



LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIPS

SPEAK Report 2009



LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIPS (LSPs)

SPEAK Report 2009

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Message from the Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport

I am delighted to welcome the publication of the third report on the work of the national network of Sports Partnerships. The SPEAK report for 2009 is important as it is the first year that the full national network was in operation. The report makes for interesting reading as it provides a clear snapshot of the work of the Partnerships and the positive achievements of their work at local level.

The evaluation framework was introduced on the back of a recommendation in the Fitzpatrick Report in 2005 which highlighted the need to measure the impact of the policies and programmes of the Sports Partnerships. In addition to fulfilling that essential function, the SPEAK Report can highlight those areas where the Partnerships are having the greatest impact and identify those issues that require additional attention.

I would like to congratulate all of the Sports Partnerships, and their voluntary boards, for their work. They are having a positive impact on participation in sport and physical activity, especially amongst groups who may face barriers in sport. The Partnerships are an important part of the national infrastructure which is required in order to achieve a sustained increase in the number of people participating in sport. Their success is a testament to this Government's significant investment in sport over the past 10 years.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Mary Hanafin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Mary Hanafin T.D.
Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport

Foreword

The Irish Sports Council are delighted to welcome the third SPEAK report of the national network of Local Sports Partnerships. This is the most comprehensive report to date with contributions from the full network of 33 Sports Partnerships.

The report allows us to share best practice, monitor trends and address areas for improvement within the network and enables us to have a greater awareness and understanding of the challenges we face.

Despite the economic challenges, the national network has been able to deliver to a wide range of courses and programmes across the target groups including those in disadvantaged communities and people with a disability. There were also significant numbers involved in the Buntús programmes and Code of Ethics training, while over 145 projects were conducted locally through the Women in Sport initiative.

Following the increased demand to deliver programmes and support for those who have become unemployed, a pioneering programme called *Link2BActive* has been introduced. After initial success, we will look to roll out this programme further within the network in 2010. In addition, the continued delivery of sporting opportunities to people with a disability through the Sports Inclusion Disability Officers underlines our commitment to deliver on Government priorities.

The Council would again like to take the opportunity to invite all statutory, community and voluntary groups with an interest in increasing participation to link in with the network both nationally and locally. The benefits the Local Sports Partnerships bring to areas such as health, education and social inclusion cannot be underestimated particularly in these challenging times.

Finally, the Irish Sports Council would like to again thank all of those who have contributed to the report and who have delivered programmes, projects and training through the network over the last year.



Ossie Kilkenny
Chairperson
Irish Sports Council



John Treacy
Chief Executive
Irish Sports Council

Key Findings

This report is based on the information provided for 2009 by 33 Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs) using the SPEAK self-evaluation system.

Resources and Funding

- Over €12.6m was invested in the LSP network in 2009. This figure includes benefit-in-kind funding.
- Funding from the Irish Sports Council accounts for 48% of the total LSP funding in 2009, the remaining 52% is raised by LSPs from partner agencies with the Local Authorities being the next most significant source of funding for LSPs in 2009.
- Over 497 people served on LSP boards in 2009, representing a 9% increase in the numbers involved in 2008.
- In 2009, the 33 LSPs directly employed 103 full-time staff and a further 28 part-time people.

Achievements of the LSP Network in 2009

Information Provision

- Over 118,000 individuals contacted the LSP network in order to access general or specific sport-related information.
- 3,436 information resources were produced by LSPs.

Development of Local Sports Infrastructure

- LSPs have provided 11,023 clubs, groups and organisations throughout the country with important information and advice in the area of funding
- 3,598 clubs and groups have been supported in the delivery of their activities
- LSPs planned and delivered 373 training and education courses

Delivering Irish Sports Council Programmes

- 1,859 primary school teachers in 241 schools received Buntús Generic training
- 1,536 childcare practitioners in 416 childcare centres received Buntús Start training
- 5,598 participants completed 386 Code of Ethics courses
- 259 participants completed 23 Club Children's Officer courses

Programme Delivery

- 112,056 people participated in 744 locally delivered participation programmes
- An additional 10,601 female participants took part in 145 local Women in Sport programmes

Building partnerships and influencing policy

- 159 networks and forums were facilitated by LSPs
- LSPs participated in 303 awareness raising events
- LSPs actively participated in 228 local committees and other networks

Challenges Ahead

- The challenge created by rising unemployment in terms of affordability and access to participation where there is cost/ membership involved.
- The moratorium on recruitment in the public service is raising many difficult and practical issues for employment practices in LSPs under the aegis of the Local Authorities.
- Sustaining the Sports Inclusion Disability Officer Programme beyond 2010 in order to maintain level of service delivery to people with a disability.
- Delivering long-term sustainable outcomes and having the capacity to measure and evaluate these outcomes continues to be a challenge.
- As LSPs grow in size and stature there is an increased demand and responsibility on each LSP Board to display all elements of good corporate governance.

Background

This is the third annual report of the Irish Sports Council's Local Sports Partnership initiative. The report is based on the information provided for 2009 by 33 Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs) using the SPEAK self-evaluation system.

SPEAK (Strategic Planning, Evaluation and Knowledge) offers organisations the capacity to self-evaluate, leading to a comprehensive understanding of the work of the organisation and the impacts of that work, and uses that new understanding to improve strategic and work planning for the organisation.

Information provided through SPEAK from each LSP is collated into a national programme database, creating a database of enormous potential to understand the full programme and its impacts, and most importantly to influence the direction of the programme and related areas of policy and practice.

1

Resources and Funding



1.1 Project Funding Sources

Funding from the Irish Sports Council accounts for 48% of the total LSP funding in 2009, the remaining 52% is raised from other sources. These figures include benefit in kind funding.

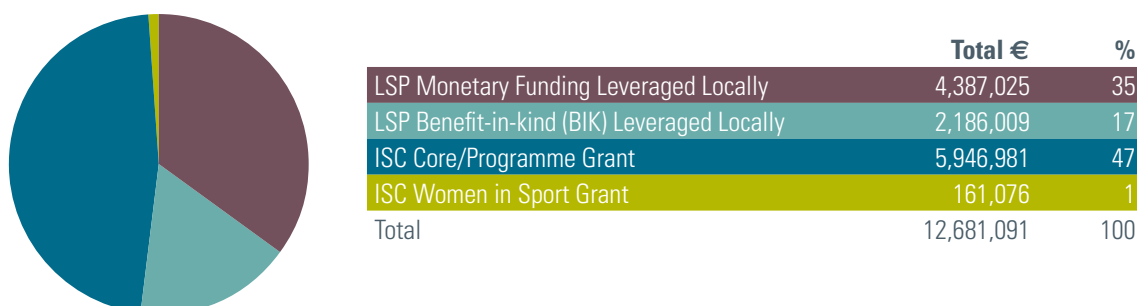


Figure 1.1 – Total funding received by LSPs in 2009

After core funding from the ISC, the Local Authorities were the next most significant source of monetary funding and in-kind support for the LSP network in 2009. Other significant funders of the network were the HSE, VEC, Pobal and An Post. Dormant account funding was a significant factor in the 2008-2009 period with regard to the Sports Inclusion Disability Officers and the funding programme for Sport for Disadvantaged Young People.

In the 2005 Fitzpatrick & Associates *Review of Local Sports Partnerships Programme* it was recommended that 50% of the network costs should be provided locally by the end of 2009. The Council is pleased to note that this recommendation has been achieved.

1.2 LSP Management and Staff

Boards of Management Participation and Representation

LSPs have boards of management drawn from key areas of expertise within the county sporting and community voluntary sectors. All statutory bodies, organisations and groups operating in local areas with a responsibility for or interest in sports development are invited to participate in the LSP.

- A total of 497 people served on LSP boards in 2009, representing an average of over 15 people per board. This also represents a 9% increase in the numbers involved in 2008.
- On average 16 hours was committed by each management committee, including the work undertaken by board sub-committees in 2009.

The Local Authority, VEC and HSE continue to be the three biggest participants on LSP Boards of Management (see Appendix A).

LSP Staff

LSPs have staff which are funded by the ISC and staff funded through other sources. Along with co-ordinators and administrators, many LSPs employ Sports Development Officers and/or Sports Inclusion Disability Officers (SIDOs).

In 2009, the 33 LSPs directly employed a total of 103 full-time staff, 62 female and 41 male. 59 of these were directly core funded by the ISC. A further 28 part-time people were employed within the LSP structure, 12 of which were funded by the ISC.

	Male	Female	Total
Full time staff, funded by ISC, other programmes and agencies	41	62	103
Part time staff, funded by ISC, other programmes and agencies	8	20	28
Total	49	82	131

Figure 1.2 LSP staff across the network

The LSPs also contracted a further 170 tutors to deliver programmes, courses and initiatives within the LSP structure.

1.3 Development of LSP Network and SPEAK

In 2008, the national LSP network was completed, bringing to 33 the number of LSPs throughout the country. However, four LSPs that were established in late 2008 were not required to contribute to the 2008 SPEAK Report. These LSPs have been included in the evaluation for 2009. Consequently, this is the first SPEAK report for the full national network of LSPs. (See Appendix B for full list of LSPs).

1.4 Developments in the Monitoring and Evaluation Methods

Following the completion of the 2008 annual report, the LSPs engaged in a process of reviewing and refining the methods used to monitor and evaluate their work. Similar to previous reviews, user feedback was collated and a representative group of LSP staff convened to review and assess it and decide on what enhancements to make.

The SPEAK system was modified to reflect the agreed views of the Irish Sports Council, LSPs and the representative group. Alterations to the system were not as widespread or as significant in size as in 2008. Among some of the more notable modifications were the following:

- LSPs must now clearly identify a sole priority target group for each participation programme delivered. They may also identify secondary target groups participating in such programmes.
- Refinements were made to the method of recording information on the most popular training and education courses.
- The framework for analysing the impacts of the various working methods of the LSP was reorganised and simplified.



2

Achievements of the LSP Network in 2009



2.1 Introduction

The extensive work of the LSP network can be characterised as falling under four main headings:

- Acting as a provider of information about sport and physical activity at a local level
- Promoting the sustainability of the local sporting infrastructure
- Working to increase levels of local participation, especially amongst specific target groups
- Building partnerships and influencing policy

This work continued to be monitored and assessed by the network throughout 2009, with a further specific focus on the roll out of nationally co-ordinated programmes.

This section explores the manner in which the partnerships have promoted participation as well as the development of sport. It also looks at the provision of leadership, co-ordination and direction, particularly in terms of the specific activities undertaken in 2009 with regard to these four headings¹.

2.2 Understanding “LSP Maintenance Work”

LSPs have continued to monitor their operational tasks in 2009 in order to examine the level of commitment that has been necessary to manage the internal workings of the organisation. These tasks include staff training and support, board recruitment and support, the ongoing development of internal policies and procedures, as well as engaging in strategic planning exercises. Other internal tasks include reporting on financial matters, as well as the management of websites and databases.

LSPs have on average spent some 49% of their overall time in this area, a slight drop on the average of 52% in 2008. Administrators continued to support the ongoing internal demands of the organisation with three quarters of their time, (the remaining quarter being used on external work with partner agencies and target groups). Development officers including the SIDOs tend to spend about 25% of their time in this area.

The following chart presents an overview of the most demanding internal tasks across all workers in the LSP Network.

¹ A selection of qualitative examples are used throughout the report to highlight the practical impact that LSP interventions are having on the communities at local level. Unfortunately due to space restrictions only a small selection of examples can be included, and it is not possible to include cases from every LSP in the national network.

