



2014

The Irish Sports Council
Field Sports Investment

The Irish Sports Council

About the Irish Sports Council

The Irish Sports Council is the statutory body for Sport established on 1 July 1999 under the Irish Sports Council Act (1999). Comprising of nine major divisions, the ISC is responsible for planning, leading and coordinating the sustainable development of competitive and recreational sport in Ireland.

Anti Doping

The Irish Sports Council has operated the Irish Sport Anti-Doping Programme since its establishment in 1999 and acts to protect Ireland's sporting integrity against the threat of doping.

Coaching

Coaching Ireland is the unit within the Irish Sports Council that has the lead role in the development of coaching in Ireland on an all island basis. The role includes highlighting the importance of quality coaching in developing athletes and providing opportunities for participants.

Governing Bodies

The Irish Sports Council works in partnership with Governing Bodies (NGBs) to make them more effective in developing their sport and servicing the needs of their members. Investment in youth field sports is critical for the continued development of participation at a grassroots level.

High Performance

The Irish Sports Council High Performance unit aims to ensure Ireland's performances in elite international sport improves and also to create consistent success at elite level defined as producing Irish athletes in the finals at European, World, Olympic and Paralympic level.

Institute of Sport

The Irish Institute of Sports delivers world class support services to high performance athletes mandated by the Irish Sports Council. The Irish Institute of Sport works directly with NGBs in developing sports specific science and medical support networks so that each sport has the support it needs to impact on performance.

Organisational Capability Building

The Irish Sports Council HR & Organisational Capability unit are responsible for building capability across the sports sector organisations. This is achieved by the strategic provision of OCB services in the capability areas of Project Management, Governance, Risk Management, Strategic Planning, Change Management, Employee Performance Management and Organisational Leadership.

Participation

The Irish Sports Council Participation Unit supports a national network of 30 Local Sports Partnerships delivering programmes across all target groups. The Women in Sport programme aims to increase women's participation in sport and promotes the positive aspects of sport and health benefits while also encouraging women to take up volunteer positions.

National Trails

The Irish Sports Council National Trails Office is the unit within the Irish Sports Council that coordinates the recreational trails programme and maintains a National Trails Register (currently 685 trails listed) in conjunction with a number of partner agencies and bodies and also undertakes promotional work aimed at increasing the awareness and usage of recreational trails.

Research

The Irish Sports Council Research Unit provides research across a national database of physical activity, physical education and sport participation levels of children, adults and youth in Ireland.

For more information visit www.irishsportscouncil.ie

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Field Sports Investment 2014

In 2014, the Irish Sports Council will invest over €7.4 million in the Field Sports Programme. This investment is broadly aimed at encouraging and creating more opportunities for young people to participate in field sports across Ireland.

Over the past decade the FAI, GAA and IRFU have expanded their range of activities through extensive work programmes with communities, clubs, schools, referees and coaches. These programmes are based on a shared ethos of developing the grassroots of the games, growing participation numbers and embracing communities outside of the traditional base of the sport.

The Irish Sports Council investment supports detailed action plans which are implemented by the team of sports development officers and volunteers in each sport. In order to address the strategic imperative of increasing participation, each organisation provides a comprehensive set of programmes that aim to develop the infrastructure of their sport. As well as a number of initiatives specifically aimed at bringing young people into sport, there are also programmes that develop clubs and build links with communities. Also, the sports build the expertise of teachers, coaches and officials so that they can provide a quality experience for children and young people who become involved in sport.

Irish Sports Council Investment 2014

Youth Field Sport	FAI	GAA	IRFU
Youth Field Investment	2,565,410	2,409,653	2,250,843
Women in Sport Investment	142,500	-	114,000
Total	2,707,910	2,409,653	2,364,843

Case studies

The Field Sports Investment is a key mechanism for the delivery of opportunities for sport and physical activity to the population and in particular to hard to reach groups. This section presents good practice examples of interaction with key target groups leading to expanded and sustainable participation.

Go Games - Every Child Gets a Go! (GAA)

The GAA Player Pathway operates on the basis of the following maxim: Child - Play to Learn; Youth - Learn to Compete; Adult - Compete to Win. Go Games are small-sided developmental games which are specifically designed to cater for the needs – fun, friendship, fair play and achievement – of the Child player in the most appropriate manner possible.

The following are the key underpinning principles of Go Games:

- All participants play in the full game - every child gets a go!
- Participant needs are catered for, where possible, on the basis of two year age cohorts i.e. U.7 (7-a-side), U.9 (9-a-side) and U.11 (11-a-side)
- Activities are structured in a manner which optimises the level of fun, friendship, fair play and achievement derived by participants.

