

Survey of Swiss Athletes 2017

Evaluation of the online survey on doping and measures to combat doping

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Abbreviated version

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1. Background

The Antidoping Switzerland Foundation is the independent centre of excellence in the fight against doping in Switzerland. It is responsible for testing, information and prevention as well as applied research. To identify changes in perceptions of doping, success in the fight against doping, and any potential for improvement, Antidoping Switzerland has commissioned Lamprecht & Stamm to conduct a number of athlete (1995, 2000, 2003, 2005 and 2010) and public (1998, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2011, and 2014) surveys, as well as one coaches survey (2016) on its behalf over the past 20 years. A monitoring programme for tested athletes (2012, 2014 and 2016/2017) is also run to ensure the quality of testing. Seven years after the last comprehensive athlete survey, the present evaluation is intended to provide a status report about the fight against doping in Switzerland, and to establish what the athletes themselves think about testing and the availability of information. This report summarises the key findings of this latest athlete survey. These findings are also compared with those of previous athlete surveys and, where particularly interesting points are concerned, with those of the coaches survey of 2016 and the 2016/2017 monitoring round, as well as with the public survey of 2014.

2. Procedure and willingness to participate

An invitation mail containing a link to the online survey was sent to 2044 athletes between 10 and 11 May 2017. The email addresses were supplied by Antidoping Switzerland. The mail was sent to all athletes who had been subject to an Antidoping Switzerland control in the 36 months prior to the survey. Recruitment thus differed slightly from the approach of previous years.

An initial reminder was sent on 1 June 2017, followed by a second reminder on 12 June 2017. The survey period ended on 30 June 2017. A total of 588 individuals provided usable information, corresponding to a response rate of 29 percent. Athletes' willingness to participate was thus lower than with the online survey of 2010 (see Table 2.1). The 1995, 2000, 2003 and 2005 surveys were all conducted by post, which produced a much better response rate in the earlier years at least. A further reason for the slightly poorer participation in the latest survey was that the sample contained both athletes who are no longer competing, and amateur athletes who had only been tested once. These individuals are affected to a lesser extent by the problem of doping, so they naturally have less interest in the issue.

Table 2.1: Overview of response rates

	1995	2000	2003	2005	2010	2017
Invitations sent	1005	1178	1115	1363	2408	2044
Questionnaires returned	494	648	544	369	1044	588
Response rate (in percent)	49%	55%	49%	27%	43%	29%

3. Characteristics of the athletes surveyed

Table 3.1 gives an overview of the distribution of selected characteristics among the athletes who were surveyed. As with previous surveys, just over a third of respondents were female. Athletes under 20 years of age participated in the survey to a much smaller degree than seven years ago. We counted more respondents aged 30 and over, however. The fact that the survey now covers only those athletes who have already been tested at least once explains the difference compared with previous studies. The older the person, the greater the likelihood that they have been tested before.

Where weekly training hours are concerned, it is notable that the proportion of athletes training more than 20 hours a week is higher than in the past. Around half of respondents invest between 11 and 20 hours per week in their training. Only just under a fifth of respondents are able to live entirely on their earnings from sport, although this share has risen steadily since the first survey in 1995.

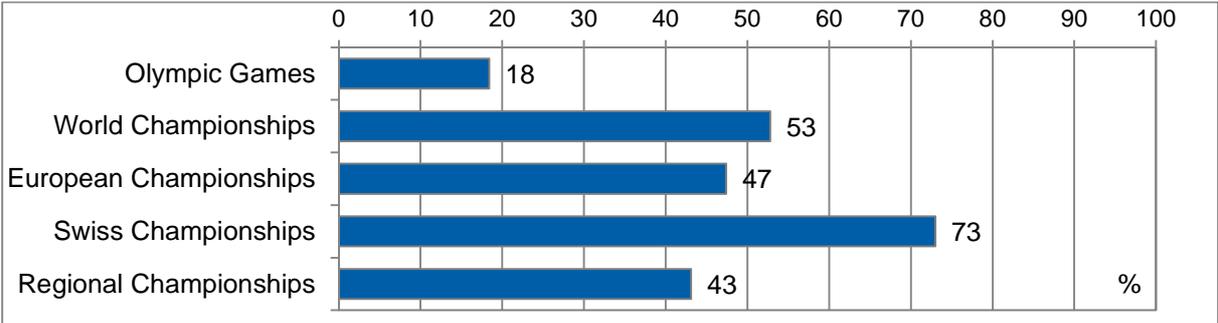
Table 3.1: Overview of the distribution of selected characteristics among the athletes who were surveyed (as a percentage of respondents)

	1995	2000	2003	2005	2010	2017
Gender						
Female	27	30	35	40	38	35
Male	73	70	65	60	62	65
Age						
Under 20	29	18	25	25	27	9
20 – 24	26	37	36	35	32	28
25 – 29	26	22	20	19	24	32
30 – 34	12	12	11	14	10	16
35 and over	6	11	8	7	7	15
Weekly training hours						
Up to 5 hours	4	6	4	2	3	4
6 – 10 hours	29	22	21	20	20	16
11 – 15 hours	33	31	34	33	31	28
16 – 20 hours	23	23	21	26	25	22
21 – 25 hours	6	10	12	9	14	19
Over 25 hours	5	8	8	10	7	11
Income from sport (do you earn your living through your sport?)						
No	77	71	75	65	59	56
Yes, partly	15	17	11	17	18	17
Yes, for the most part	4	4	5	5	9	9
Yes, completely	4	8	9	13	14	18
<i>Number of respondents*</i>	<i>494</i>	<i>648</i>	<i>577</i>	<i>369</i>	<i>1044</i>	<i>588</i>

Note: * as not all of the respondents provided full personal details, the number of cases stated for certain dimensions is slightly lower than the stated total of all respondents.

Just under a fifth of the athletes surveyed have already taken part in an Olympic Games, and more than half have participated in world championships (see Figure 3.1). All in all, three out of four athletes stated that they compete internationally (at Olympic Games, world championships or European championships), while the Swiss championships are the highest level at which three quarters have competed.

Fig. 3.1: Level at which athletes have already competed (as a percentage of respondents; multiple answers possible)



Note: n=515.

Around 40 percent of the athletes surveyed were drawn from the sports of athletics, ice hockey, cycling (road, track and mountainbike), cross-country (Nordic) skiing and swimming. In contrast to the 2010 survey, handball, downhill (Alpine) skiing and volleyball (including beach volleyball) no longer feature among the best-represented sports. Overall, exactly one quarter of the athletes surveyed in 2017 describe themselves as team athletes. This figure is significantly lower than in 2010. One of the reasons for this is the lower proportion of respondents playing handball and volleyball. Another is that fewer ice hockey players participated in the survey compared with previous years.

4. Evaluation of Antidoping Switzerland

This section examines the work of Antidoping Switzerland. It presents the respondents' answers with regard to the frequency of doping controls and their quality, in terms of security and testing personnel.

Frequency of doping controls

Just under half of the athletes surveyed had not undergone any in-competition tests in the year prior to the survey (see Table 4.1). However, compared with the 2010 survey, participants in the current survey were tested much more frequently while taking part in competitions. Of those surveyed, 25 had been subject to six or more in-competition controls in the previous twelve months.

Just over half of respondents had not undergone any out-of-competition control in the year prior to the survey. However, where out-of-competition controls are concerned, it also emerged that participants in the 2017 survey were tested much more frequently than those in the 2010 survey, although this was due in part to a change in the way that the sample was chosen (see Section 2). Indeed, 34 respondents stated that they had been subject to six or more out-of-competition tests in the previous twelve months.