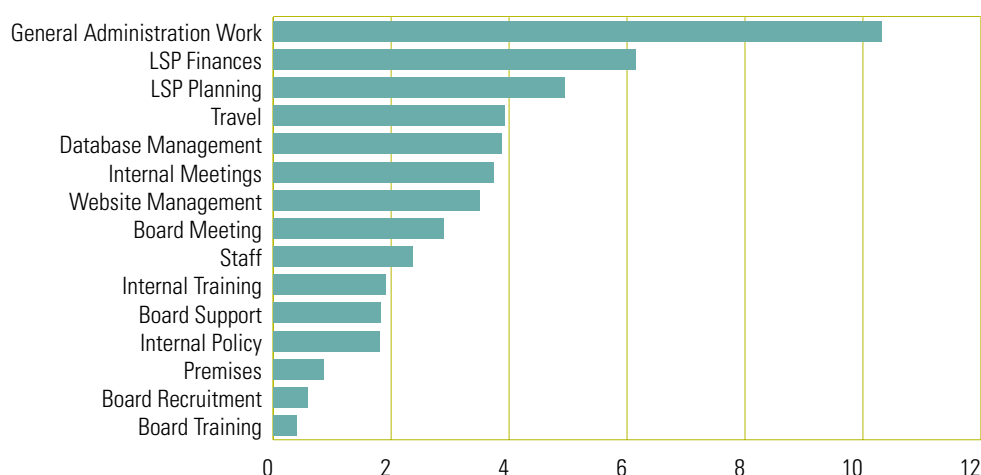


Figure 2.1 Breakdown of LSP Maintenance Work

Through collecting information on this aspect of the LSP work, it becomes clear that the organisational demands of building the partnership from the bottom up represents a major time commitment from all staff. Supporting members of the board to play a full role in the life of the LSP takes up a significant amount of the co-ordinator's and administrator's time. Liaising with funders and dealing with reporting requirements are also important and time consuming tasks.

2.3 Working Methods

Each LSP has continued to engage in a detailed analysis of where their time went in 2009 beyond their work in LSP maintenance. The following chart gives a breakdown of the time committed to LSP work with partner agencies and directly with target groups, according to their eight specific working methods.

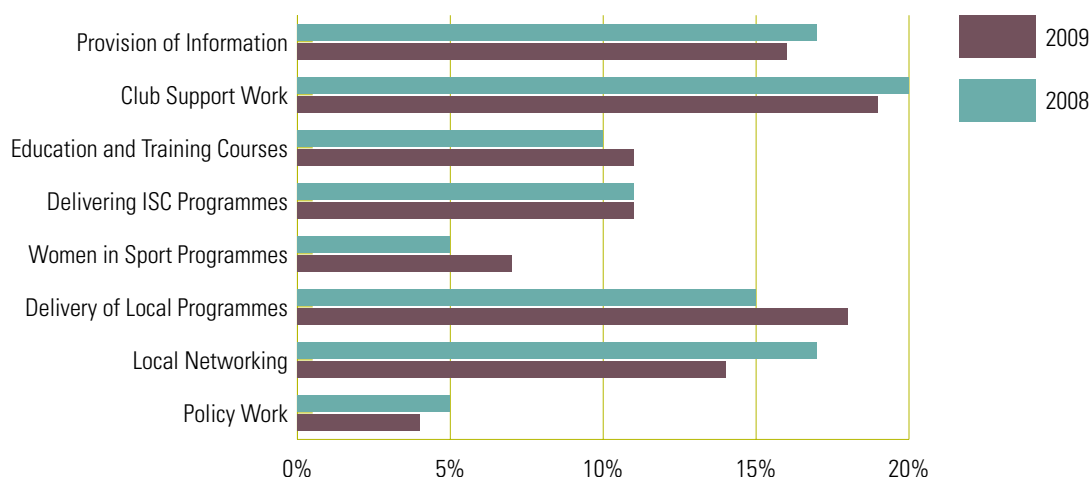


Figure 2.2 Comparison of breakdown in LSP time, 2008 and 2009. For an explanation of working methods see Appendix C.

The most significant areas of work undertaken by LSPs in 2009 were in relation to the promotion of a sustainable local sporting infrastructure, developing and disseminating information resources as well as the initiation and delivery of local programmes.

The most significant shift in the working methodologies of LSPs in 2009 was the extra effort spent on initiating, supporting and delivering local projects. This area of work witnessed a 5% increase in time committed.

The following sections examine these five areas of LSP work - information provision, local sports infrastructural development, ISC programme delivery, local participation programme delivery and policy work.

2.4 Information Provision

2009 Highlights:

- Over 118,000 individuals contacted the LSP network in order to access general or specific sport-related information
- 3,436 information resources were produced by LSPs

LSPs have continued to invest one sixth of their time in 2009 in the area of resource development and information provision.

Over 118,000 individuals contacted the LSP network in 2009 in order to access general or specific sport-related information.

When compared to 2008 this represents a 76% increase in interaction with the wider public and demonstrates that the partnerships are becoming more of a focal point for the community in the area of sports development and physical activity.

LSPs have also worked with individuals who drop into the LSP offices looking to access specific information resources. Almost 7,000 individuals from all target groups have dropped into a LSP in person in 2009. Through such contact, target groups are gaining awareness of the full range of local activities and national initiatives that the LSPs promote.

LSPs continue to identify gaps in information provision at a local level and have been instrumental in addressing these gaps by producing and circulating resources.

From Figure 2.3 it can be seen that, when compared to 2008 LSPs increased their output and production of new Information Resources in 2009.

New Information Resources	Number 2009	(Number 2008)
Number of Printed Materials	450	(402)
Number of Press Releases	944	(590)
Number of ePublications	2,042	(990)
Total	3,436	(1,982)

Figure 2.3 Summary of new information resources developed by LSPs in 2008 and 2009. Figures in brackets are for 2008.

What has been the impact of this work?

LSPs continually monitor the manner in which their information is being used by their target groups and their partner agencies.

LSPs have recorded evidence of increased levels of awareness about access to opportunities in the area of sports and physical activity, leading to a greater take up of such opportunities.

Engagement with local media has allowed for the promotion of programmes and courses. This has led to contacts from community areas and target groups seeking to run similar activities in their area. A number of LSPs have regular columns in local newspapers to advertise activities and new initiatives.

Through their use of new social media, LSPs have been promoting, networking and engaging more effectively with groups, communities and clubs. Media such as web text, email lists, Twitter and Facebook are being used to raise awareness of LSP campaigns. For example Mayo LSP has supported the use of web text for projects such as “Meet and Train” resulting in increased attendance. Clare LSP is using Facebook as a means of communicating new initiatives and building up an online presence. As more information and dissemination strategies are making use of such media, other LSPs are following suit.

Information campaigns have led to direct and indirect increases in participation levels. The development of an underage structure for Roscommon Ladies Basketball Club happened as a result of their initial search for information from their local LSP (Roscommon LSP).

County Limerick LSP has recorded specific impacts from its information and dissemination strategy.

- Code of Ethics courses increased to 16 in 2009 with 700 coaches attending all courses in 2009, an increase of 20% from 2008.
- Go For Life grant applications increased in 2009 with 16 groups being successful.

Requests for information by phone and email have increased by 18% with website hits averaging 25,000 per quarter (County Limerick LSP)

Through information being disseminated about coaching courses, as well as coaching resources being produced, County Limerick LSP has noted improvement in the continuous professional development of coaches. Training methods have changed for some coaches based on research documentation being disseminated. Coaches have complimented the LSP on providing access to research documents on the web.

This growth of the number of people participating in projects engaging with sporting organisations is a key focus for LSPs’ information provision activities. However, a further impact relates to the increased profile of the LSP network as well as a growing awareness of the extent of its work.

County Cork LSP also recorded important impacts from its information provision:

- 44 Code of Ethics courses last year with an average number of participants of 14 people per course.
- The Meet & Train promotional flyers led to three successful meet & train groups operating on a weekly basis.
- Over 40 clubs applied to the *SportsAbility* grant scheme in 2009. Information was circulated through the SIDO (County Cork LSP).

2.5 Development of Local Sports Infrastructure

2009 Highlights:

- LSPs have provided 11,023 clubs, groups and organisations throughout the country with important information and advice in the area of funding
- 3,598 clubs and groups have been supported in the delivery of their activities
- LSPs planned and delivered 373 training and education courses

Since 2007, LSPs have consistently committed some 30% of their external working time in working towards developing a more sustainable local sporting infrastructure.

LSPs continued to support the development of a sustainable infrastructure in which a wide range of sporting and community sector organisations can work together in a partnership approach. This involves:

- providing quality training for volunteers and officials
- enhancing local coach deployment
- working with clubs and groups to develop autonomous structures and codes of practice
- identifying funding streams and providing support in applying for such funding

Funding Work

In 2009 LSPs provided 11,023 clubs, groups and organisations throughout the country with important information and advice in the area of funding. This represents a 55% increase in the number of clubs, groups and organisations assisted when compared to 2008.

This information has been disseminated through newsletters, brochures, local radio, local and national press and other media. LSP websites have been an important focal point in reaching clubs. Most LSPs have run information workshops in the area of funding.

LSPs have worked directly with 1,716 (16%) of these clubs to assist them in preparing and developing funding applications.

Detailed information is kept on the range of organisations targeted. A wide range of grants and funding schemes were accessed, including local authority grants, sports capital grants, dormant accounts, specific disability funding streams and other mainstream sources.

What has been the impact of this work?

Groups, clubs and sporting organisations throughout the country have successfully accessed funding as a result of ongoing support from LSPs. While this funding allows for the critical expansion of the local sporting infrastructure, the spending of this money represents an important boost to the local economy.

Sligo LSP and local sports clubs in RAPID areas made a successful application under the Dormant Accounts Fund, RAPID Additionality Measure, to provide funding for three urban disadvantaged sites, Cranmore, Merville and Forthill for 2009-2010. Funding amounting to €20,000 was received to support sports clubs/ organisations in the delivery of sport and recreational programmes including Soccer, Golf, Dance, Angling, Swimming and Gaelic Games, linked with local clubs, youth clubs, resource centres and community groups (Sligo LSP).

LSPs work with local clubs to raise awareness of funding schemes.

Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown LSP organised a Fundraising Seminar attended by over 35 clubs to provide information, contacts and innovative solutions in dealing with funding issues. Through their participation and follow up support, 17 different clubs received funding under the Club Development & Participation Grant of €1,000 each (Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown LSP).

Club Development Work

A further aspect of the LSP's support for the local sports infrastructure concerns specific club development work. This may involve support with regard to the delivery of sporting activities, as well as help with organisational and policy issues.

Development Area	2009	(2008)
Groups supported in the delivery of their activities	3,598	(2,541)
Groups supported with regard to developing their organisational or management structures	695	(457)
Groups assisted in tackling particular development or policy issues	612	(745)

Figure 2.4 Number of groups supported by LSPs in 2008 and 2009

This support work has involved working with groups to develop participation strategies and social inclusion policies. For instance, LSPs promote policy development initiatives within clubs, groups and projects regarding disability awareness and the inclusion of new communities in club activities.

We have developed a useful club development manual which is available on our website. The document provides a resource for clubs in terms of internal capacity building issues, financial planning and health and safety concerns (South Tipperary LSP).

A wide range of groups are supported. For example:

...a workshop for childcare workers is facilitated by Waterford LSP to promote ideas and delivery methods regarding physical activity for children (Waterford LSP).

As new communities bring new activities to the area in sports such as cricket, fencing and volleyball (as identified in Sligo), new energies are evident and LSPs act to offer support to any new ideas.

Less work has been recorded in 2009 in relation to the area of facility development. LSPs have also advised clubs on their dealings with the media and the development of communication strategies.

What has been the impact of this work?

There has been a direct and clear impact on the overall sustainability of the sporting infrastructure. The LSP Network has consistently prioritised the development and support of volunteers and coaches at club and organisation level.

As a result of engaging with the parents and giving them key tasks, two Sports Ability clubs (in Nenagh and Roscrea) have become increasingly sustainable, increasing capacity to deliver activities (North Tipperary LSP).

We have worked with the Waterford Street Soccer Committee to promote its self-sufficiency. This will allow the league to continue independently of Sports Partnership staff. The LSP has supported the further development of this initiative across extra communities in 2009, ensuring higher levels of participation in street soccer activities and an increased capacity to self organise (Waterford LSP).

Laois LSP had a concerted focus on promoting voluntarism in 2009.