- Participants train and play in a safe, supportive and stimulating environment where they are encouraged to risk error, to learn and to derive maximum enjoyment from their involvement.
- Players master the basic skills of Hurling and Gaelic Football and experience the sense of accomplishment, which derives from acquiring playing proficiency on the left and right hand side of the body.
- Everybody involved in Go Games, whether as players, parents/guardians, spectators, mentors, teachers, officials etc., should adhere to the key underpinning principles and give expression to the GAA 'Give Respect, Get Respect' initiative.

Go Games were first introduced by the Association in 2004 and were enshrined in GAA Policy in 2010. Go Games serve to complement GAA's Player Pathway and reflect what is currently recognised as best practice on an international basis.

Go Games are a real success story for the GAA. In 2013, with the support of the Irish Sports Council, a total of 1,377 GAA Clubs completed Go Games Blitz Programmes, 1,923 Primary Schools (53.5% of Primary Schools) completed Hurling Go Games Blitz Programmes and 2,865 Primary Schools (80% of Primary Schools) completed Football Go Games Blitz Programmes. Each Go Games Blitz Programme consists of a minimum of 5 blitzes. This means that over 30,825 Go Games blitzes were held across clubs and schools in 2013.

Furthermore, last year 3,061 Primary Schools (85% of Primary Schools) completed a Go Games Coaching Programme which involves the delivery of 8 coaching sessions by Games Development personnel - this is a phenomenal amount of activity that goes a long way to ensuring children are receiving at least 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity.

This Easter, the first ever national celebration of GAA Go Games takes place on the week of April 14th-20th. This will involve a national Go Games blitz in Croke Park on Monday 14th April - 53 teams and 1,060 players from each of the 32 counties will travel to Croke Park to participate in the Go Games blitz. Furthermore, in each County a central Go Games blitz will take place in the County Grounds. In total it is anticipated that approximately 9,600 boys and girls will get a go!

Bedford Row Project (FAI)

Social inclusion projects make up an enormous part of the FAI's initiatives, ran in conjunction with stakeholders and partners around the country including the Irish Sports Council.

One example within the wide range of the FAI social inclusion programmes is the work done with the Bedford Row Project in Limerick.

The Bedford Row Project is committed to providing a holistic approach and effective response to families affected by imprisonment.

The project works with all generations to break the cycle of involvement in crime.

The Bedford Row Project reaches out to children:

- Who maybe angry, fearful, anxious, aggressive and/or in crisis.
- Who, when growing up, are harmed by misuse of alcohol and/or drugs in their homes.
- Who are often isolated in their communities and whose vast potential might be wasted on destructive pursuits as they reach their teenage years.
- Whose families have been affected by imprisonment for generations.

The FAI's key involvement with this project is to show that through Football we are creating a healthy lifestyle and an alternative way of life for these children and families. The idea behind this project is to bring families together who share similar adversities. When a parent goes to prison the child receives a sentence also.

This can lead children in this situation to believe they are different in the community. As a sporting organisation the FAI can make a positive impact on how these families view society.

The programme commenced in late 2013 with the support of the Irish Sports Council. Kits with Bedford Row crest have been sourced for the children, every Thursday the FAI's Development Officer Declan Considine, works with the support of the Southill-based Outreach to provide small sided games against other similar communities to enhance the community spirit of the children.

Events that have taken place include a Fun Day for the families and a trip to the Aviva to watch Ireland play against Serbia, which was a unique experience for the children. The programme is also about helping create an identity for the group by linking them in with other club teams.

Bernie O'Grady Social Worker highlights the importance of the Bedford Row initiative: "This is a unique Project working at the core of Social difficulties that challenge us in Limerick today.

"The Project provides comprehensive and long-term solutions that really work. The FAI is core to the creative and inclusive work we carry out with these families. The support and interaction as a result of the work the FAI do with the kids on the programme is immeasurable in terms of motivation in the children and the positive success of this project."

Touch rugby (IRFU)