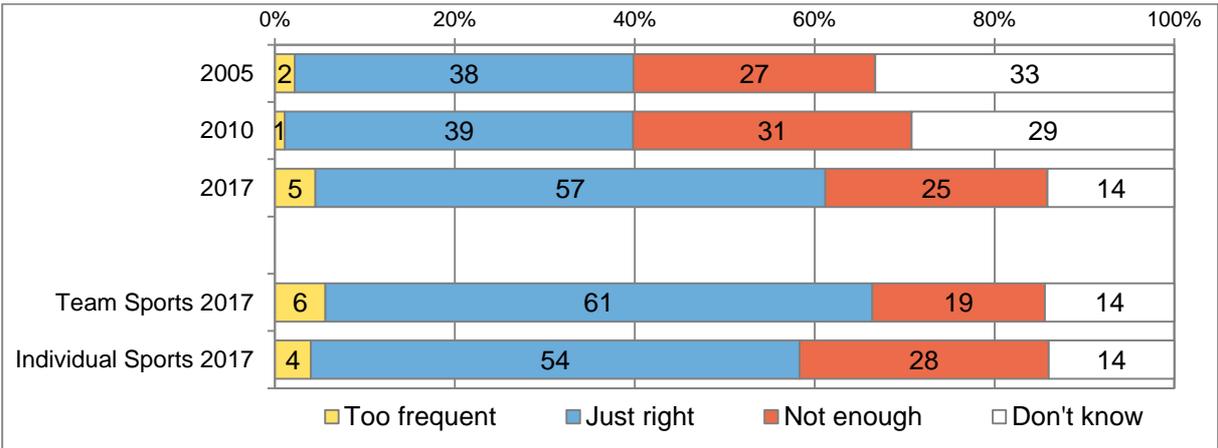
The frequency of doping controls differs between sports (see Table 4.1). Respondents from individual sports are tested much more frequently, both in competition and out of competition. The proportion of athletes who had not been subject to any out-of-competition controls in the previous twelve months was also much higher among those from team sports. The frequency of controls is not connected with whether or not an athlete earns their living from their sport, but there is a significant difference depending on whether or not they compete internationally. Athletes who have already competed at the international level are thus tested more often. Gender and age are of lesser importance where the frequency of controls is concerned.

Table 4.1: Frequency of doping controls over the past 12 months, 2000 to 2017 (as a percentage of respondents)

	2000	2003	2005	2010	2017	2017 Team sport	2017 Indivi- dual sport
In-competition controls							
No control	61	63	64	73	49	52	47
One control	25	21	18	16	30	41	26
Two controls	7	8	9	5	9	5	11
Three or more controls	7	8	9	6	12	2	16
<i>Number of respondents</i>	628	555	342	1044	558	122	364
Out-of-competition controls							
No control	76	70	51	67	55	74	48
One control	13	18	24	17	18	23	16
Two controls	6	7	12	8	9	2	11
Three or more controls	4	5	13	9	18	1	25
<i>Number of respondents</i>	607	534	361	1044	542	114	357

The majority of athletes surveyed in 2017 believe that the frequency of doping controls in their case was just right (see Figures 4.1 and 4.2). Where in-competition controls are concerned, there was a striking fall compared with previous surveys in the proportion of respondents who answered “don't know” to this question. The group of athletes who would like to see more in-competition controls has also shrunk, and there has been a corresponding increase in the proportion of those who are happy with the frequency of those controls. Athletes who believe that they are subject to testing too frequently are the clear minority.

Fig. 4.1: Evaluation of the frequency of in-competition doping controls (as a percentage of respondents)

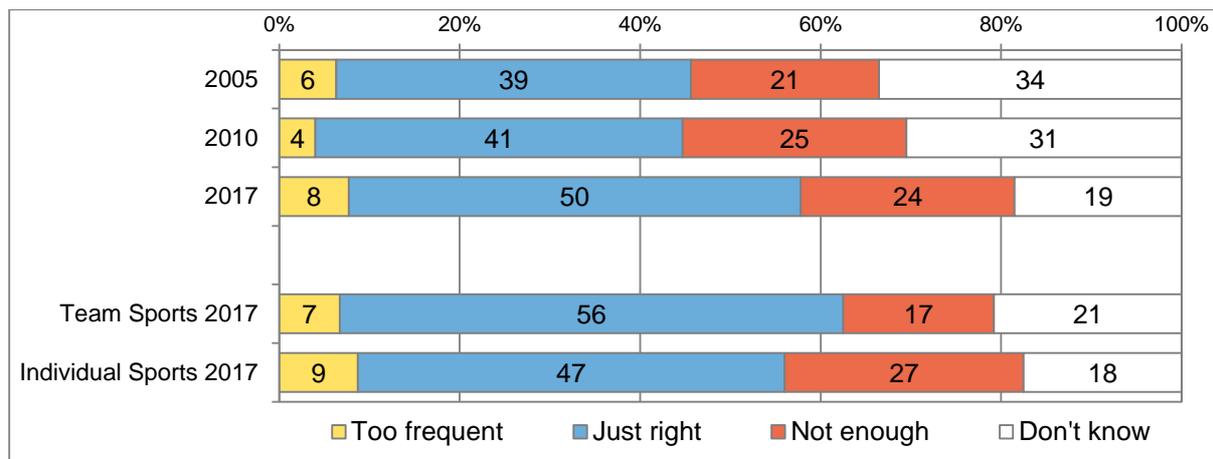


Note: number of respondents 2017 n=580, 2010 n=1044, 2005 n=324.

There was also a fall in the number of “don't know” answers with regard to out-of-competition controls (see Figure 4.2), with a corresponding increase in the number of respondents assessing the frequency of controls as “just right”. The number of athletes who believe that they are subject too frequently to out-of-competition controls has doubled compared with the 2010 figure. They remain a minority, however.

Responses to the question about the frequency of controls are not affected by the gender, age or international experience of the athlete. However, respondents from individual sports were more likely than those from team sports to rate testing frequency as “not enough”.

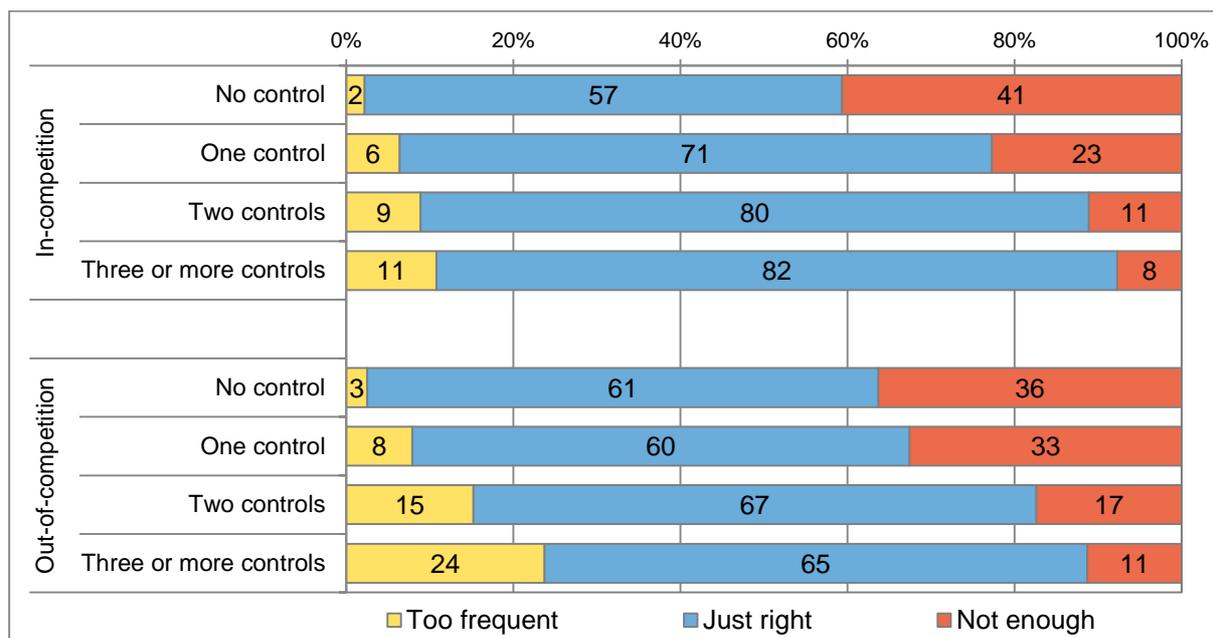
Fig. 4.2: Evaluation of the frequency of out-of-competition doping controls (as a percentage of respondents)



Note: number of respondents 2017 n=557, 2010 n=1044, 2005 n=331.