In 2009 we held a workshop on “Volunteering in Changing Times” to assist clubs on recruiting, retaining and recognising their volunteers. There were 50 participants from 20 organisations. These included Woodenbridge paddlers, Portlaoise Boxing Club, Laois Camogie Clubs etc.

The impacts were improved management structures within the club, better planning for the future, and increased capacity for fundraising (in lieu of no sports capital grants available). Abbeylax Special Olympics Club was supported in the original set up of their club. This included appointing officers, recruiting volunteers and receiving coaching and assistance with their training of athletes (Laois LSP).

Clubs who have received developmental support from LSPs have consolidated club structures in 2009 and have used their increased capacity to deliver new targeted programmes in addition to their regular weekly club programmes.

We have worked with eight new clubs over the course of 2009 to advise and assist them with their committee set up, drawing up of constitutions, linking with NGBs and accessing relevant courses. This has resulted in new sports becoming available in the Louth area - Cricket, Hockey and Fencing are all examples of these (Louth LSP).

Sligo LSP has also conducted significant work in promoting club development.

In 2009 the Innisfree Wheelers Cycling Club (in conjunction with the Sports Inclusion Disability Project) developed new inclusive Tandem Cycling within their club framework. This initiative is aimed at local adults with a visual impairment who wish to pursue the sport of cycling. Through disability awareness training and the identification and training of club personnel to become tandem pilots the programme has been hugely successful with two local visually impaired athletes now cycling regularly as members of the club. These athletes achieved notable success with one of them completing both the An Post Tour of Sligo and the Mizen to Malin Head All Ireland Cycle in 2009. The second athlete is currently part of Cycling Ireland's Paralympic Programme with the hope of qualifying for major championships in the near future after finishing second in the National Time Trials and just missing out on the World Track Para-Cycling Championships in Manchester in November 2009. The direct impact of increased capacity within the Innisfree Wheelers Cycling Club to embrace people with a disability into their club with the support of the SIDO programme is reflected in the words of a participant:

'Tandem Cycling has given me, and I speak from the perspective of a visually impaired person, an opportunity to actively participate in an outdoor sport which might otherwise be denied to me. The provision of a tandem bike and pilot has enabled me to attain a high level of fitness which, for a guy in his mid 40's, is not a bad thing at all. Most significantly of all though, participating in the 2009 cycle from Mizen Head to Malin Head in aid of Irish Guide Dogs marked a major milestone in my life'. Tom Cavanagh - Athlete. (Sligo LSP)

Training and Education Courses

LSPs keep detailed records on the numbers of participants who have completed training and education programmes that are supported by the network. In 2009 the LSPs planned and delivered some 373 training and education courses, workshops and seminars with their partner agencies. This is an increase from 282 courses supported in 2008. Figure 2.5 presents a breakdown of the training and education courses run by LSPs in 2009. On average, 23 people attended each training course.

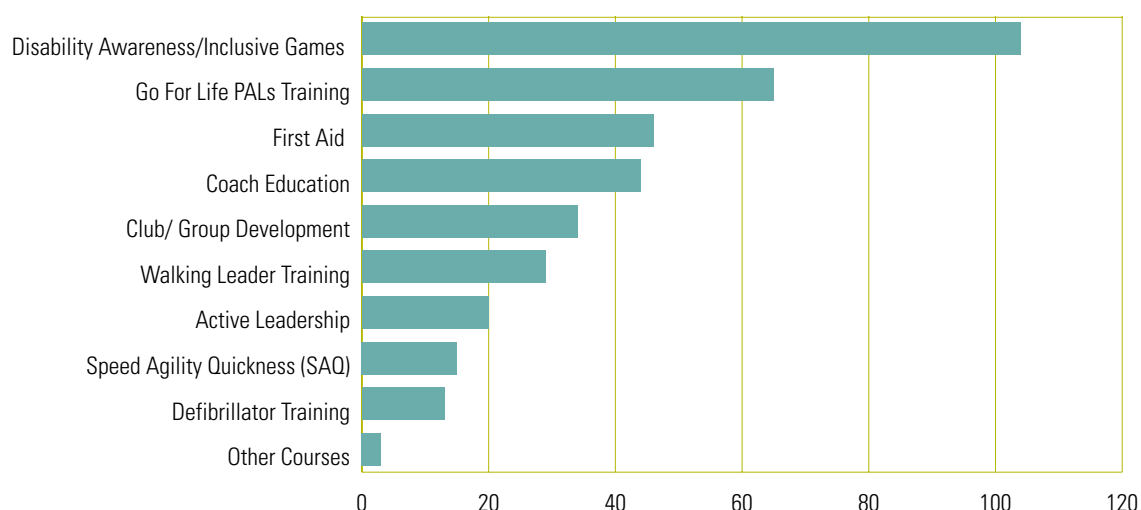


Figure 2.5 Training and education courses run by LSPs in 2009.

The Active Leadership Award has been developed by the Irish Sports Council and Sport Northern Ireland to provide a panel of trained, knowledgeable and enthusiastic community based leaders, whose aim is to encourage people to become and remain involved in sport and physical activity. The course is designed to ensure that leaders will have the necessary competencies to plan and lead safe, enjoyable sport and physical activity sessions.

Some 36 youth leaders have received Active Leadership Training from South Tipperary LSP (17 in 2007, 10 in 2008 and 9 in 2009) and are now trained to provide activities for young members of their groups (South Tipperary LSP).

Reflecting the substantial work and value of the Sports Inclusion Disability Officers (SIDOs), the most common type of training course run in 2009 was Disability Awareness/Inclusive Games training. Over 2,500 participants attended 102 training events, workshops and awareness raising sessions with a focus on of disability. The education, community and sporting sectors were targeted to promote inclusion measures and extend their activity base to ensure greater access to all.

In Meath we have worked to increase participation in Boccia among people with physical and intellectual disabilities. This involved the establishment of a league within Meath to facilitate the growth of the sport. Some eight staff members in a range of local disability services were trained in skills of delivery of Boccia and have run Boccia courses back within their services. This led to 2 successful regional tournaments with 28 participants taking part (Meath LSP).

Many of the training and education courses run by LSPs directly led to new groups being formed and increased participation.

Laois LSP worked with their Local Authority and the ISC in 2009 to deliver a Walking Leadership Training course involving 25 participants. The roll-out of the Portlaoise Stepping Out Programme followed from the course. These initiatives led to the establishment of the Portlaoise Walking & Social Club. There are currently 38 members of this walking club with 15 associate members. The Laois LSP aim to replicate the Slí na Sláinte model for training purposes in 2010 with the aim of similar impacts in Abbeyleix and Portarlinton (Laois LSP).

Clare LSP had similar successes with their Clare Active Walking Programme. Through a partnership with the Irish Heart Foundation, the LSP ran 5 walking leader courses throughout the county in 2009, resulting in the formation of 2 walking clubs and 3 Slí na Sláinte routes (Clare LSP).

What has been the impact of this work?

By promoting and developing the base of trained volunteers and community leaders, employment opportunities have been created. A constant flow of newly trained tutors and volunteers continues to emerge in each county.

As a direct result of training supported by us in 2009, two new female Hip Hop Dance instructors, one new Gymnastics coach and two new Boxercise instructors now regularly coach on Youth Sport West, Active Communities and Girls Active programmes. In addition, the 19 participants who completed Active Leadership training in 2009 were all employed on summer camps in County Sligo (Sligo LSP).

In strengthening the capacity of local sporting organisations, personal progression for members of target groups in their communities has been documented.

The participation of target groups has been promoted through the Active Leadership programme as delivered by Co. Limerick LSP.

Participants from the Travelling Community have received ongoing support to actively use their learning to develop programmes in their communities, leading to the hosting of a series of sports days in their communities (County Limerick LSP).

A more qualified cohort of tutors and volunteers emerged in 2009, enhancing the sustainability and capacity of clubs and organisations to develop and thrive.

Two swim coaches from Westport Swimming Club received training in Disability Helpers during 2009 and now deliver specialised classes in the area. Some ten badminton volunteers received Level 1 Training and brought it into their clubs where there was no previous coaching (Mayo LSP).

We provided support to sports and recreation clubs in Kilkenny to support their coaches and volunteers in accessing training and coaching courses, through subsidising some of the training costs. For example, in 2009 some 47 coaches and volunteers were able to access training due to the €2,650 made available by the LSP (Kilkenny LSP).

2.6 Delivering Irish Sports Council Programmes

2009 Highlights:

- 1,859 primary school teachers in 241 schools received Buntús Generic training
- 1,536 childcare practitioners in 416 childcare centres received Buntús Start training
- 5,598 participants completed 386 Code of Ethics courses
- 259 participants completed 23 Club Children's Officer courses

As with 2008, Local Sports Partnerships committed some 11% of their 2009 overall available time to the delivery of two national ISC programmes: Buntús and Code of Ethics.

Buntús

Buntús Generic is a programme developed to support primary school teachers in introducing young people to sport and helping to develop their interests. Teachers deliver Buntús in support of the Physical Education programme. The Irish Sports Council has linked with the FAI, IRFU, Badminton Ireland, Junior Golf Ireland and Basketball Ireland to deliver the Buntús Sports Specific Programmes to Primary and Special Needs Schools in the Local Sports Partnership areas. The training is provided by the Regional Development Officers from the National Governing Bodies and specially trained Buntús tutors.

Buntús Start is a comprehensive physical activity programme for children aged 2-5 years old. It has been designed for use in pre-school settings so that pre-school and playgroup leaders can provide a wide range of learning opportunities for young children to develop skills as well as a positive attitude to physical activity.

All three Buntús programmes allow an important opportunity for LSPs to engage with pre-school and primary school children and their teachers in order to disseminate the key message embodied in the Buntús programme.

In 2009, the work of LSPs with primary schools and childcare centres has led to the following results:

	Buntús Generic		Buntús Start	
	2009	(2008)	2009	(2008)
Number of schools/childcare centres received training	241	(289)	416	(381)
Number of teachers/practitioners who were trained	1,859	(2,851)	1,536	(1,208)
Total number of students in schools/childcare centres that received training	28,094	(42,059)	8,237	(8,103)

Figure 2.6 Summary of 2009 Buntús outputs. Figures in brackets are for 2008.

Since their introduction, over 320,000 children have been beneficiaries of both programmes.

	Buntús Generic	Buntús Start
Total number of schools/centres that received training (since introduction of Buntús Generic/Start)	2,323	1,154
Total number of teachers/practitioners trained	15,345	4,201
Total number of children in trained schools/centres (since introduction of Buntús Generic/Start)	298,538	24,008

Figure 2.7 Buntús outputs since the introduction of the Buntús programme

Compared to 2008 there was a 16% decrease in the number of schools that received Buntús Generic training in 2009. Compared to 2008 there was a 9% increase in the number of childcare centres received training in Buntús Start in 2009. These trends are not unexpected. There is a correlation between the reduction in the number of Buntús Generic courses and the marked increase in the number of Buntús Start courses. As highlighted in the 2008 SPEAK report that while delivering the Buntús Generic programme is a key priority for the newer LSPs, for the majority of the established LSPs Buntús Generic has been fully implemented in most or all primary schools in their area. Consequently as the LSP network matures the focus shifts towards the roll-out of Buntús Start in childcare centres.

What has been the impact of this work?

LSPs have recorded positive response rates and uptake levels from schools and pre schools. Important factors in the successful delivery of Buntús include:

- The knowledge, expertise and support of available tutors
- Strong working relationships that have been established between the LSPs and the schools and clubs
- Positive engagement from partner agencies (including the primary school network and County Childcare Committees) and NGBs
- Regular and structured follow up support provided by NGBs
- The availability of quality resources encouraged the schools to participate in the programme

Longer established LSPs have rolled out Buntús Generic throughout all primary schools in the county. Many such LSPs engaged in refresher training with schools in 2009.

Many LSPs have also been conducting Buntús Start revisits with preschools in 2009 to work with new practitioners.

This ongoing relationship building within the education sector has ensured that schools have been responsive to the roll out of Buntús Sport Specific. However, LSPs reported difficulties in delivering some Buntús Sport Specific Programmes due to NGB financial cutbacks.

