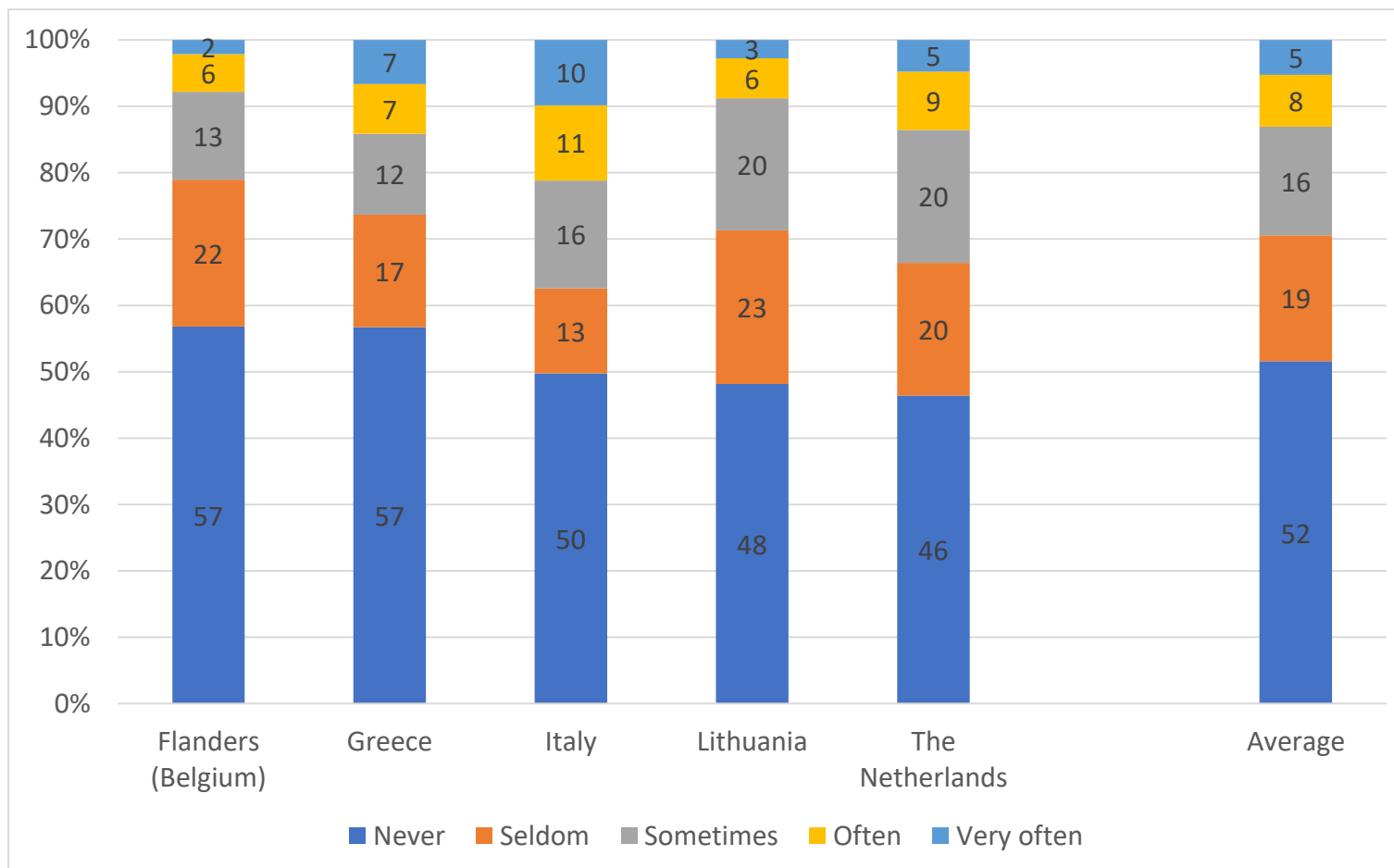


N(Flanders) = 2568; N(Greece) = 3039; N(Italy) = 207; N(Lithuania) = 220; N(The Netherlands) = 2171; N(Average) = 8205

Question: Besides sport there are other activities which are (also) meant as a way to be physically active in general or for pleasure. How often do you expect to undertake the following activities during the next twelve months?



Figure 4.36. Frequency of dancing (in the free time, not in a club) in the next twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 1681; N(Greece) = 2894; N(Italy) = 203; N(Lithuania) = 216; N(The Netherlands) = 2148; N(Average) = 7142

Question: Besides sport there are other activities which are (also) meant as a way to be physically active in general or for pleasure. How often do you expect to undertake the following activities during the next twelve months?