It is clear from Figure 4.3 that athletes who are tested frequently are less likely to demand more controls. Where in-competition controls are concerned, the great majority of individuals who are tested frequently are satisfied with how often controls are conducted. The picture is a different one for out-of-competition controls, however. Here, frequent testing is more likely to produce resentment. This is consistent with the findings of the monitoring programme for 2016/17. Frequent in-competition controls are more accepted than frequent out-of-competition controls.

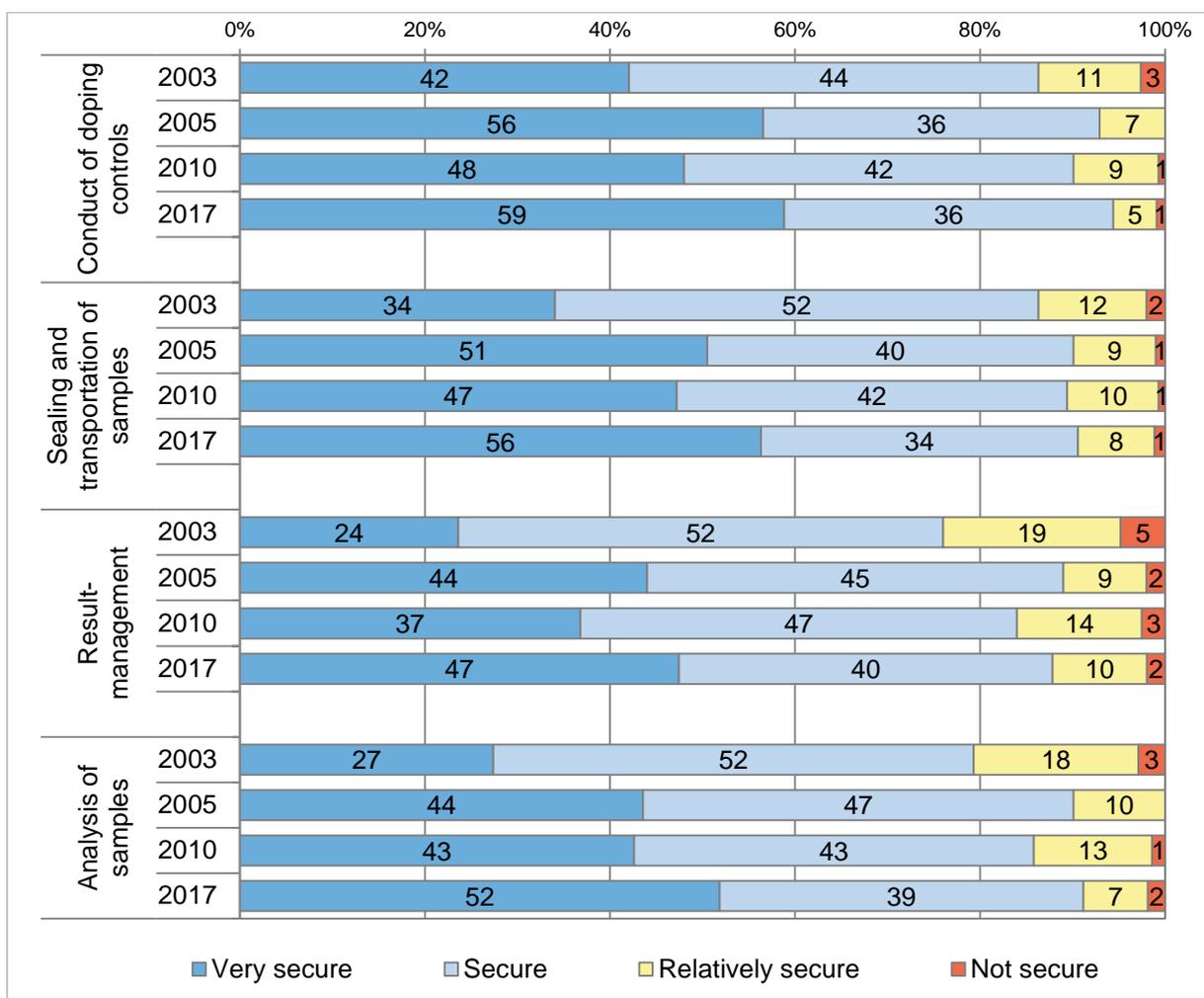
Fig. 4.3: Evaluation of the frequency of doping controls, both in competition and out of competition, by how often the athlete has been tested in the past twelve months (as a percentage of respondents)



Quality and security of doping controls

Feedback on the security of the doping controls conducted by Antidoping Switzerland is very positive (see Figure 4.4). More than 90 percent of athletes judge the way in which controls are carried out, as well as the sealing and transportation of urine samples and sample analysis, to be (very) secure. The proportion of respondents rating the various aspects as very secure once again increased significantly compared with the 2010 survey. Athlete responses on the security of doping controls are not affected by whether they are in a team or individual sport, or by their gender, age or international experience. Almost all are satisfied with the security of controls – a finding also confirmed by the 2016/17 monitoring programme and the 2016 coaches survey.

Fig. 4.4: Evaluation of the security of doping controls carried out by Antidoping Switzerland (as a percentage of respondents)



Note: number of respondents in 2017 between 486 and 554. “Don’t know” answers are not shown on this chart. Depending on the point concerned, between 7 (conduct of the doping controls) and 73 (analysis of samples) individuals answered “don’t know”.

The quality of doping control officers' work is also viewed positively by the overwhelming majority of athletes, with 93 percent saying that their overall impression was very good or good. The proportion of "very good" scores increased in a variety of areas (overall impression, trustworthiness and information) compared with the 2010 survey. Respondents are most likely to identify room for improvement where information on rights and duties is concerned. Although this aspect now attracts more "very good" scores than it did in 2010, a comparatively large proportion of respondents (18%) scored it as only satisfactory, or even as unsatisfactory. Respondents who play team sports more frequently judge information on rights and duties as only satisfactory (24%) or as unsatisfactory (5%).

Just under a quarter (24%) of the athletes surveyed said that they had been tested abroad or by foreign control officers in the preceding twelve months. This figure is slightly higher than in 2010 (18%). The proportion of those who had been tested abroad was higher for individual sports (30%) than for team sports (10%). Only a small minority of less than 10 percent of respondents rated individual aspects of the Swiss doping control system as worse than foreign systems.