The success of other initiatives that are promoted by the LSPs to primary schools has been attributed to Buntús.

In Offaly, we delivered a new School Super Star programme to primary schools in 2009. This programme was designed around activities and equipment within the Buntús bags, thereby ensuring that there was no cost implication to participating schools.

The programme culminated in a 10 event inter-schools competition based on the Super Stars programme which was popular in the 1980s. As a result of this programme / competition, a lot of equipment from the Buntús bags (e.g. hockey sticks, rugby balls) not commonly used heretofore were used in the schools (Offaly LSP).

New partnerships have been promoted through Buntús work.

In Donegal, we worked successfully to bring the Donegal County Childcare Committee and the Childcare Business Development Network together to promote the Buntús Start programme to the Private Childcare sector (Donegal LSP).

In Mayo, a number of childcare centres now hold yearly summer camps which also double up as a camp for the community. The LSP provides information and support through its special participation grant scheme (Mayo LSP).

New initiatives have taken place as a result of Buntús.

In North Tipperary the primary schools Basketball League was set up as a result of the Buntús programme. This is now in its fifth year, with 32 primary schools participating and 480 children. A number of primary schools have also signed up for the Playground Markings Project as a result of the Buntús Programme. Childcare providers have also come together to organise fun activity days as a result of Buntús Start training (North Tipperary LSP).

The Buntús equipment has been used to good effect to promote participation in sporting events.

Three primary schools in 2009 used the Buntús equipment on their sports days. The Laois County Childcare Committee also received support with a play day and family day utilising the Buntús Start equipment. An annual soccer blitz is now part of the county sports schedule as well as a Basketball Blitz and Basketball Jamboree with over 200 children participating (Laois LSP).

A review undertaken by South Tipperary LSP indicated that of the 38 schools reviewed 37 were getting on well with the programme and found it an excellent resource for their school and development of their students. A large number of initiatives emerged from the use of Buntús equipment, including lunchtime activity programmes, a tag rugby blitz, a circuit style class, a hockey tournament and a series of fun days (South Tipperary LSP).

As schools and childcare centres have become more engaged with the LSP network, LSPs have worked to develop this relationship further.

Some LSPs contributed in 2009 to in-service days and teacher training courses. Other LSPs worked with schools regarding other initiatives such as the playground markings scheme and the Green flag award.

In Limerick, the LSP has contributed to Childcare Committee information sessions. Links have been developed with the 22 DEIS² Schools to develop sport programmes (Limerick City LSP).

Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics training programme targets sports leaders and adults involved in the organisation of sport for young people to promote child welfare and protection policies and procedures. LSPs work closely at a local level with all governing bodies of sport and related organisations to support the adoption of child welfare and protection policies and procedures.

The Code of Ethics programme consists of two workshops:

- A 4-hour Basic Awareness training module for leaders within the sports club and
- A further 6-hour Club Children’s Officer workshop to support Club Children’s Officers in the implementation of the code in their clubs.

These courses are rolled out through the LSP network, targeting sports leaders and other officers, as well as the Children’s Officer and designated persons within clubs.

In 2009, 5,598 participants completed Basic Awareness training on 386 courses run by the LSPs. This represents an average of 11 courses per LSP per year, an increase of 35% compared to 2008.

	Basic Awareness		Club Children’s Officer	
	2009	(2008)	2009	(2008)
Number of courses delivered	386	(250)	23	(14)
Number of participants	5,598	(3,542)	259	(167)

Figure 2.8 Summary of Code of Ethics outputs. Figures in brackets are for 2008.

As a result of participating in the workshops, Children’s Officers / Sports Leaders are trained to:

- Implement best practice in protecting the welfare of participants
- Create a child-centred environment within the sports club
- List categories of abuse and some indicators associated with abuse
- Make the appropriate response to a disclosure
- Make a report to the Designated Officer or appropriate Statutory Authorities

2 DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools). DEIS is a Department of Education & Science initiative designed to tackle educational disadvantage by ensuring that the most disadvantaged schools benefit from a comprehensive package of supports

What has been the impact of this work?

Through 2009, LSPs have continued to put in place effective systems for the management and delivery of the Code of Ethics programme.

Quality internal support materials have been developed by many LSPs which are then widely disseminated online and during the courses to assist clubs in the development of their child welfare and protection policies.

Sligo LSP has a series of fact sheets on the website to support clubs in developing and implementing policies. While clubs have reported this to be a beneficial resource, LSPs throughout the country are encouraging course participants to refer to the SSRP resources for additional information (Sligo LSP).

Support from the ISC on issues relating to Code of Ethics training and development and the supply of quality tutors has led to an increasing demand from clubs to engage in training.

LSPs work closely with clubs to organise sessions to suit their practical needs. Furthermore, links with working partners have been promoted.

In Mayo, the increase in Code of Ethics workshops in 2009 was due to the Mayo GAA County Board adopting the course as part of its coach education programme (Mayo LSP).

LSPs have partnered together with neighbouring LSPs in order to deliver the Club Children's Officer course.

The LSPs are not tasked with evaluating the extent to which clubs have implemented the lessons from the Code of Ethics training workshops, especially the Club Children's Officers training. It is the responsibility of the National Governing Bodies to ensure that child welfare and protection policies are being implemented in their clubs. However, LSPs have worked with NGBs to increase awareness among clubs and organisations for the need to have policies and procedures in place to protect all members. Many LSPs point to the need for better communication between some NGB's and LSPs in relation to implementation of the Code of Ethics.

In addition the lack of availability of local data regarding clubs with a Children's Officer (as well as the training status of the Club Children's Officer) represents a challenge to LSPs to target clubs.

Many LSPs are trying to work more closely with clubs who have attended the 6-hour Club Children's Officer training to ensure they are supported in the implementation of Child Welfare and Protection policies in these specific clubs.

We worked to promote meaningful engagement by clubs with the Child Welfare and Protection Course by setting one of the criteria of their 'Disability Access Grant Scheme' in 2009 that each applicant group had to attach a copy of their Child Welfare and Protection policy. If one was not in place, the club had to sign up to a course before funding was received (North Tipperary LSP).

LSPs are finding that they are becoming a contact point for the local Children's Officers within clubs who seek advice about policies within their club.

2.7 Programme Delivery

2009 Highlights:

- 112,056 people participated in 744 locally delivered participation programmes
- An additional 10,601 female participants took part in 145 local Women in Sport programmes

Local Sports Partnerships committed one quarter of their overall available time in 2009 to the area of project delivery. An extra 550 days were directed at initiating, supporting and delivering new work, leading to a large increase in the establishment of new and innovative programmes, projects and initiatives across the LSP network. LSPs have responded to emerging local needs by extending the range of its activity base to work to directly increase levels of local participation.

Each LSP is constantly establishing new projects, overseeing the delivery of innovative initiatives and year by year creating links with a wider range of partner agencies. As LSPs have engaged in more project-driven work, their contact with target groups has grown organically.

LSPs monitor their work in this area by maintaining records on each project or programme in which they play a role or have some responsibility. The following table presents an overview of the number of locally delivered projects in which LSPs were involved in 2009.

	Number of Active Projects	Number of Projects by Involvement
Local Programmes	744 (433)	Solely Responsible: 67 (48) Mainly Responsible: 389 (220) Partly Responsible: 288 (165)
Women In Sport Programmes	145 (102)	Solely Responsible: 9 (4) Mainly Responsible: 73 (68) Partly Responsible: 63 (30)

Figure 2.9 Number of locally delivered programmes in which LSPs were involved in 2009. Figures in brackets are for 2008.

LSPs have examined the range of groups that have been targeted by categorising new projects according to the primary target group with which they were working. The following chart gives an overview of the manner in which LSPs prioritised certain target groups in 2009.

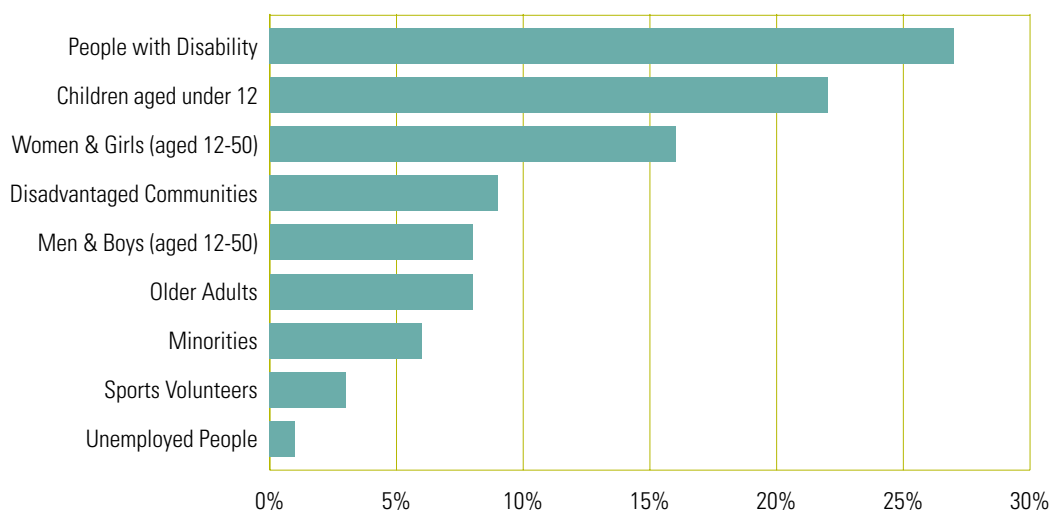


Figure 2.10 Breakdown of primary target groups in LSP local programmes in 2009

As can be seen in Figure 2.10, people with a disability were the primary target group in approximately one quarter of new LSP programmes in 2009. Once again this demonstrates the immense value of the SIDOs and having dedicated full time staff working in the area targeting the disability sector.

LSPs also tracked the key issues that each project was setting out to address by these local projects. The following chart presents a breakdown of the issues and presents trends between 2008 and 2009.

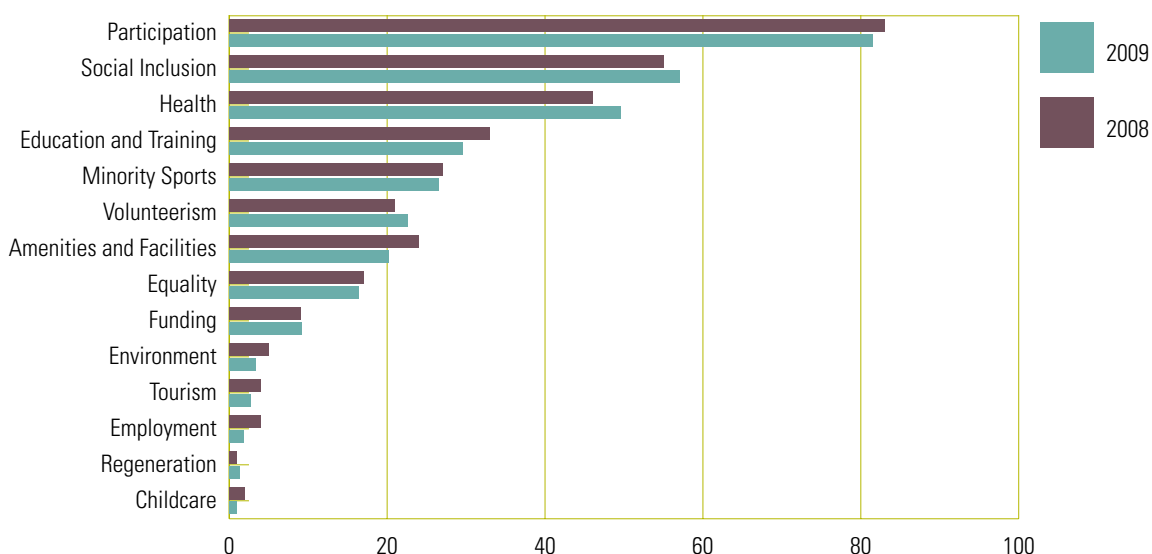


Figure 2.11 Key issues that LSP local programmes addressed in 2008 and 2009

Similar to previous years, we can see that the remit of the LSPs is broad and extensive. Once again participation, social inclusion and health continue to be the key issues for the LSPs.