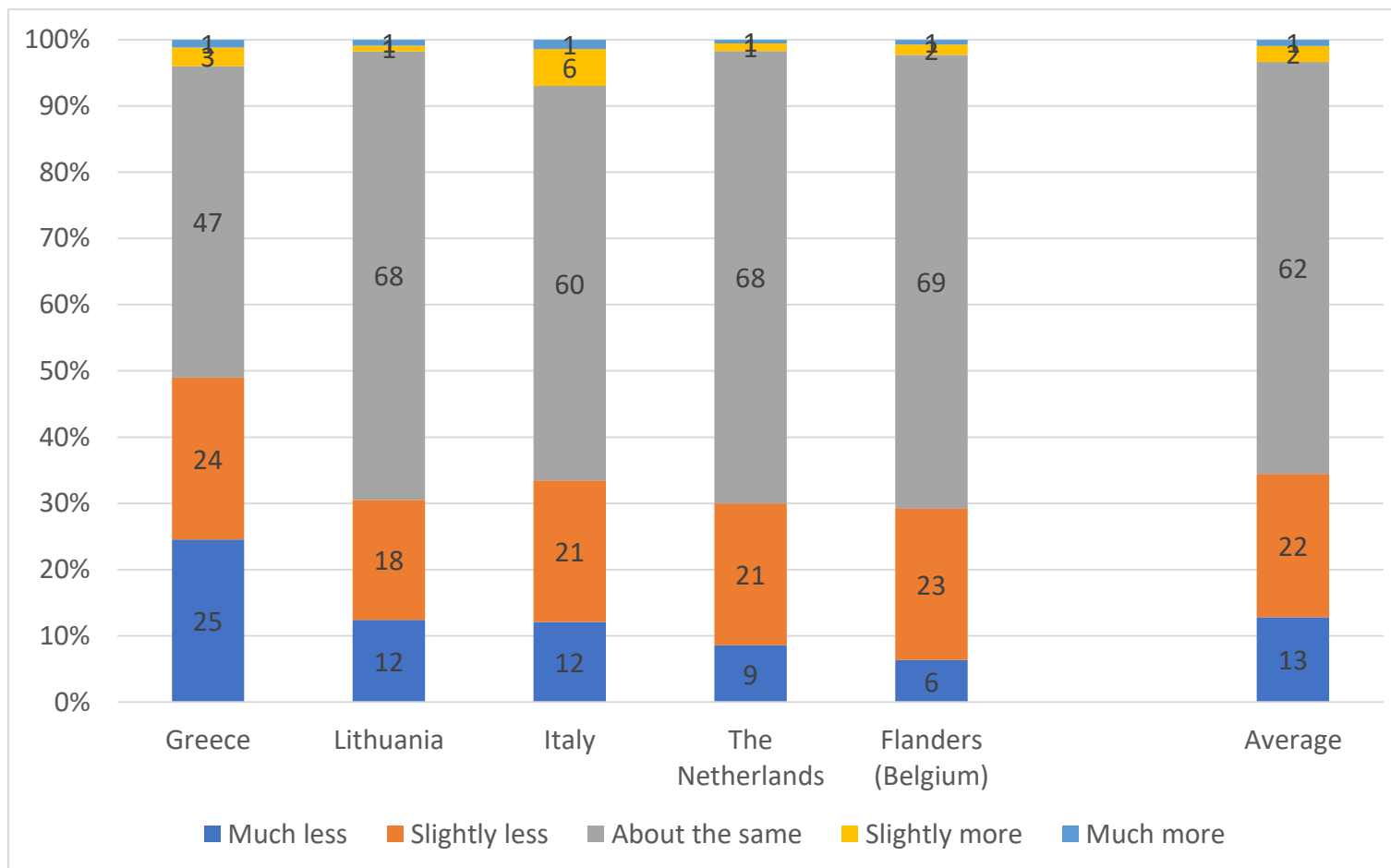
4.9.3. HEALTHY BEHAVIOUR



- Just as was the case for the period before the running event, participants were asked to what extent they expect to eat and drink unhealthy, and smoke in the next twelve months:
 - Eating fat and/or sugar and/or salt (Figure 4.37)
 - Drinking alcohol (Figure 4.38)
 - Smoking (Figure 4.39)
- In general, the running event had no impact on healthy behaviour. 62, 60, and 57 percent of event runners ate, drank and smoked about the same respectively (denoting no influence of the running event). For 35, 37 and 42 percent of event runners the event had a positive influence on the eating, drinking and smoking behaviour respectively as they indicated they expect to eat and drink less unhealthy and smoke less (denoting a positive influence of the running event). These are almost the same as the period before the running event
- Compared to their Greek, Italian and Lithuanian counterparts, more Flemish event runners indicated that participation in the running event had no influence on eating, drinking and smoking behaviour. In addition, the Flemish event runners showed one of the least positive influences of the event on healthy behaviour (together with Dutch event runners)