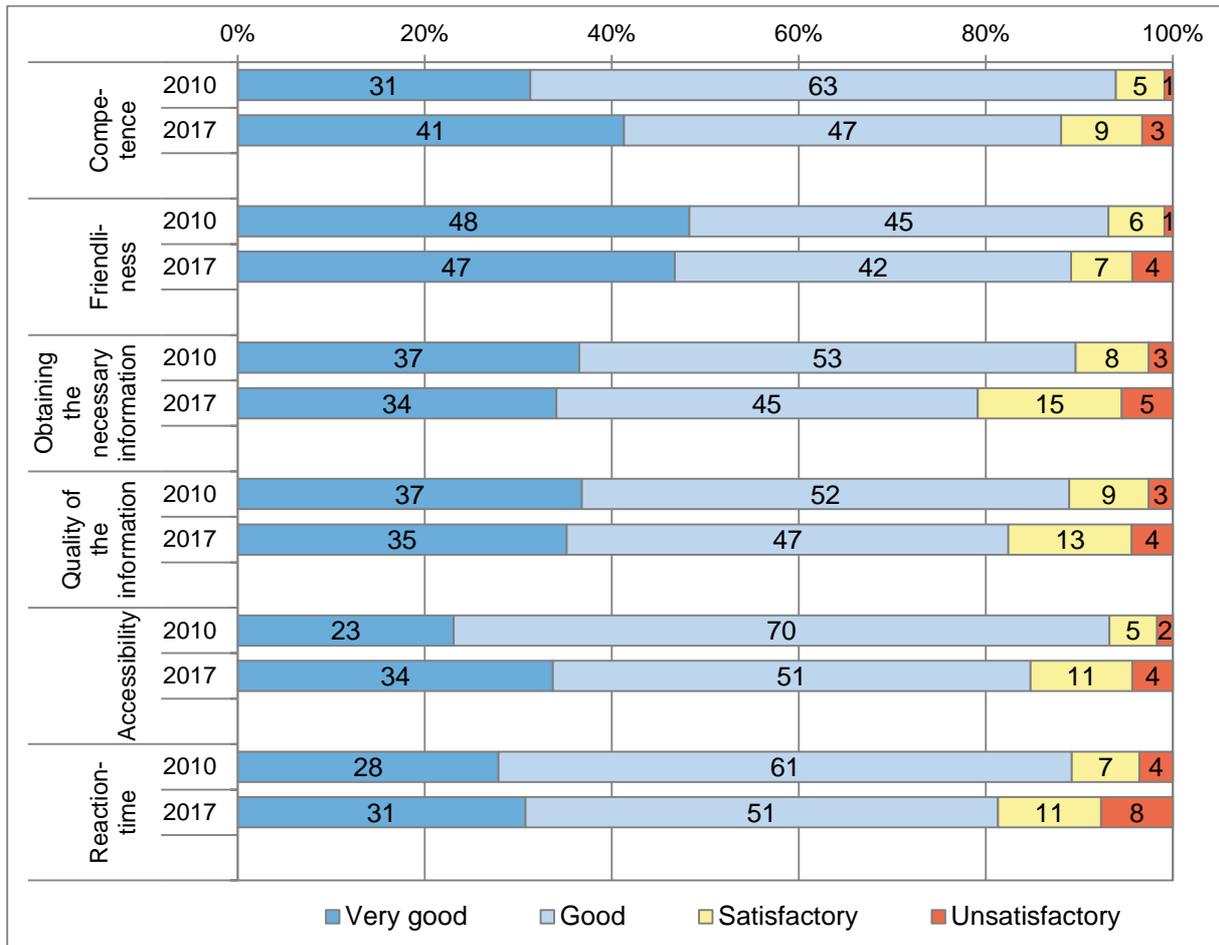
All in all, athletes give extremely positive feedback about the quality and security of doping controls in Switzerland. Despite opinions being very high already, there has been further discernible progress in some areas compared with the 2010 survey. Swiss testing also fares very well in comparison with foreign controls.

Experience with Antidoping Switzerland

In the 2010 survey, 13 percent of respondents said that they had had direct contact with the Antidoping Switzerland Foundation. That figure increased to 17% with the latest questionnaire. The proportion of those who have had such direct contact is significantly higher among individual sportsmen and women (21%) and international athletes (20%) than it is among respondents from team sports (5%) and those competing at the regional or national level (11%).

The majority of respondents describe their experience with Antidoping Switzerland as positive (see Figure 4.5). Competence and friendliness were the most highly valued aspects. The changes in this regard between the 2010 and 2017 surveys are not statistically significant, although respondents now tend to be rather more critical across the board than they were seven years ago.

Fig. 4.5: Experience with the Antidoping Switzerland Foundation (figures as percentages of respondents who have had direct contact with the Foundation)



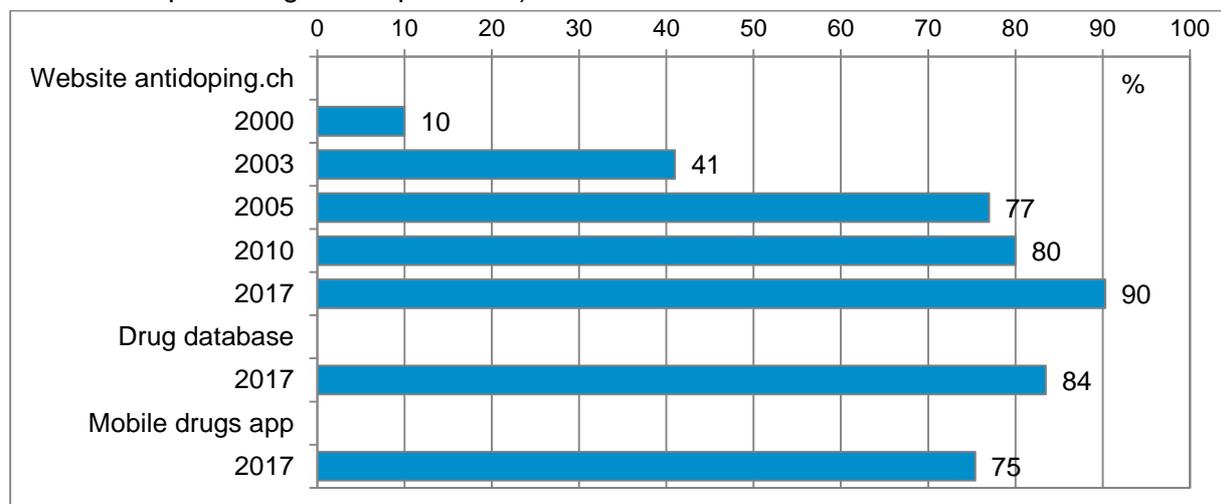
Note: number of respondents in 2017 between 91 and 92. In the 2010 survey, the “satisfactory” answer category was entitled “could be improved”.

5. Sources of information

The antidoping.ch website is currently the most well-known of Antidoping Switzerland's information tools, followed by the drug database and the mobile drugs app (see Figure 5.1). Despite its third place, three-quarters of the athletes surveyed are familiar with the app.

The survey revealed that there was a further marked increase in awareness of the antidoping.ch website – of ten percentage points – between 2010 and 2017. Respondents from individual sports are much more familiar than team athletes with the website (93% vs. 84%), the drug database (88% vs. 75%), and the drugs app (80% vs. 61%). Furthermore, familiarity with the three sources of information is considerably greater among female respondents and those with international experience. The analysis found a significant difference according to the respondent's age, with younger athletes more familiar with both the website and the mobile drugs app. While almost all respondents (98%) aged under 20 know the website, the proportion among those aged 35 and over is 84 percent. There is also a marked difference between these two age categories where familiarity with the app is concerned (84% vs. 59%). Overall, however, athletes are very familiar with the sources of information provided by Antidoping Switzerland. Only nine percent of respondents said that they were aware of neither the drug database nor the app. In addition, the athletes participating in the 2017 survey are much better informed about the information that is available than the coaches who completed the 2016 survey.