What has been the impact of this work?

The number of people participating is a key impact indicator of this work. The following table presents a summary of this data. LSPs also collect data on the extent to which the delivery of these projects had a financial and benefit in kind cost. The following table presents a summary of this data for 2009 (2008 data in brackets).

Indicator	Women in Sports Programmes	Local Programmes
Number of Active programmes where data is available for 2009	145 (102)	744 (433)
Total number of People Participating (including participants on selected training programmes)	10,601 (7,896)	112,056 (69,843)

Figure 2.12 Summary of 2009 LSP Programme Outputs. Figures in brackets are for 2008.

Over 110,000 people have participated in these local programmes, as well as a further 10,500 beneficiaries of the Women in Sport programmes. This represents an increase of 58% or over 45,000 participants on the 2008 level. While some of this increase can certainly be attributed to the four new LSPs included in this year's report (including Dublin City with a large population base), it also reflects the growth, development and increased capacity of the wider network. For example, when Women in Sport and Local Programmes are combined, in 2009, a LSP delivered an average of 27 programmes targeting 3,395 participants. This is an increase from 2008, where LSPs ran an average of almost 18 programmes targeting 2,680 participants.

81% of these local programmes had a stated focus on increasing participation. This was achieved through engaging closely with low participation target groups. LSPs maintain a close connection to these target groups by engaging with a wide range of working partners who monitor the changing needs and requirements of such groups.

In 2009, many LSPs renewed a focus on working with unemployed people in their communities.

We have collaborated on the Westport Kayaking Project, which set out to improve the self esteem of a group of unemployed people and increase their awareness of the environment through participation in sea kayaking. The project has successfully motivated the group to participate in positive outdoor activities. An expansion of the project is now planned to have a wider programme of outdoor activities with the aim of forming a club (Mayo LSP).

Dublin City LSP has worked considerably with people from migrant communities in 2009. A project called *Dancercise* was aimed at a group of female asylum seekers who could not afford to take part in many activities. The 12 women are part of a group who meet every Monday to deal with the challenges associated with being an asylum seeker. The dance class was welcomed by all the women as a break to their normal routine. The *Dancercise* project proved very successful and another programme will be run in 2010 with joint financing from St Vincentians Refugee Centre (Dublin City LSP).

A wide range of projects and initiatives were established in 2009 to promote greater inclusion for people with a disability. The SIDO network was instrumental in working closely with disability groups and activists to co-design and promote many innovative and new ways of working in a sports development context.

Clare LSP has built on the success of the creation of Ennis Special Olympics Golf club where 10 people regularly take part in competitions. An “Ability Golf” programme has been put in place to allow other golf clubs to help disability golfer’s (on a buddy system basis) to play golf at their local golf club which will lead to independent golfing on behalf of the person with a disability (Clare LSP).

Westmeath LSP has worked with a local cycling club to target participants with sensory impairments. Tandem Cycling provides the opportunity for family and friends to participate in a shared sporting activity. Indeed family and friends are encouraged to volunteer and in some cases become pilots (Westmeath LSP).

Other examples of programmes delivered to the range of target groups include:

Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown LSP has worked in partnership with the Southside Traveller Action Group to provide members of the travelling community with a way of increasing their level of physical activity, as well as education in health related issues (Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown LSP).

Limerick City LSP worked successfully in 2009 to further promote the sport of handball with young people living in disadvantaged communities. Some 126 children of primary school age and 38 from Youth Clubs and Garda Diversion projects became involved in the Limerick City Primary Schools Handball Championship (Limerick City LSP).

Cavan LSP targeted older people in the community with two older adults’ sports festivals in 2009. The establishment of a new age kurling league for older adults involved the training of leaders to ensure that participants can practice the games in their local settings and then participate in a quarterly league. The project is delivered with the support of the HSE and Positive Age Cavan. The physical activity needs of over 120 older people were met through the work of this project (Cavan LSP).

The GOYA Gang (Get Off Your Ass) programme is an example of a successful inter-LSP collaboration between two LSPs, whereby adventure sports such as sailing, caving and orienteering were promoted to young women in north Clare and south Galway. In 2009 40 girls regularly participated in the programme. Funding was used to buy safety equipment and to offer further training to parents as tutors (Clare LSP & Co. Galway LSP).

2.8 Building partnerships and influencing policy

2009 Highlights:

- 159 networks and forums were facilitated by LSPs
- LSPs participated in 303 awareness raising events
- LSPs actively participated in 228 local committees and other networks

LSPs spent some 18% of their time in 2009 working in the area of policy and local networking. The aim of this work in the area of policy and local networking is:

- to become more embedded in the local sports development infrastructure
- to build effective partnerships with policymakers which will develop incrementally.
- to lobby for change

LSPs have achieved these objectives through:

- participation within a range of local networks, forums, major initiatives and inter-disciplinary committees
- involvement in awareness raising activities in conjunction with partner agencies
- numerous conference presentations
- contributions to academic publications as well as producing valuable research reports
- working closely with policymakers within regional and national networks.

Networks and Forums

In 2009, LSPs have been to the forefront in the promotion of a wide range of major initiatives, networks and forums at local and national level.

LSPs have played an important role in facilitating 159 networks and forums. The LSP acts as the principal facilitator in most of these initiatives, networks and forums.

Innovative approaches to bringing together working partners are evident across the LSP network. Engagement with forums and networks promotes the profile and work of the LSP, but more importantly new synergies are often created across a range of sports and physical activities.

For new LSPs, the active engagement with local Sports Forums has proved to be a good platform for meeting with, disseminating information to and identifying issues affecting clubs and sports organisations through the county. It also provides LSPs with the opportunity to promote the work of the LSP and the ISC to local clubs.

Through the work of the Sport Development Officer Forum in Louth, the GAA Club Support Officer has worked with the HSE Physical Activity Officer on setting up a walking for health workshop based at a GAA club. The target group was older men involved in the club (Louth LSP).

LSPs can point to a wide range of positive impacts emerging from their work with, and through their support of, local networks, working groups and forums. Through facilitating the participation of clubs, organisations and community based groups within such networks, LSPs encourage the organisations to think outside their own sport or activity base and identify common needs for sport in their county or in some cases, their region.

The following examples highlight this area of LSP work:

One result of the work of the forum of Nenagh Town Council and North Tipperary County Council has been greater access to Nenagh schools' facilities after schools hours (North Tipperary LSP)

The SportsAbility Forum in County Cork is in its fourth year of operation and continues to ensure that programmes are accessible, and that communication is promoted between different sporting and community based organisations. This forum is also responsible for the annual *SportsAbility* Day which saw over 200 people attend in 2009 (County Cork LSP).

Through the work with the local Sports Forum, we were involved in two mass participation events in 2009 where 2000 people took part in the Wexford Half Marathon and the *Round the Houses Fun Run* (Wexford LSP).

Fingal LSP opened up its Sports Development Forum in 2009 to School Sports Co-ordinators. By promoting these new connections and links, the relationships with the schools improved and participation proved to be valuable for information sharing exercises (Fingal LSP).

An important element of partnership working and developing the local sports infrastructure requires the LSP network to promote the sustainability of local networks and forums.

In Monaghan, we have worked over three years with the Blackwater 10k Run Network to support the development of its own committee so that following year three of the event, it will be self sufficient. This committee is actively engaging with the LSP to develop initiatives which will encourage increased participation in the 2010 event (Monaghan LSP).

Meath LSP has worked to promote the active involvement of service users on the Disability Sports Forum, leading to the current position where Enable Ireland now is represented by 2 service users on the forum. Involving service users will improve the quality of the forum's work over the long-term (Meath LSP).

Awareness Raising and Committee Work

LSPs monitor the number of awareness raising events in which they have played an active role.

In 2009, LSPs participated in 303 such events (an increase from 255 events in 2008), from playing an organisational role in Child Welfare and Protection information days and multi-cultural festivals and events to participation in meetings with local community development projects.

LSPs keep track of the extent of their local networking in relation to the themes that they address as well as the kind of local committees that they are asked to join.

Over time, the LSP network has expanded its local, regional and national relationships with a wide range of statutory and community based organisations, further embedding the network in the policy making environment at county level and wider.

In 2009, LSPs were actively participating on a wide range of local committees and networks.

Committees	Number	
	2009	(2008)
Health related	53	(29)
Education related	31	(24)
Sports infrastructure related	54	(46)
Social inclusion related	90	(49)
Total	228	(148)

Figure 2.13 Breakdown of local committees and networks LSPs actively participated in, in 2008 and 2009. Figures in brackets are for 2008.

North Tipperary Sports Partnership provides a helpful insight into the range of committee work in which LSPs are involved. This LSP is active on local committees including the Schools Completion Programme, North Tipperary County Council Sports and Social Committee, Nenagh Town Council, Disability Network, Mid West Sports Network, North Tipperary Trails Committee, Healthy Living Committee and during 2009 the Co-ordinator was on the North Tipperary Cycling Routes committee and very involved in establishing Nenagh as a Cycling Hub. The LSP is involved with all 'Active Community' committees (North Tipperary LSP).

What has been the impact of this work?

Increased awareness of the role and workings of the LSP Network has resulted from this committee work with all working partners and those groups in the community who work with LSP target groups. Increased engagement is also evident.

Following a presentation that was given to Comhairle na nÓg, Wicklow LSP received a request from Comhairle na nÓg that one of their members be nominated onto the Board of the Sports Partnership to act as the youth representative within the LSP. This has since happened (Wicklow LSP).

LSPs can point to the increased allocation of funding and resources to groups for programme implementation arising from such outreach work.

County Limerick LSP has garnered support from the Local Authority for funding and resources, as well as securing access to PESS (Physical Education and Sport Science) students to assist with programme implementation. Improved access to facilities has resulted from improved communication channels with the Community and Voluntary Forum. The LSP has also worked to support the opportunity for research programmes in partnership with University of Limerick under-graduate and post-graduate students (County Limerick LSP).

By bringing its expertise to bear on the work of local committees, LSP influence can lead to increased involvement of local volunteers and greater participation in sporting activities.

Mayo LSP brought together key statutory agencies and local sporting and community groups in a structured partnership to establish the Westport Festival of Sport Fun Day. Some 750 people participated in the event. The work of the Festival Committee ensured that volunteers from the local community came forward to support the event (Mayo LSP).

Policy Work

LSPs recorded their 2009 activities that have an implication for policy. While this referred to work undertaken locally, it also related to work that has significance beyond the immediate community of the LSP.

The following table gives a breakdown of some of these recorded outputs in relation to policy work. This includes participation in seminars, conferences etc. that had a policy theme; delivering presentations with a policy agenda as well as the level of engagement with research and the production of publications.

Key Issue	Production of Research/ Publications	Delivering Presentations	Speaking at Conferences/ Seminars
Participation	31	126	45
Health	10	36	7
Education and Training	18	56	10
Voluntarism	10	26	5
Social Inclusion	8	39	5
Amenities and Facilities	11	19	0
Equality	3	15	0
Environment	0	1	0
Tourism	2	4	3
Childcare	4	3	1
Regeneration	2	2	0
Employment	0	3	0
Funding	5	47	14
Minority Sports	3	27	0
Total	107	404	90

Figure 2.14 Breakdown of LSP outputs in relation to policy work in 2009

The focus on achieving sustainability within the network of dedicated SIDOs across the LSP network was accorded an important focus for policy work in 2009. Across the LSP Network, SIDOs delivered disability awareness presentations to policy makers within the sporting, education and community sectors.

Monaghan LSP used the platform of the SIDO programme to engage with local sporting facilities and service providers to consider the issues of access for people with a disability. Through such engagement and work with policy makers in this area, one facility with limited facilities for people with a disability used local funding to make physical changes to their premises. Use of the facility by people with a disability has increased (Monaghan LSP).