Figure 4.37. Intention to eat fat and/or sugar and or salt in the next twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

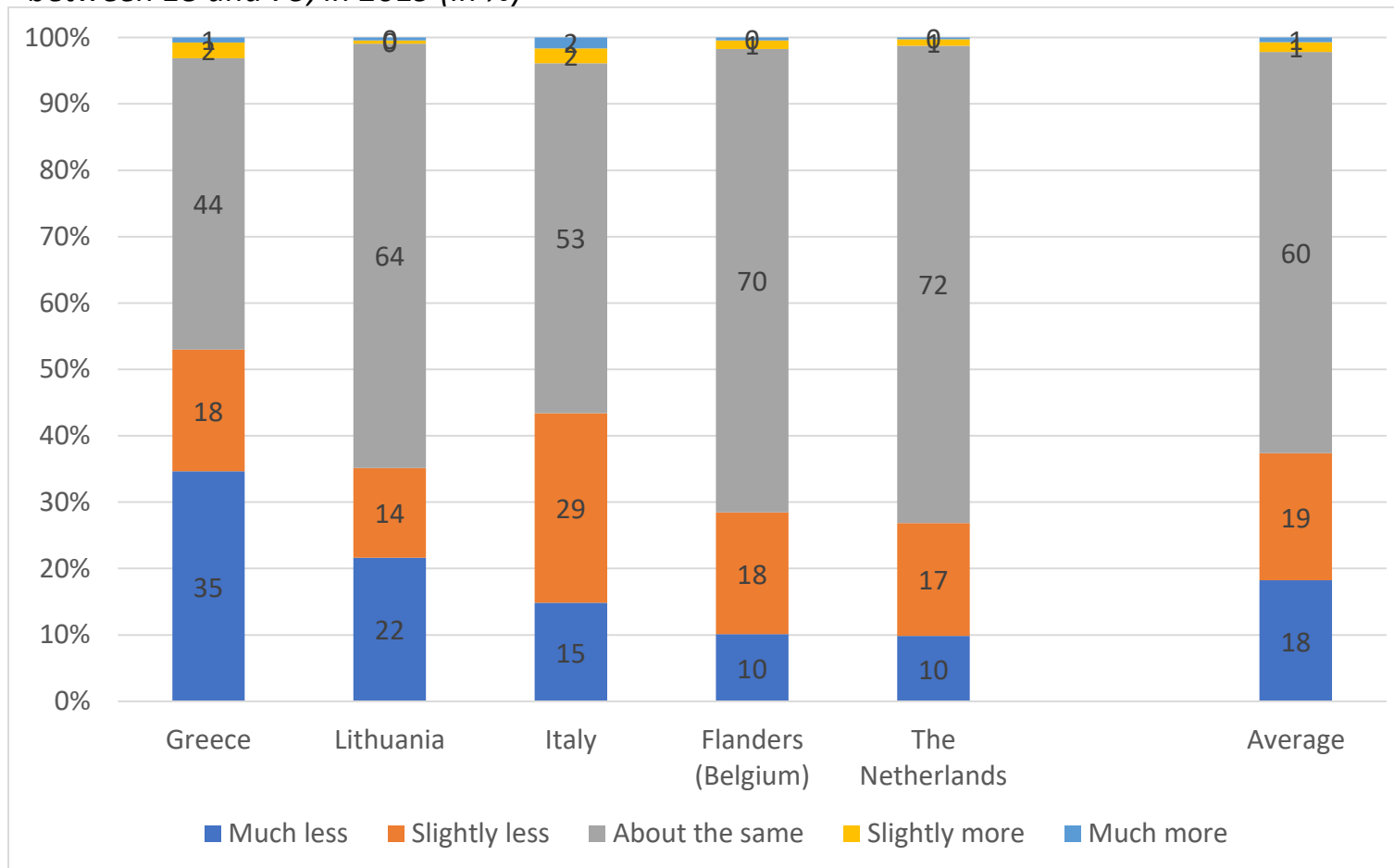


N(Flanders) = 1704; N(Greece) = 3124; N(Italy) = 215; N(Lithuania) = 226; N(The Netherlands) = 2270; N(Average) = 7539

Question: Please indicate the extent to which you intend to eat less fat and/or sugar during the next twelve months as a result of your participation in the event.