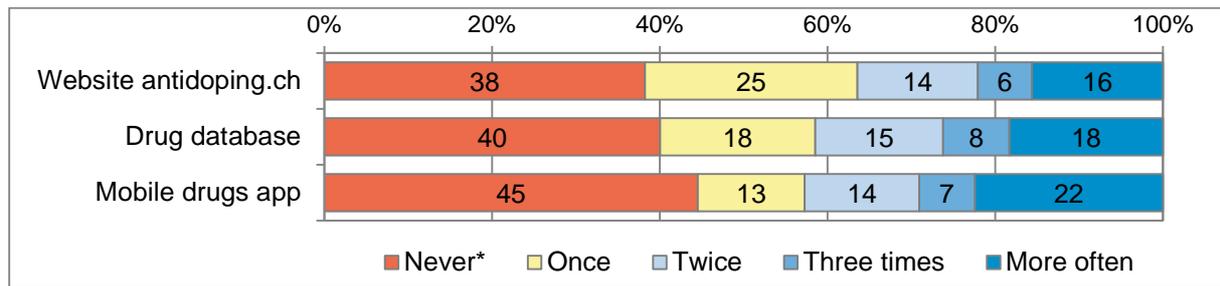
Fig. 5.1: Familiarity with the sources of information provided by Antidoping Switzerland (as a percentage of respondents)



Note: number of respondents in 2017 n=557

Figure 5.2 illustrates how often the various sources of information are consulted. Each of the individual services had been used by well over half of respondents in the three months prior to the survey. The analysis found that, where athletes know and use the mobile drugs app, they consult it more regularly than they do the website. Individual sportsmen and women, female respondents and athletes with international experience are more regular users of the information that Antidoping Switzerland provides. The drug database and the mobile drugs app are used more frequently by the athletes surveyed in 2017 than by the coaches covered by the 2016 study. They also tend to consult the website more frequently.

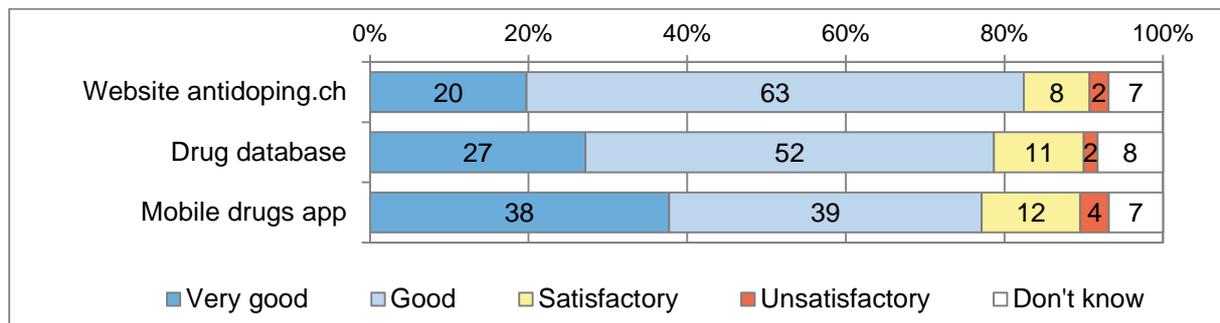
Fig. 5.2: Frequency of use of the information provided by Antidoping Switzerland in the past three months (as a percentage of all respondents)



Note: * including respondents who were unfamiliar with the service in question; number of respondents in 2017 n=557

As in the previous 2010 survey, feedback about the information provided by Antidoping Switzerland was very positive (see Figure 5.3). If the “don't know” answers are factored out, the proportion of “good” and “very good” scores are between 83 percent (for the mobile drugs app) and 89 percent (for the website). The drugs app, in particular, scores top marks relatively often. The considerable value attached to the app was also confirmed by the 2016 coaches survey.

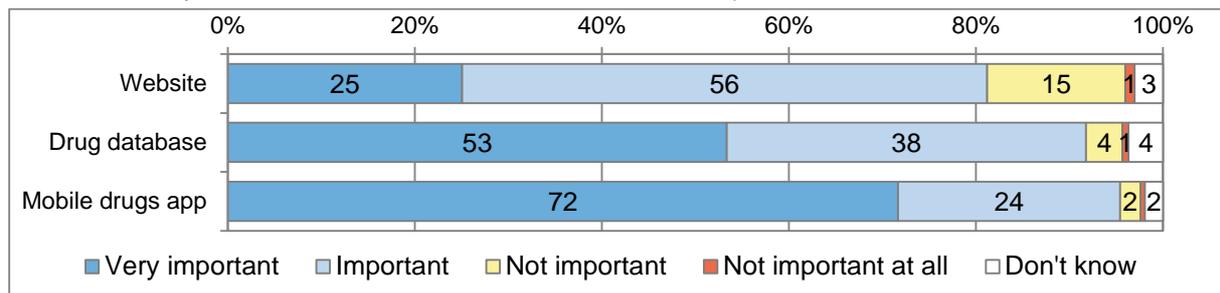
Fig. 5.3: Evaluation of sources of information (as a percentage of those respondents who are familiar with the service)



Note: number of respondents in 2017: website n=496; drug database n=460; drugs app n=411.

A similarly positive picture emerged when respondents were asked about the importance they attach to these information services (see Figure 5.4). All three information tools were rated (very) important by an overwhelming majority, with the drugs app accorded the greatest importance. Almost three quarters of the athletes who are familiar with the app believe that it is very important. Comfortably more than half of respondents think the drug database is very important, and exactly a quarter have the same opinion of the website. The app is more often very important to female athletes. Meanwhile, the importance of the website increases with the age bracket of the respondent. Changes can be tracked over time in views of the importance of both the website and the drug database. The website gained steadily in importance for athletes between 2003 and 2010, although the latest survey shows that this trend has not been maintained. Like the website, the drug database also lost a degree of importance between 2010 and 2017 – a decline which can probably be explained by the launch of the highly popular and much-valued drugs app. That said, many of the athletes expressed a wish to have a barcode scanner for medication incorporated into the app.

Fig. 5.4: Importance of various sources of information (as a percentage of those respondents who are familiar with the service)

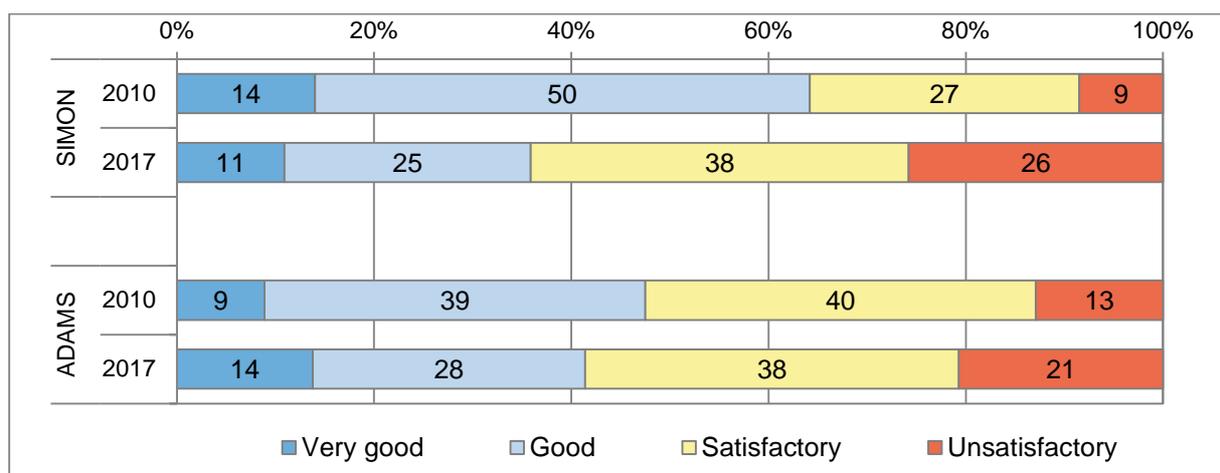


Note: number of respondents in 2017: website n=495; drug database n=461; drugs app n=413.