In Laois we prepared a series of policy submissions with regard to the County Anti-Racism Strategy, Travellers Mens Health Programme as well as the Laois County Development Plan. County Councillors and politicians were lobbied regarding their support for the SIDO programme (Laois LSP).

Sports Partnerships in Longford, Laois, Offaly and Westmeath worked in conjunction with each other to develop and publish “Volunteering in changing times”, a document designed to assist clubs in recruiting, retaining and rewarding their volunteers (Longford LSP).

Offaly LSP also undertook some background research in order to input into the development of the infrastructural plan for Offaly GAA. A presentation on these findings was delivered to the working group (Offaly LSP).

Waterford LSP brought the GAA, FAI and IRFU together to develop a Waterford Primary schools calendar of fixtures and programmes in a successful effort to encourage the NGBs to work together in the interests of primary school children (Waterford LSP).

What has been the impact of this work?

As the LSP network becomes more active in the policy making agenda within each county, LSPs are again proving in 2009 that they have a key strategic role in the shaping of local, regional and national policy with regards to sports development and related issues.

The older LSPs are now regarded as one stop shops with regard to information, education and implementation, leading to greater opportunities to lobby and influence relevant policymakers.

Newer LSPs are following this trend as they are engaged in networking and dissemination activities with local community organisations, ensuring that a higher awareness of the LSP agenda is becoming more and more evident.

In a clear example of such best practice, the joint efforts of the work of the Midlands Network of LSPs combined to produce guidelines on voluntarism in sport. This policy document is being taken up by a volunteering sub committee of Cumann Camogaíochta na Gael and is likely to form the basis of the national organisation's volunteering policy.

Individual LSPs continued in 2009 to make submissions to strategic documents and planning work, ensuring that the LSP agenda is named in County Development Plans. Examples of this work can be seen in Laois, where the LSP lobbied to ensure that ethnic minority participation in sport and physical activity and community initiatives will be promoted. In Louth, the LSP Strategic Plan is included as an action item in the County Development Board Culture Plan. The LSP has also been highlighted in the Louth Age Friendly Plan as being responsible for the delivery of older adult's sports and activity programmes. Wexford LSP is working in co-operation with Wexford County Council to develop a Recreation Strategy for County Wexford. Planning began in 2009 and will be completed during 2010. This will inform future policy and planning needs in the area of sports and recreation.

3

A Flexible, Responsive Network



3.1 Introduction

The LSP network is now fully established and embedded in the national sports development infrastructure. The year 2009 has seen the first full year of 33 LSPs actively working together to meet the significant challenges of addressing participation issues with a wide range of target groups. The working methods used by the 33 LSPs have been described in some detail in the previous section, as have the outputs and impacts associated with each.

This section examines some development challenges and questions that have faced LSPs in 2009:

- How are changing target group needs being addressed?
- Are there new models of LSP service delivery emerging?
- How can the potential from LSP engagement in high profile/ mass participation events be maximised?
- How is the Network becoming more effective in the policy arena?

A number of case studies are employed to highlight the manner in which the LSP network is successfully negotiating these new challenges.

In 2009 the LSPs increased their level of work with specific target groups such as people with a disability and those who have become unemployed. New and innovative programmes have been developed for these groups within the network and examples are outlined in section 3.2.

The LSP network continually explores new possibilities and models of service delivery and engagement with various groups in partnership with National Governing Bodies of sport (NGBs). Demonstrating this point, a pilot strategic sports club programme in Cork City and County will be profiled in section 3.3.

A new series of mass participation cycling events, the An Post Cycle Series, has been promoted in 2009 (section 3.4). Much time and effort is committed to the development of these events. LSPs have monitored their work in this area and have collected evidence to demonstrate that positive impacts are discernible.

LSP working methods are bringing LSPs together more and more. The need to develop strategies to promote a cohesive partnership approach at community, county, regional and national level became more evident in 2009. Initiatives revealing greater integration and unity within the national LSP network will be examined in section 3.5.

3.2 Addressing Changing Target Group Needs

LSPs exist locally to be in tune with changes in the local environment and to explore, learn and adapt to the unfolding reality on the ground. While each LSP designs and produces a three-year or five-year strategic plan to give a sense of direction, the need to be able to develop new insights, to learn and be innovative are important aspects of LSP work. Experimentation and flexibility are needed.

LSPs have developed a wide network of partners throughout their communities, with whom they work to identify changing needs of target groups. In this respect, LSPs are actively engaged within sporting clubs, community based groups, education providers and disability organisations. As new situations arise, as some issues become more pertinent, as certain target groups become more affected by changing circumstances, LSPs respond and plan their work to take account of such new demands.

People with a Disability

This has been evident in the manner in which the expansion of the work of the SIDO network has taken place in 2009.

The SIDO network has demonstrated that the active involvement of a team of dedicated development staff can influence significant change in a short period. A wide range of sports clubs, leisure, education and community centres have developed inclusive policies and implemented guidelines with regard to inclusion and access for people with disabilities.

Disability awareness programmes have been rolled out in co-operation with education providers. Increased awareness levels have translated into more inclusive promotion of sporting activities and the active participation of people with a disability in mainstream programmes.

LSPs delivered over 100 Disability Awareness and Inclusive Games Training courses in 2009. Over 2,500 participants took part making these courses the most popular training courses run by LSPs last year. The training of disability service providers has ensured that the delivery of sporting programmes for service users has become more sustainable and self sufficient.

People with a disability were the primary target group in approximately one quarter of new LSP programmes in 2009. There are many examples whereby the work of the SIDOs has led to a more inclusive and disability friendly environment in the area of sports development. Such impacts have been to the benefit of disabled service users, the wider community, as well as people with a disability who have yet to engage with new opportunities.

A range of innovative approaches have been employed to increase the participation levels of people with a disability. From tandem cycling to hill-walking, swimming to horse-riding, 2009 has seen the establishment of new targeted projects and access initiatives that will continue into 2010. A focus on such experimentation and flexibility, as well as review and learning are core elements to the work of the LSP network. Each LSP monitors and evaluates each project with a view to being able to demonstrate the important impacts of this work.

Unemployed People

Each LSP also conducts ongoing analysis of their operational environment, whereby the issues affecting local communities and target groups are studied. This work is conducted at Board level with partners and ensures that as an organisation, each LSP is fully aware of the manner in which positive and negative developments are unfolding within their communities. From a planning perspective, it allows for a rapid response to new conditions and facilitates the tailoring of programmes to local needs.

In 2009, the LSP Network has explored a number of approaches to working with unemployed members of the community. Research has been conducted at a local level into some of the potential impacts of unemployment on participation levels.

Such has been the case in South Dublin where the LSP has responded to the growing problem of unemployment in an innovative and highly effective way. The following case study presents the results of a new LSP initiative.

Case Study: Link2BActive

South Dublin County Sports Partnership (SDCSP) consulted with partner agencies involved in working locally around the issue of unemployment. It was recognised that being unemployed can be a very frustrating experience. It can drain individuals of energy and affect their physical & mental health. While many people may be aware of and appreciate the importance of keeping their mind and body active, in a time of emotional and financial stress, the cost of doing this can be a barrier.

In October 2009, the LSP working with the Dodder Valley Partnership, the Clondalkin/ Palmerstown/ Lucan/ Newcastle (CPLN) Area Partnership and South Dublin County Volunteer Bureau developed the Link2BActive programme to tackle the challenge of affordability and access to participation where there is cost or membership involved for people who are unemployed.

Link2BActive creates an opportunity for unemployed people to access sports facilities at a reduced rate, encouraging them to participate in recreational activities. With increasingly high rates of employment, SDCSP looked to link unemployed people with local facilities such as gyms, leisure centres, all weather pitches, swimming pools, pitch & putt clubs and other facilities where people's usage was declining due to economic constraints.

Local sports providers were requested to come up with an offer, complete with terms and conditions, for the use of their facilities by unemployed persons. SDCSP has developed a page on its website (www.sdcsp.ie/link2bactive) with all the links to these facilities and has also printed promotional flyers, distributed through social welfare offices, GP services, community centres, libraries and more in the county to inform unemployed people about the programme. SDCSP have already commenced evaluation of the programme collecting evidence of its benefit.

One example of a successful partner involved in this programme, Westpark Fitness, now has 518 members on the programme with a 90% retention rate.

With the Link2BActive programme, SDCSP has demonstrated its flexibility, entrepreneurship and ability to reactively adapt to unfolding circumstances on the ground. It has provided a novel, local solution to a national problem. Given the success to date of Link2BActive, the ISC has provided funding for five more Sports Partnerships to develop this programme in their area for 2010.

3.3 A New Model of Delivery

LSPs have been working to become a one stop shop for the needs of organisations within the community with regard to the promotion of sports and physical activity. This contribution to the sports infrastructural development is underwritten by the partnership approach offered by the LSP. Each LSP seeks to bring together agencies, clubs and organisations and to allow for their respective expertise to be managed and facilitated in any new initiative or project. The LSP will often remain in a supporting role as the programme comes to fruition.

Please see the example below:

Case Study: Piloting a Structured Countywide Sports Programme

As part of a review of the Partnership activities in 2009, the Boards of Cork County and City LSPs jointly expressed the view that the LSPs needed to do more to address the development challenges of the organised sporting community. Along with running a variety of training and education courses, the LSPs felt that they needed to further address the local club infrastructure in parallel to this, and put in place a comprehensive sports programme which would establish a strong legacy beyond the work of the LSP in any sports area.

The suggestion of developing a strategically planned and co-ordinated Cork Sports Programme was explored and agreed to pilot in the latter half of 2009. Through the Cork Sports Programme, the LSPs aim to work closer with the National Governing Bodies, County Boards and Development Officers to examine where and how to implement a sustainable development programme for each of the sports in Cork. Members felt that the opportunity to make a real and lasting difference was far greater through this type of initiative.

The Partnership engaged in a pilot with Cork Boxing Board to develop the “Cork Sports Boxing Programme”.

The programme had two phases:

Phase 1 involved a formal engagement with Cork Boxing Board to establish a methodology through which the LSPs could support the Board to address local needs. Through the discussions, a service document was produced and contracts between the LSPs and Boxing board were signed. The LSPs agreed to work with the Boxing Board to pilot a programme to support the attainment of clearly identified goals i.e. the establishment of four new boxing clubs in priority areas. It was agreed that responsibility for rollout of the programme and establishing the clubs rested with Cork Boxing Board. The LSPs undertook a role to support and ensure that the Boxing Board achieved that aim.

The LSPs negotiated a deal with a Cork supplier for an equipment start up pack, (content suggested by the Boxing Board) for the four clubs and a small grant towards start up costs. Working in partnership with Cork Boxing Board, Garda Youth Diversion projects and various local community groups, volunteers were found and four new boxing clubs were established in Ballincollig, Ballyphehane, Carrigaline and Mayfield. An outreach initiative led to an average of 35 new boxers in each area.

Phase 2 of the programme involved the LSPs providing an intensive programme of coach education and support to these new clubs and also existing boxing clubs in Cork. In addition to this, the LSPs agreed a plan with the Boxing Board to ensure that the coaches would complete Code of Ethics and First Aid courses.

The programme resulted in Cork Boxing Board increasing the number of registered boxing clubs from 21 to 25 in two months and the total number of boxers increased by 140.

It is envisaged the Cork Sports Programme will be expanded to other organised sports bodies in 2010. The roll out of some of the bigger NGB Cork Sports Programmes will entail their full-time Development Officers leading the roll out of the projects to agreed target groups, and the LSPs Development Officers taking a more supportive role as opposed to direct delivery. This support will come in the form of providing equipment, coaching courses, tutor training, programme costs, club development and any other help the clubs and sport needs to help increase and sustain participation levels.

That Cork LSPs had built strong relationships with agencies at a county level allowed for this programme to be built and delivered in a spirit of partnership. The focus on learning has ensured that

data has been collected at each phase of the new development. This will ensure that other LSPs will benefit from the work in Cork.