Figure 4.38. *Intention to drink alcohol in the next twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)*

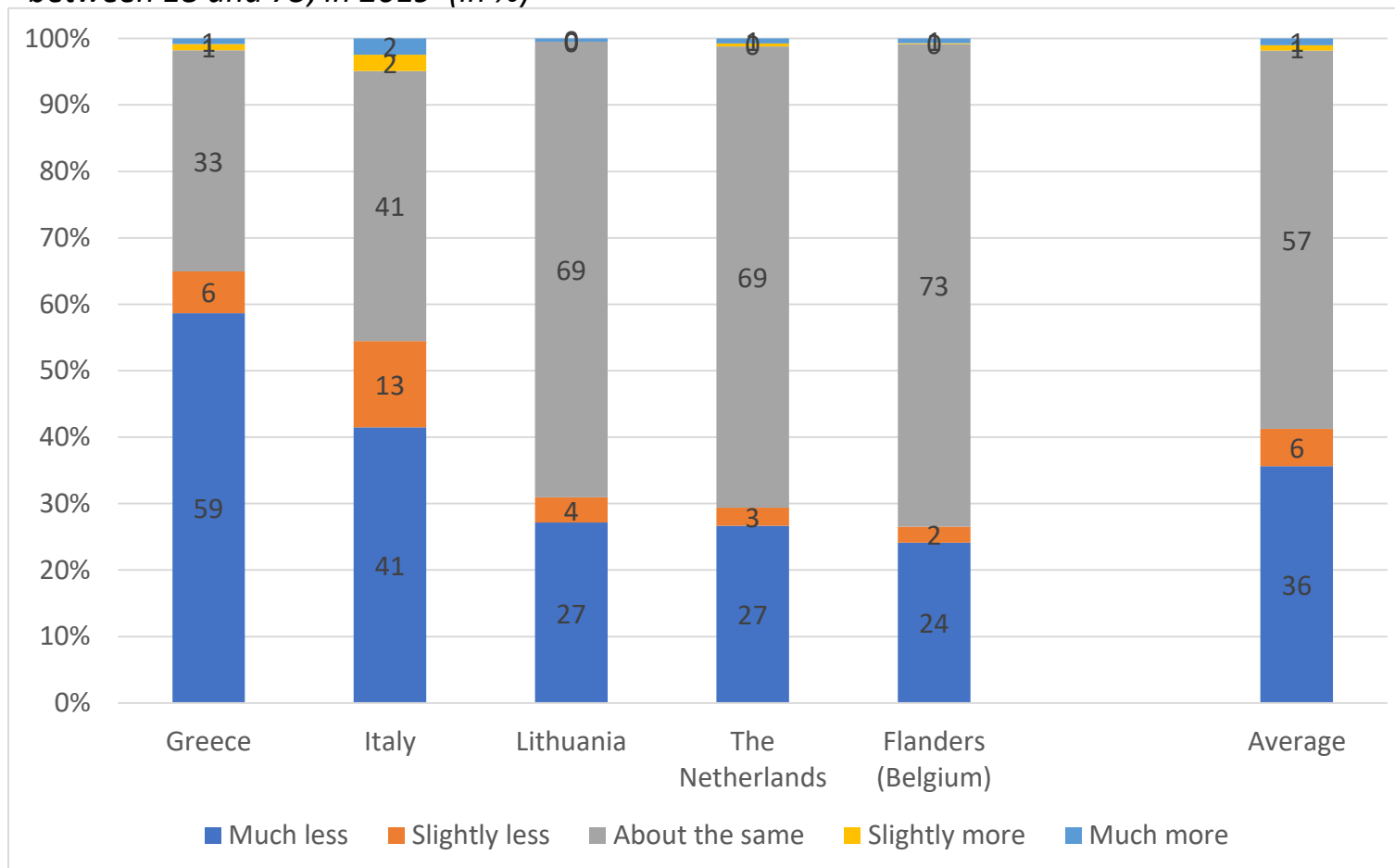


N(Flanders) = 1660; N(Greece) = 3035; N(Italy) = 182; N(Lithuania) = 222; N(The Netherlands) = 2241; N(Average) = 7340

Question: Please indicate the extent to which you intend to drink less alcohol during the next twelve months as a result of your participation in the event.