6. Whereabouts systems

Among the athletes who participated in the survey, 71 percent do not use any electronic whereabouts system. SIMON is used more often (23%) than ADAMS (5%). Compared with the 2010 survey (SIMON 27%, ADAMS 10%), a lower proportion of respondents now uses one of the two registration systems (28% vs. 37%). As expected, athletes from individual sports (38%), and those with international experience (38%) use one of the registration systems more often. Overall, SIMON (36%) and ADAMS (42%) receive good marks from only a minority of the respondents who are familiar with the system in question. It is striking that SIMON is rated much worse in the current survey than was the case in 2010 (see Figure 6.1). Around a quarter of respondents now believe that the system is unsatisfactory, compared with nine percent in 2010. It can be inferred from the comments on the registration systems that athletes have difficulty using the SIMON system in particular. They believe that it is outdated, and find completing whereabouts information to be complicated and time-consuming.

Fig. 6.1: Evaluation of registration systems, 2010 and 2017 (as a percentage of those respondents who are familiar with the system)



Note: in the 2010 survey, the "satisfactory" category was entitled "could be improved"; number of respondents in 2017: SIMON n=128; ADAMS n=29.

7. Athlete knowledge

Most of the athletes surveyed (97%) said that they are able to obtain enough information on the subject of doping. This excellent result has remained at the same level since 2005, with no significant difference according to the athlete's sport, gender, age or international experience. This high degree of satisfaction with the information about doping that is available is consistent with the findings of the 2016/2017 monitoring programme.

Table 7.1 shows how the athletes who participated in the survey have found out about doping. Most respondents (85%) gave several sources which, in their view, have helped to inform them. Athletes from individual sports (69%) and with international experience (69%) quote Antidoping Switzerland more frequently as a source of information, while coaches and advisors are more important sources for respondents aged under 30. As expected, parents are a more important source of information for young athletes than for older sportsmen and women.

Table 7.1: Sources of information on doping, 1995 to 2017 (as a percentage of respondents)

	1995	2000	2003	2005	2010	2017
Antidoping Switzerland	*	*	*	*	44	64
Official bodies (Swiss Olympic, FOSPO)	83	70	70	72	44	39
Coach/advisor	55	56	62	62	63	56
Medical doctor	44	54	53	56	47	48
Federation/club	57	54	52	59	49	53
Media (newspapers, magazines)	51	49	44	34	31	23
Other athletes	31	35	37	37	30	38
Other sources of information	20	20	17	16	15	18
Parents	*	8	15	14	17	15
International federations	*	*	*	*	*	12
Did not receive any information at all	1	1	1	1	2	4
<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>494</i>	<i>648</i>	<i>577</i>	<i>369</i>	<i>1044</i>	<i>541</i>

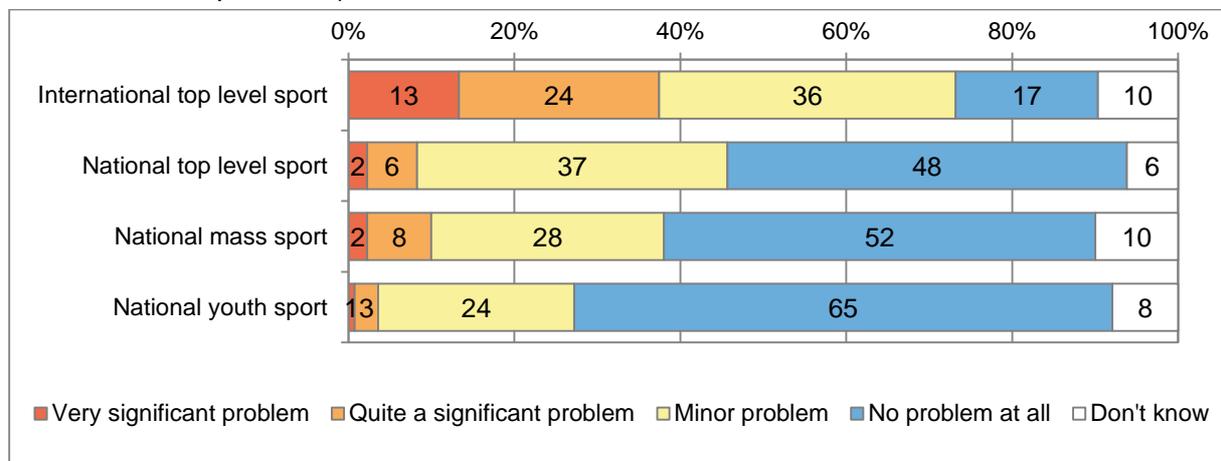
Note: * not asked in this year.

At 14 percent, only a minority of the athletes surveyed expect more support from the Antidoping Switzerland Foundation with doping prevention. While this figure is even lower (8%) for respondents from team sports, almost one in four coaches (2016 coaches survey: 22%) would like more support from Antidoping Switzerland.

8. Appraisal of the doping problem and measures to combat it

Basing their answer on their own sport, 37 percent of the athletes surveyed said they believed doping to be a quite, or even very significant, problem in international elite sport (see Figure 8.1). Just 27 percent of the respondents in the 2016 coaches survey shared this view. By comparison, some 92 percent of the population (2014 public survey) believes that there is a quite or very significant doping problem within elite sport. While only 16 percent of athletes in team sports take the same view of the international elite in their own sport, the figure among respondents in individual sports stands at 52 percent. Swimming and athletics are believed to have a particularly significant problem. The doping problem is judged to be much less severe in elite sport at the national level, as well as in mass-participation and youth sport.

Fig. 8.1: Evaluation of the doping problem in the respondent's own sport (as a percentage of respondents)



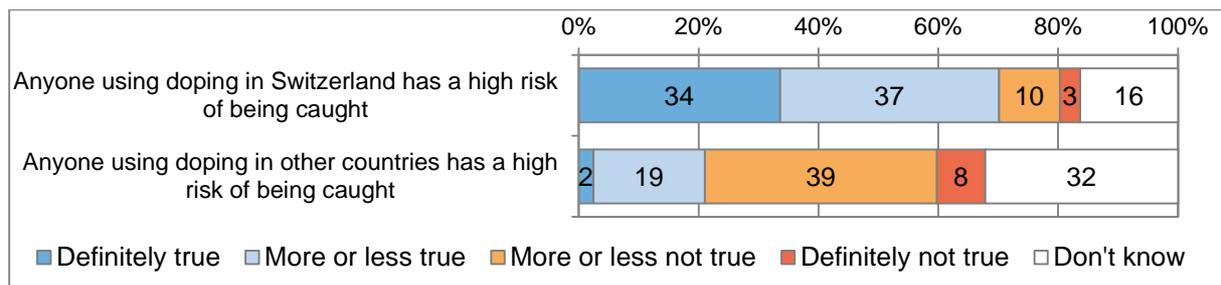
Note: number of respondents in 2017 between 526 and 532.

The athletes who took part in the survey take the clear view that efforts to fight doping differ widely from country to country, and that anti-doping measures in Switzerland are exemplary. Among those who venture a comparison between Switzerland and other countries, a large majority believe that Swiss controls are stricter. This is also reflected in the risk of being caught doping (see Figure 8.2). Only a quarter of athletes believes that strict anti-doping measures in Switzerland place the country at a disadvantage internationally, and just as many believe that their own sport has a greater doping problem than others.

Of those surveyed, 41 percent think that there are countries which are not strict enough in the fight against doping, while five percent do not share this view, and 54 percent don't know. Respondents from individual sports and those with international experience much more often take the view that some countries do not do enough to combat doping in their sport. Allegations in this regard are targeted most frequently at Russia and other Eastern European countries.

When asked if there are countries which are tougher and more effective in their fight against doping, six percent of the athletes surveyed answered "yes", 21 percent "no", and just under three quarters were unable to judge. Germany is given most often as a positive example in this regard, followed by the USA and France.