While other LSPs have conducted similar projects on a less structured manner, this Cork Sports Programme represents the potential for a new service delivery model. With the further development of this model with other sporting bodies, the LSPs can signify a shift from seeing themselves as agencies with responsibility for direct delivery of participation opportunities to one which ensures opportunities for participation are delivered locally by governing bodies.

Some important principles of this model can be summarised:

- The LSP can maintain shared control of the design, direction, management, monitoring and support for programmes while allowing the sporting organisation to facilitate and resource their roll out.
- The LSP recognises that governing bodies of sport are the primary deliverers of community sports and that responsibility for delivery will continue to rest with the individual sports organisations.
- The LSP will monitor and support the sports organisation to ensure programmes are delivered effectively.

The net impact of this work is that it extends the team of the LSPs to include the many sports specific county level Sport Development Officers, enabling the LSPs to co-design, direct, manage and support an array of sustainable effective projects and programmes.

This model maintains at its centre the aim to create more participation opportunities for people to get involved in sport. These opportunities come in the form of linking schools, clubs and communities together and strengthening the relationships between them so that the opportunity for participation is for the long term and not just a once off. The approach achieves the LSP goal of ensuring local resources are used to best effect by building alliances with key partners. This programme once again demonstrates an inventive, flexible and adaptive approach taken by LSPs.

3.4 Delivering Mass Participation Events

As LSPs have become more embedded in the national sports infrastructure, new opportunities have arisen whereby there is the potential to become engaged in mass participation events. In 2009, there are two significant examples of this nature. The An Post Cycling Series and the choice of Dublin as European Capital of Sport 2010 represent the results of the input of much effort from LSPs and the Irish Sports Council.

These events have worked to harness the potential for greater participation levels from LSP target groups. While the results of the work in Dublin will be assessed in future years, there is evidence of immediate outcomes from the cycling initiatives.

An Post Cycle Series

In 2009, Local Sports Partnerships through the Irish Sports Council, and in partnership with An Post, introduced a series of mass participation cycling events encouraging communities to get back on their bikes. The Cycle Series is a non competitive, participation focused initiative, aimed at increasing the numbers involved in cycling. Five events were introduced and delivered through the Local Sports Partnerships in Sligo, Clare, Meath, Waterford and Cork between May and September. Three routes of

varying degrees of difficulty were established as part of each event. The series was a huge success with almost 5,500 participants taking part in its inaugural year.

The An Post Cycle Series represented a partnership approach at local level involving LSP, Local Authorities, VEC, Fáilte Ireland, the Gardai and local cycling clubs amongst others. All five LSPs ran a number of cycling programmes in the lead up to their event, such as primary school Safer Cycling programmes, Secondary School challenges, Easter Cycling Camps, Community Cycling Initiatives and Meet & Spin groups. The impact of the An Post Cycle Series in terms of promoting sustained participation in cycling locally has been significant. Since the Series, local cycling clubs have reported an increase in membership, while the local cycling shops have recorded a significant increase in the sales of bicycles.

Waterford LSP had taken a lead in the promotion of mass participation community cycling events through its central involvement in the Sean Kelly Tour of Waterford. This event has run since 2007 and has grown in profile each year as it has successfully promoted participation in cycling for regular activity and supported the development of the sport of cycling in Waterford. In 2009, the Sean Kelly Tour of Waterford became part of the An Post Cycle Series and over 2,800 people took part. The Sean Kelly Schools Challenge resulted in 12 of the students participating in regular training spins with the local club. Five students also took part in other events in the Cycle Series. There is evidence of a greater profile of cycling locally and more people cycling as a result of the Sean Kelly Tour.

European Capital of Sport 2010

Dublin City LSP contributed to the planning and development aspects within the local authority that resulted in the choice of Dublin as the European Capital of Sport 2010 by the European Capitals of Sport Association (ACES).

According to ACES, the rationale for awarding this title to Dublin City was:

- The huge participation by people in Dublin in all levels of sport - the variety of sports on offer in the city, the high level of volunteerism - from local clubs to stadia management
- The city's partnership approach to sport and recreation
- The importance Dublin City puts on encouraging all sectors of society to get involved in sport and recreation

The award of European Capital of Sport represents a real opportunity for the LSP to build on these factors and accelerate participation levels in sport and physical activity. A large number of events are taking place in 2010 in all sports and targeting all target groups across the city.

Dublin City LSP has worked with the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) to carry out research on participation rates and issues with regard to sport and physical activity in Dublin City.

The LSP is presenting a clear policy focus on ensuring that there is close monitoring of the work being carried out to maximise the mass participation potential of the high profile year.

3.5 Promoting LSP Work in the Policy Arena

LSPs have endeavoured to strengthen the networking potential of the LSP network itself. A number of initiatives have taken shape in 2009 that indicate the greater integration and cohesion of LSPs within the national network.

At an inter-county level, LSPs are co-operating and sharing resources. At a regional level, LSPs are doing likewise. For example, four LSPs in the midlands collaborated to publish *Volunteering in Changing Times*, a guide to volunteering recruitment, retention and rewarding. The Mid-West LSP Network consists of five LSPs in the Munster region joining forces to tackle common issues and cooperate in the provision of training and development opportunities for sports coaches and volunteers. Similarly, five LSPs in the South-East area have established a regional network where they engage in joint planning and support of local initiatives.

At a national level, a greater level of strategic engagement between the Irish Sports Council and LSP Boards has led to a closer relationship between the core funder and the 33 LSPs.

In June 2009 the ISC undertook a new process aimed at improving the engagement with the LSPs. The Irish Sports Council established a series of regional meetings with representatives of LSP Boards and Local Authority Directors of Services to update them on items of strategic importance and to discuss issues and concerns with regard to the LSP network. These meetings were an important mechanism by which the Council and LSP Boards could hear face-to-face the challenges and opportunities that exist within the national network.

At each meeting, the Irish Sports Council's Chief Executive & Executive staff gave a presentation on behalf of the ISC and chaired the discussion sessions. The meetings were of great benefit in helping the ISC to identify the issues, challenges and solutions arising at a local level with LSPs throughout the network. It is hoped to repeat these meetings annually, focusing on the future development of the network.

The manner in which LSPs come together to engage in policy discussions represents an important future step for the network. The network as a whole needs to examine any new models of LSP service delivery, new directions with regard to shared mass participation events, as well as best practice with regard to dealing with increased demands from different target groups.

A national network with a clear and focused vision will ensure that LSPs have a stronger and unified voice in the policy arena.

The success of the campaign to maintain funding of the SIDO network is a clear example of the potential when LSPs work together constructively on a single policy issue. Through mobilising a campaign in 2009 of support for the work of the sports inclusion programme, LSPs demonstrated their strong grassroots connections, as well as their local and national policy and political connections.

4

Next Steps



4.1 Introduction

This section examines the context in which LSPs find themselves, as they face the years ahead. The key questions are:

- What challenges do LSPs face?
- How are the LSPs equipped to address these challenges?

4.2 Development Challenges

The LSPs have examined key external development challenges for three years. The following table presents an overview of the ranking of key issues by the LSPs.

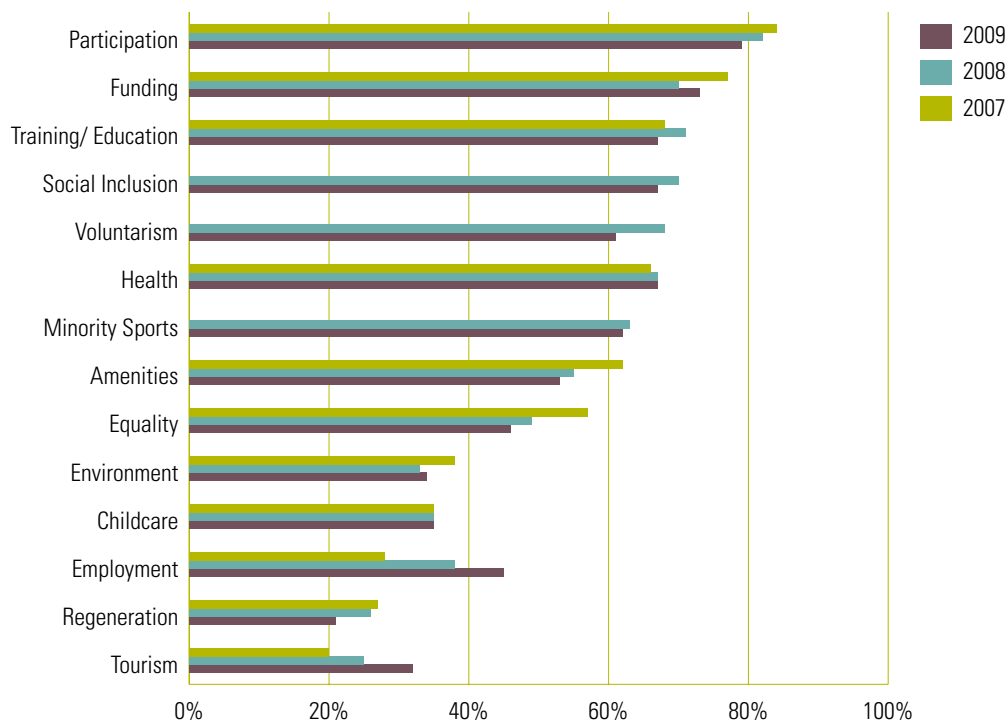


Figure 4.1 Comparison of key external development challenges facing LSPs, 2007-2009.

The many internal and external challenges that were highlighted in the 2008 SPEAK report are still as valid and relevant today as they were last year. For example, similar to previous SPEAK reports maintaining dedicated funding from the Irish Sports Council and other partners represents a critical factor in the ability of LSPs to continue to provide the full range of local services and supports. Furthermore sustaining existing staffing levels, supporting a community of volunteers and promoting the key messages on the importance of physical activity to the wider public continue to be relevant issues. However, throughout 2009 a number of further challenges came to the fore:

Unemployment and Recession

Perhaps unsurprisingly, rising unemployment became a more significant issue for LSPs in 2009. This creates challenges in terms of affordability and access to participation where there is cost/ membership involved. The 2008 Irish Sports Monitor second annual report published in December 2009 revealed a significant drop of 2% in active participation in sport among adults, from 32.9% to 30.8%, equivalent to 1 in 16 participants no longer participating. The evidence very strongly suggests that the recession was behind the drop in active participation. The relationship between income and playing sport strengthened with the decline concentrated among lower income households and in individual sports which tend to be more expensive. This drop in the headline rate of participation is a matter of concern as the drop reduces the social and health benefits of participation and is likely to have important consequences for the health and wellbeing of those who no longer actively participate in sport.

Public Service Moratorium on Recruitment

The moratorium on recruitment in the public service is raising many difficult practical issues for employment practices in LSPs under the aegis of the Local Authorities. In particular the complexities surrounding the employment of LSP staff in Local Authorities on temporary contracts came to the fore, as the Department of Finance circular in March 2009 made it clear that temporary appointments on a fixed term basis would only be renewed in very limited circumstances. This was a major issue for the network in 2009 with legal and HR challenges surrounding the continued employment or termination by reason of non renewal of the contracts of such people.

Continuation of the SIDO Programme

The presence of a network of dedicated full-time development officers working in the area of inclusion targeting the disability sector greatly enabled LSPs to increase and maintain participation in sport and physical activity by people with a disability in 2009. Funding from Pobal for this initiative comes to an end in 2010. The Irish Sports Council is pleased to be in a position to commit over €400,000 for the continuation of the SIDO programme in 2010, albeit in a reduced capacity. However, maintenance of service beyond 2010 is still a considerable challenge in the wider context of the need to achieve significant savings in the cost of providing public services over the next several years.

Evaluation and Sustainable Development

In the context of ever greater demand for value across all sectors, delivering long-term sustainable outcomes and having the capacity to measure and evaluate these outcomes continues to be a challenge. Delivering true, lasting value in the most cost effective way, and having the proof of same is more important than ever. This requires a network wide commitment to measure what matters and to provide locally valid evidence of the value of each programme and initiative delivered. If LSPs do not, it will weaken the capacity to make a compelling case into the future.