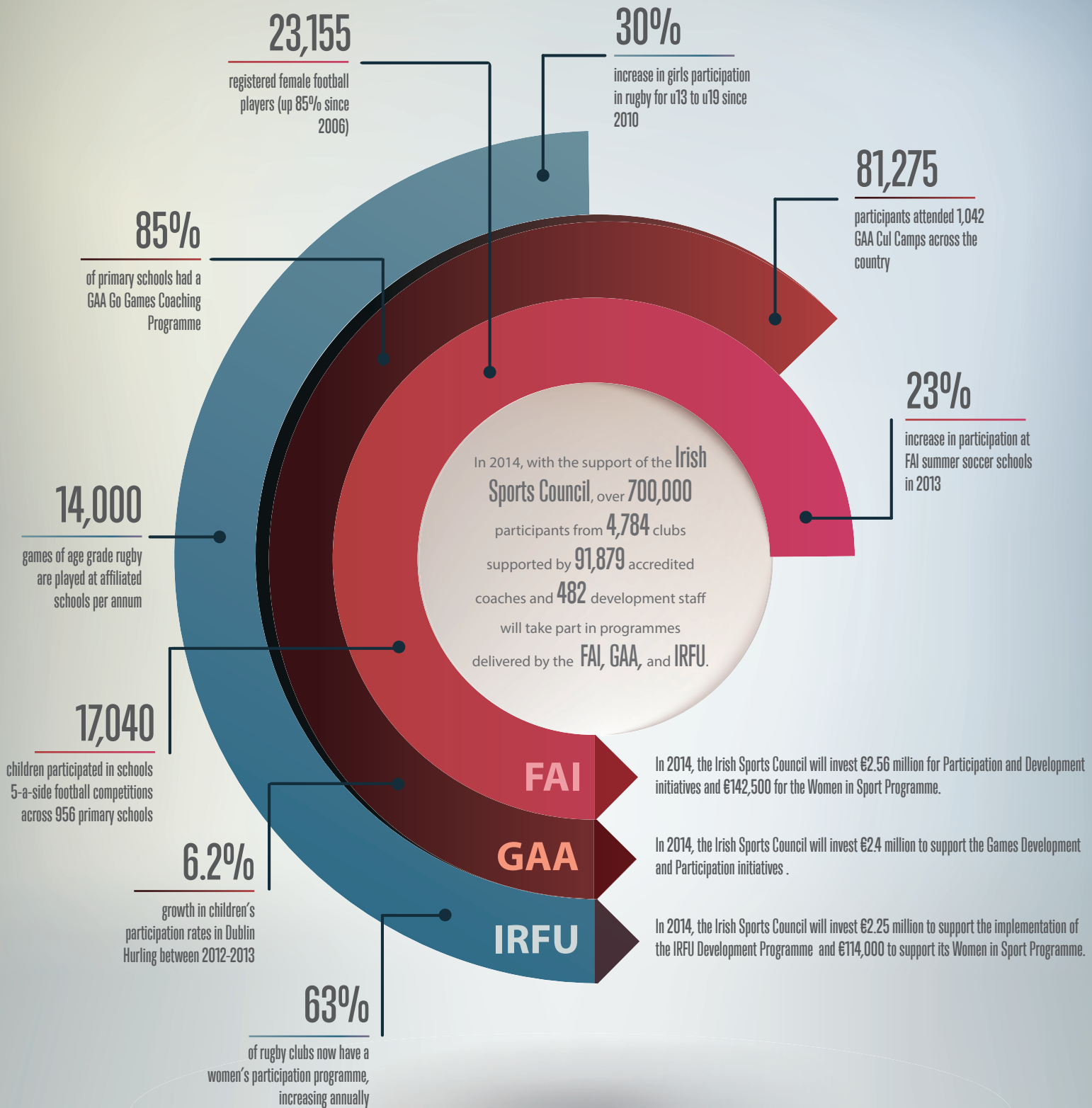
To combat the issue of drop out, the IRFU with the support of the Irish Sport Council operates a programme focused on secondary schools girls and boys to encourage them to participate in team sports while in education. The IRFU's Touch Rugby programme which is a minimum-contact version of the game, offers in-school sessions over six weeks, ending in a school blitz day in the local rugby club in which 6-8 secondary schools participate. Due to the informal nature of the events other health and education programmes, operated by our partners, are embedded in the programme. To encourage the social element of sport, all teams are mixed in gender.

Touch Rugby, allows either new and existing players to participate in a modified form of rugby. Particular attention is paid to students with no background in the game or those not currently playing the regular fifteen-a-side version, and girls who do not participate in regular physical activity. In the lead-up to this programme, development officers' conduct sessions with students as part of the schools own physical education programme. After the six weeks of coaching, teams then participate in a Blitz day

A recent example of this programme, was the IRFU Touch Rugby one-day event for schools which took place in Crescent College, Limerick. This event was aimed at transition year students (4th year), boys and girls, who would not normally participate in regular rugby activities. 12 teams participated in the tournament made up of squads from Crescent College, Castletroy College, St Munchin's, Rockwell College, Villiers School and Ard Scoil Ris. Eight teams formed the mixed competition for girls and boys and four contested the competition for boys. As each team was composed of at least a recommended number of twelve players, the tournament was played and enjoyed by over 150 relative newcomers to any form of rugby.

Field Sports Investment By Numbers

In 2014, the Irish Sports Council will invest over €7.4 million in the Youth Field Sports Programme. This investment is broadly aimed at encouraging and creating more opportunities for young people to participate in field sports.



**THE
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