Fig. 8.2: Evaluation of the risk of being caught doping (as a percentage of respondents)

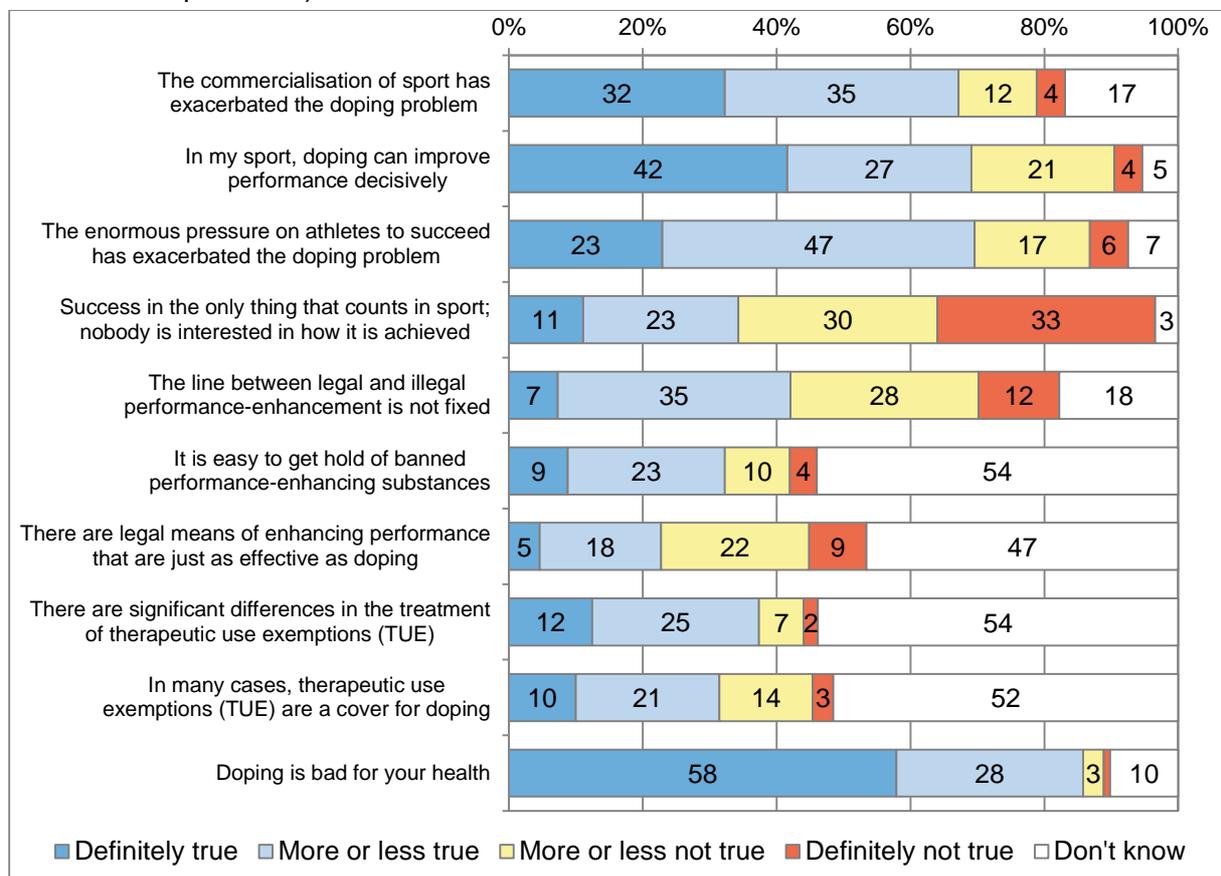


Note: number of respondents in 2017 between 532 and 533.

9. Attitudes to doping

The athletes who took part in the survey are very clear in their opinion that doping violates the principle of fair play, and they fully support the statement that “Those who use doping set a bad example”. The respondents in the 2017 survey are even a little stronger in their support for the view that doping harms the image of sport than they were seven years previously. The athletes clearly reject the statements that “Tough anti-doping measures harm top-level sport” and “Doping means equality of opportunity for sportsmen and women”, although the latter was slightly better received in the latest survey than in 2010. Figure 9.1 shows other attitudes towards the subject of doping.

Fig. 9.1: Attitudes to doping: agreement with a variety of statements (as a percentage of respondents)

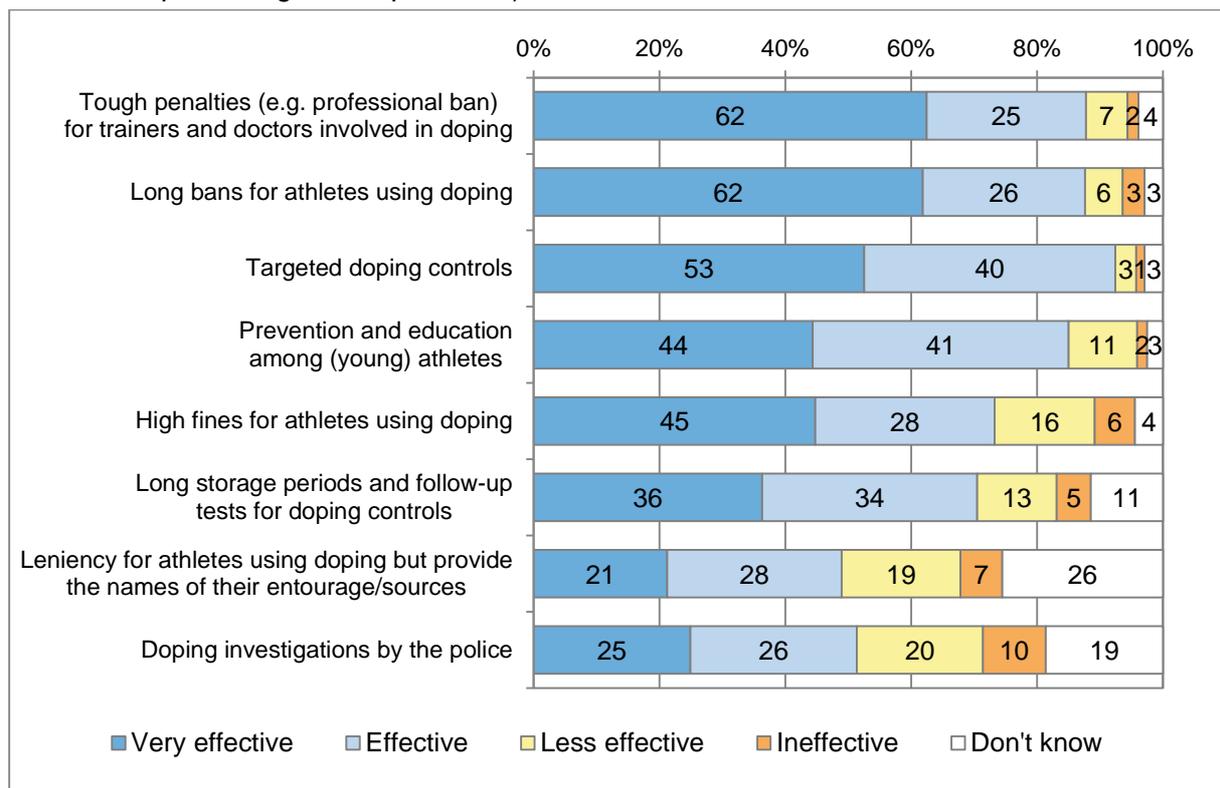


Note: number of respondents in 2017 between 520 and 524.

10. The future of the fight against doping in Switzerland

Tough penalties for all concerned are seen as the most effective means of fighting doping, alongside targeted doping controls and prevention and education programmes among athletes (see Figure 10.1). As was the case in earlier athlete surveys, the overwhelming majority (94%) believe that doping should be strictly prohibited. In the coaches survey of 2016, 92 percent of respondents shared this view – a somewhat higher proportion than emerged from the public survey of 2014 (84%).