Figure 4.39. Intention to smoke in the next twelve months among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)



N(Flanders) = 1305; N(Greece) = 2553; N(Italy) = 123; N(Lithuania) = 210; N(The Netherlands) = 1882; N(Average) = 6073

Question: Please indicate the extent to which you intend to smoke less during the next twelve months as a result of your participation in the event.



4.9.4. REPEATED EVENT PARTICIPATION

Repeated event participation



- A large share of event runners would participate in the same running event the year afterwards (score of 7 or higher on a scale from 0 to 10; Table 4.15). Although quite a high share of Flemish event runners would participate in the same running event the year afterwards (82.5%), this is lower compared to event runners in other countries

Table 4.15. Repeated event participation among event runners aged between 18 and 75, in 2019 (in %)

	Average (N=8659)	Flanders (Belgium) (N=2553)	Greece (N=3287)	Italy (N=228)	Lithuania (N=266)	The Netherlands (N=2325)
Percentage of event runners that are likely to participate in the same event the year afterwards*	85.0	82.5	84.8	87.3	86.8	83.5

* Classified as respondents that indicated a seven or more on a scale from zero to ten
Question: How likely are you going to participate in the event next year?



CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION



- Light running increased in popularity in the past decades
 - The diversity of (event) runners also increased
- Share of male runners increases with the distance that is covered on the event (especially among Flemish and Dutch event runners (less among Greek and Lithuanian event runners)
- Flemish event runner participates a lot in cycling, fitness and swimming as well (running is not the only sport)
- A large share of Flemish event runners participates more in running compared to three years ago
- Running in nature, as well as participation in nature running events is very popular for Flemish event runners
- Most Flemish event runners run alone (a very small share participates as a member of an athletics club)
- Only half of Flemish event runners perform additional training in preparation for the event. They do so for a longer period of time, but less intensive (compared to event runners in other countries)
- The running event does not have a significant influence on future running and sports participation



Strengths

- Harmonised questionnaire in different countries (Helsen & Scheerder, 2020; Scheerder et al., 2011; 2020)
- Questionnaire validated in past research
- Diversity of events
 - Diverse in size
 - Diverse in covered distances
 - Diverse in media coverage

Limitations

- With the exception of socio demographic characteristics, we did not take into account the specific distance that a respondent covered on the event
- Period of data collection (e.g. no spring events)
- Self selection bias & over-estimation of self-evaluation



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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Kobe Helsen

Kobe Helsen is scientific researcher in the Policy in Sports & Physical Activity Research Group at the KU Leuven. He participated in research projects concerning policy and management issues regarding local sports federations, and concerning the multitude of impacts of sports events. His research interests are in the field of the societal impact of recreational sports events.

Jeroen Scheerder

Jeroen Scheerder is Professor in Sport Policy and Sport Sociology, coordinator of the KU Leuven sports management program, and Head of the Policy in Sports and Physical Activity Research Group at KU Leuven (Belgium). He was President of the European Association for Sociology of Sport (EASS), and currently acts as Promotor-coordinator of the Interuniversity Policy Research Centre on Sports on behalf of the Flemish Government. His research interests lie in the policy-related, political and sociological aspects of sport and leisure-time physical activity.



Kostas Alexandris

Kostas Alexandris (PhD, Med, MA) is a Professor in Sport and Leisure Management at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and the Director of the “Sport, Tourism and Recreation Management” Lab. He is Associate Editor of “Managing Sport and Leisure”, Regional Editor of “Leisure Studies” and participates in the Editorial Boards of several international journals in the area of sport, leisure and tourism management. He is also the co-author of the book “Sport Consumer Behavior: Marketing Strategies (Funk, Alexandris and McDonald, 2016 by Routledge). He is currently leading the “RUN for HEALTH” project, funded by the EE.

Paul Hover

Paul Hover (MSc) is senior researcher at the Mulier Institute. His research is primarily aimed at the economic and social impact of sport events, including running events. He roots his knowledge preferable in a combination of robust statistical analyses and in-depth qualitative interviews. Hover has put his research experience to use in a great deal of books, book chapters, reports and articles, both in a policy and scientific context. Hover was the first author of the Dutch chapter in the book ‘Running across Europe’ (2015), he evaluated over 30 running events and was an editor of the ‘Sector report Athletics in The Netherlands’(2016), a book commissioned by the Royal Dutch Athletics Federation.



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