Fig. 10.1: Evaluation of the effectiveness of various measures to combat doping (as a percentage of respondents)



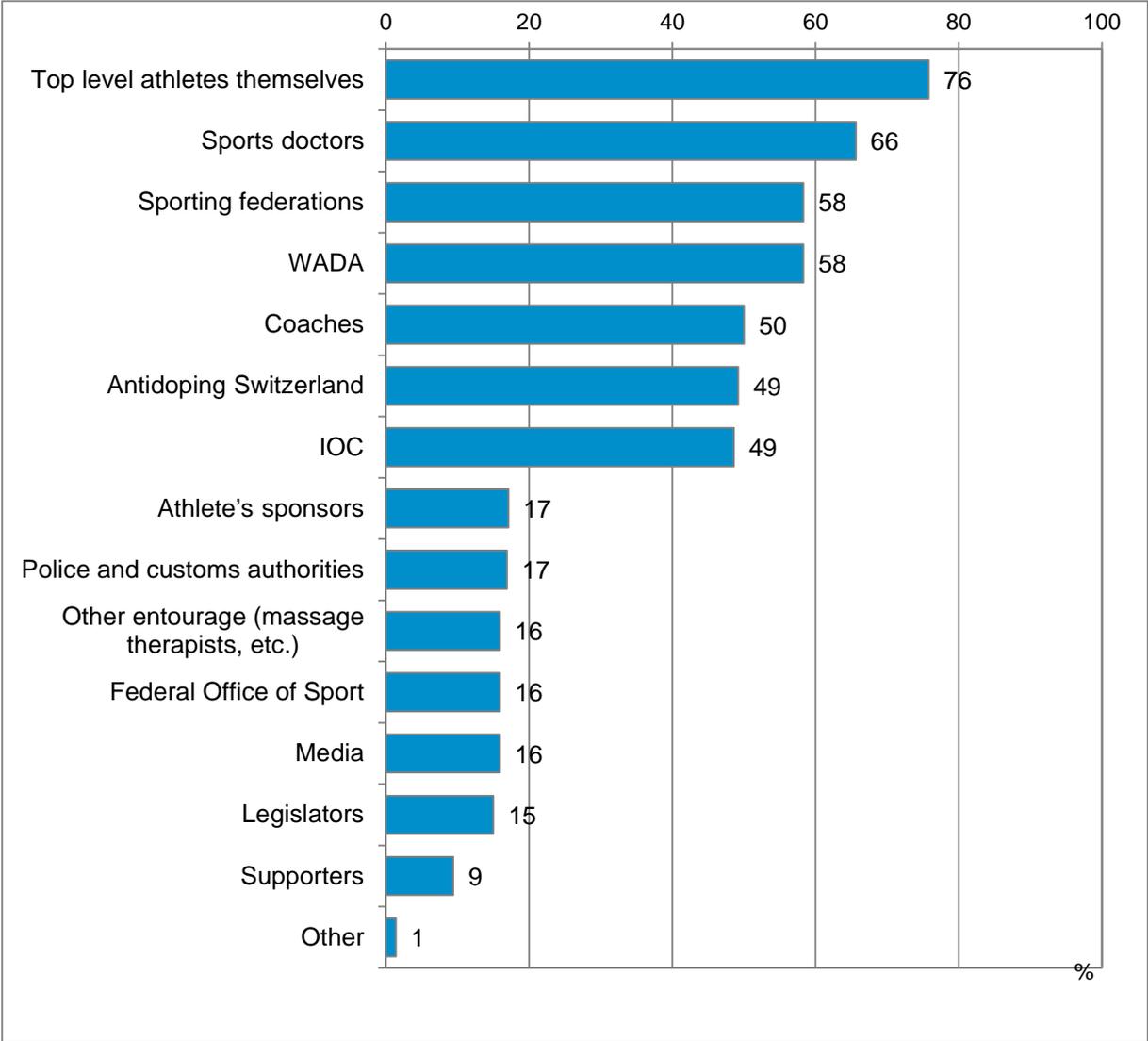
Note: number of respondents in 2017 between 510 and 516.

Having considered the general effectiveness of individual measures to combat doping, respondents were asked to consider the importance of those measures in the way in which doping is dealt with in the future. They placed the greatest emphasis on greater international cooperation, tougher penalties for those using banned substances, and penalties for the athlete's entourage. The majority of the athletes surveyed also view other measures, such as more doping controls, more resources, more information and prevention, long storage periods for samples and making the consumption of banned substances punishable by law, as (very) important.

Figure 10.2 shows which groups of individuals and organisations the athletes believe should take more responsibility in the fight against doping. They identify themselves as holding the greatest responsibility, followed by sports doctors, sport federations, the WADA, coaches, Antidoping Switzerland and the IOC. Opinions about responsibility differ depending on the characteristics of the athletes concerned. Respondents from team sports believe that sports doctors have a greater responsibility, while individual athletes would place greater obligations

upon the IOC, the police and customs authorities, as well as legislators. It is also interesting that athletes with international experience are more likely to think that the WADA and the IOC should assume more responsibility in the fight against doping, whereas those competing at only the national and regional levels place greater emphasis on their coaches. By comparison, the coaches who participated in the 2016 coaches survey see the responsibility lying even more heavily with sports doctors and themselves, but less with the WADA. The general public (2014 public survey) also believes that the greatest responsibility lies with the elite athletes themselves, but also think that coaches are also under a considerable obligation in this regard.

Fig. 10.2: Groups of individuals and organisations which should assume greater responsibility in the fight against doping.



Note: number of respondents in 2017 n=508

11. Key points in brief

In May and June 2017, 588 athletes took part in an online survey on the doping problem and measures to combat it.

- Of the athletes surveyed, around half had undergone at least one in-competition control during the preceding twelve months, while the same proportion had been tested out of competition. Only a few of the respondents believe that they are tested too frequently, while around a third believe that controls are not conducted often enough.
- The controls carried out by Antidoping Switzerland receive very positive marks, and also fare very well in comparison with those conducted abroad. The security of doping controls is even judged to be rather higher in 2017 than it was in 2010. The work of control officers is also valued. The only area in which there is room for improvement is the provision of information on rights and duties during the testing of athletes from team sports.
- Athletes generally take the view that they are able to obtain enough information on doping. For example, 90 percent of respondents are familiar with the website, with a further increase in awareness recorded since 2010. The great majority are also familiar with the drug database (84%) and the mobile drugs app (75%). Each of the individual sources of information had been used by over half of respondents in the three months preceding the survey. The mobile drugs app is seen as the most important information medium by a clear margin, and also scores top marks more often than the other two.
- Athletes are rather critical where the whereabouts systems are concerned. It can be inferred from the remarks and concerns expressed about this area that many users find the systems outdated and complex to use.
- Doping is seen by 37 percent of athletes as a (very) significant problem at the international top level of their sport. The fight against doping in Switzerland is viewed as exemplary, and athletes believe that a person is more likely to be convicted of doping in Switzerland than in other countries. For example, 41 percent of athletes take the view that there are countries which do not do enough to fight doping in their sport. Allegations in this regard are targeted most frequently at Russia and a variety of Eastern European countries. However, other respondents voiced the opinion that countries such as Germany, the USA and France take an even tougher line on doping than Switzerland.
- Although the majority of respondents believe that doping can improve performance decisively in their sport, the practice is firmly rejected. Athletes believe that doping violates the fair play principle, harms the image of sport, and that those who engage in doping set a bad example. The majority of the athletes surveyed think that the commercialisation of sport, as well as the pressure on athletes to succeed, has exacerbated the doping problem. They tend to be critical of therapeutic use exemptions.
- Of the athletes who participated in the survey, 94 percent would like to see doping strictly prohibited in the future. They believe that tough penalties for all of those concerned, long bans and targeted doping controls are the most effective means of fighting doping. Meanwhile, the most *important* measure in this fight is seen as greater international cooperation. Asked which groups of individuals or organisations should take more responsibility in the fight against doping, more than half of athletes state that the responsibility lies with the top level athletes themselves, sports doctors, sport federations and the WADA.