Governance and the Role of LSP Boards

All LSPs in receipt of Irish Sports Council funding are expected to operate in a democratic and transparent manner and display all elements of good corporate governance. The basic principles of governance in a public service context include accountability, openness and integrity and these values should underpin all activities of the LSP, whether it is established as a company limited by guarantee or under the aegis of the Local Authority. Other key elements in the governance process involve an appropriate set of communications between a LSP's Executive Management, its Board, its member agencies and other stakeholders. As LSPs grow in size and stature, and as partners contribute increasing level of monetary funding and benefit-in-kind support, the Boards' responsibilities and accountability to partner agencies increases accordingly. There is also an onus on each Board to continuously review how effectively the LSP operates in a changing environment and to deliver a partnership of high mutual value which meets its full potential.

4.3 Addressing Development Challenges

Despite the challenges highlighted, there are common factors which ensure that LSPs continue to be well positioned to face and meet the difficulties that lie ahead.

Continued ISC Commitment

It is imperative that the LSPs continue the work highlighted in this report which is aimed at the most disadvantaged target groups. It is crucial that local communities continue to benefit from the positive influence of sport and exercise in the current recession. Therefore the work of the LSP network is of key strategic importance to the Irish Sports Council, and we remain committed to supporting this network, even in the face of challenging economic conditions. This commitment is underlined by the ISC investing over €6.1m in the LSP network in 2009. This was despite a reduction in the overall ISC 2009 budget of approximately 10%, and brings to over €34m the amount that the ISC has directly invested in the network since the first LSPs were established in 2001. This commitment is ever more necessary as LSPs are increasing their measurable output (as seen in Section 2) and seeing an increase in demand for services. Once again in 2010, the ISC Chief Executive & Executive Staff intends to engage directly with LSP Boards to review and discuss the challenges and opportunities facing the LSP network.

Matched Funding and Partnering

A cross-sector partnership approach towards the goal of sustainable sports development is at the very core of the LSP model and has served the LSP network well. As highlighted in Section 1, the LSP network is currently meeting the Matched Funding requirement of the 2005 Fitzpatrick *Review of Local Sports Partnership Programme* to generate 50% of LSP funding from local sources despite the economic downturn. This substantial partner buy-in places the network on a more sustainable footing as it reduces reliance on any single income source of support.

Public Service Derogations

Throughout the course of 2009 derogations were secured by seven LSPs who had submitted staffing requests to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government due to the current staffing moratorium in the public service. This was a hugely positive development and hopefully creates a clear precedent, for any further requests that will be submitted. Additionally, it shows the importance and value that County and City Managers and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government attach to the work of the LSP's locally and as a national network.

The Case for Future Investment

Participation in sport, physical activity and recreational exercise is increasingly seen, both in Ireland and internationally, as making an important contribution to health and to social capital. The reduction in participation highlighted in the 2008 Irish Sports Monitor strengthens the case for prioritising expenditure programmes most likely to increase grassroots participation, especially among low income groups. This is the exact area in which the LSPs operate. International evidence also suggests that promoting physical activity through community campaigns and local events, through individual activity programmes and by linking local facilities to outreach work is effective in increasing participation. This is precisely what LSPs have been established to do and which this report and previous SPEAK reports demonstrate is happening.

An Innovative and Flexible Approach

LSPs are typically small, single unit organisations, with few layers of management. Their small size and community focus ensures they are well positioned to respond quickly and flexibly to unfolding events at grass roots level. As demonstrated in Sections 2 and 3, LSPs recognise that they need to constantly learn and adapt as organisations, as well as continuously moulding their services to meet changing local needs.

4.4 Summary

The first LSPs were established in 2001 in eight sites. Between 2001 and 2008 the network was gradually expanded to cover the entire country. This is the first report for the full national network of LSPs and, as such, marks another milestone in the network's development. LSPs continue to make positive impacts at local level while seeking opportunities to increase outputs in innovative and effective ways. The LSP network will continue to increase its usage of the information gathered in SPEAK to share best practice, evaluate progress and improve service delivery to target groups and local communities.



Appendices

Appendix A - LSP Boards

Appendix B - List of Local Sports Partnerships

Appendix C - Explanation of Working Methods

Appendix D - Glossary of Terms

Appendix E - Images



Appendix A - LSP Boards

The following table gives a breakdown of the level of working partner participation on the boards of management of the 33 LSPs.

Working Partner	Number of LSPs
VEC	32
Local Authority	31
HSE	30
Registered Sporting Organisations	25
Disability Organisations	24
Community/ Voluntary Forum	23
County/ City Development Board	20
Third Level Institutes	19
Area Based Partnerships	17
Youth Services Organisations	17
FÁS	15
Sports Forum	15
Gardaí	15
Other Sporting Organisations	14
Community Organisations	13
Pobal/ LEADER	12
Post-Primary Schools	11
Primary Schools	8
Education Centres	5
Age and Opportunity	5
County Childcare Committee	3
Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform	1
Other Government Departments	1
Tourism Agencies	1
Chamber of Commerce	1

LSPs aim to ensure that the expertise they bring together at their boards reflects the target groups with whom they work.

Responsibilities of the Board

The Board is responsible for all the activities of the Sports Partnership. These responsibilities can be divided into six main areas:

- To govern the organisation through the proper administration of its affairs
- To provide leadership for the organisation
- To plan the strategy for the development of the organisation
- To establish partnerships with other organisations who can help develop the organisation
- To manage the people involved in running the organisation
- To implement the strategic plans for the organisation and monitor their progress
- To ensure a realistic programme of participation and performance in the organisation as a consequence of the previous six responsibilities.

Appendix B - List of Local Sports Partnerships

Local Sports Partnership Network	Year Established
North Tipperary Sports Partnership	2001
Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership	2001
Roscommon Sports Partnership	2001
Clare Sports Partnership	2001
Donegal Sports Partnership	2001
Kildare Local Sports Partnership	2001
Laois Sports Partnership	2001
Fingal Sports Partnership	2001
County Cork Local Sports Partnership Limited	2002
Meath Local Sports Partnership	2002
Waterford Sports Partnership	2002
Limerick City Sports Partnership	2002
Kerry Local Sports Partnership	2004
Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership	2004
Mayo Sports Partnership	2004
Westmeath Sports Partnership	2004
Carlow Sports Partnership	2006
Offaly Local Sports Partnership	2006
Monaghan Sports Partnership	2006
County Limerick Local Sports Partnership	2007
South Tipperary Sports Partnership	2007
Galway City Sports Partnership	2007
Cavan Sports Partnership	2008
Louth Sports Partnership	2008
Dun Laoghaire Sports Partnership	2008
South Dublin Sports Partnership	2008
County Galway Sports Partnership	2008
Wexford Sports Partnership	2008
Cork City Sports Partnership	2008
Longford Sports Partnership	2008
Leitrim Sports Partnership	2008
Dublin City Sports Partnership	2008
Wicklow Sports Partnership	2008

Appendix C - Explanation of Working Methods

Provision of Information

Refers to the number of information resources that an LSP has developed for the community in the current year. This may be a regular newsletter, a directory of summer events, an information leaflet or an eBulletin. It also includes the numbers of individuals using the LSP as a source of information, either by phone/email contact or through visiting the LSP office in person.

Club Support Work

LSPs provide ongoing help or support to a wide range of sporting organisations and community groups. This incorporates both club development work and providing funding information and support.

- Club Development work - Local Sports Partnerships engage in specific work to support the development of sporting clubs and clubs promoting physical activity in their communities. This may involve support with regard to the delivery of sporting activities, as well as help with organisational and policy issues.
- Providing Funding Information and Support - This relates to work done making groups and clubs aware of available sources of funding. Supporting groups and clubs in making funding applications and in fund raising are other important aspects in this working method.

Education and Training Courses

Organising, promoting and delivering training and education courses, such as Active Leadership, First Aid, Speed Agility Quickness (SAQ), Defibrillator Training, Coach Education Training, as well as other training courses that have a specific local focus.

Delivering ISC Programmes

This includes delivering the Irish Sports Council's Buntús and Code of Ethics training. Buntús programmes have been developed to support primary school teachers and other childcare practitioners in introducing young people to sport and helping to develop their interests. The Code of Ethics training programme targets sports leaders and adults involved in the organisation of sport for young people to promote child protection policies and procedures.

Women in Sport Programmes

This refers to delivering or helping to deliver projects and participation initiatives within the Women in Sports Programme. The Women in Sport Programme is an Irish Sports Council initiative designed to increase the number of women participating in sport and physical activity.

Delivery of Local Programmes

LSPs are instrumental in developing and/or delivering local programmes and initiatives designed to increase participation in sport and physical activity. It incorporates a range of local projects and initiatives that the LSP has been a key actor in setting up.

Local Networking

Local Networking includes establishing or helping to establish networks, sports forums and linked initiatives locally. It also incorporates local activities in which the LSP engages in order to promote the key message of the Local Sports Partnership. This may involve membership of relevant local committees or structured involvement in awareness raising events.

Policy Work

LSPs aim to involve themselves in activities that have an implication for policy. It refers to all work undertaken to influence or promote change in the area of sport and physical activity. This could be work undertaken locally – but it is more likely to have a significance beyond their own community

Appendix D - Glossary of Terms

ACES – European Capitals of Sport Association. ACES works with the European Commission and every year assigns the recognitions of European “Capital”, “City” and “Town” of Sport.

Active Leadership Award – An Irish Sports Council/Sport Northern Ireland award designed to provide trained, knowledgeable and enthusiastic community based physical activity leaders.

Buntús – An Irish Sports Council programme developed to support primary school teachers and childcare practitioners in introducing young people to sport and physical activity.

Cara Adapted Physical Activity (APA) Centre - the CARA Centre is a National Resource Centre aimed at coordinating, facilitating and advocating for the inclusion of people with disabilities in sport, physical activity and physical education.

CPLN Area Partnership - Clondalkin/ Palmerstown/ Lucan/ Newcastle (CPLN) Area Partnership in Clondalkin South Dublin is one of 38 organisations nationally established by the government to tackle disadvantage and social exclusion. The objective of the Partnership is “to promote, support, assist and engage in social development, enterprise development, to facilitate rural and urban regeneration and community development, and to deal with the causes or consequences of social and economic disadvantage or poverty”.

DEIS – Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools. DEIS is a Department of Education & Science initiative designed to tackle educational disadvantage by ensuring that the most disadvantaged schools benefit from a comprehensive package of supports.

Dept of JELR – Government Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform, working for a safer fairer Ireland.

Dormant Accounts Funding - A scheme for the disbursement of funds that are unlikely to be reclaimed for projects and programmes designed to alleviate poverty and social deprivation. The Dormant Accounts legislation targets three broad categories of persons for support from the fund: Those affected by economic and social disadvantage; Those affected by educational disadvantage; and Persons with a disability.

FAI – Football Association of Ireland. The FAI is the governing body of football in Ireland.

Fáilte Ireland – Fáilte Ireland is statutory agency which guides and promotes tourism as a significant driver of the Irish economy.

FÁS – Foras Áiseanna Saothair. Irelands National Training and Employment Authority.

GAA – Gaelic Athletic Association. The GAA is the governing body of Gaelic games in Ireland.

Go For Life - The Go for Life Programme aims to increase participation among older people in recreational sport activities, and is supported by the Irish Sports Council.

HSE – Health Service Executive. The HSE is a statutory authority responsible for providing Health and Personal Social Services for those living in the Republic of Ireland.

IRFU – Irish Rugby Football Union. The IRFU is the governing body for the sport of rugby union in Ireland.

ISM - Irish Sports Monitor. The Irish Sports Monitor is an ongoing telephone survey of adults aged 16 and over in Ireland, which records sport and exercise activities undertaken in the 7 days prior to

interview. In 2008, the Irish Sports Monitor interviewed over 6,800 adults. The survey is primarily designed to track levels of participation in sport, both for the population as a whole and various sub-populations of interest. The 2008 report is the latest in a series of collaborations between the Irish Sports Council and the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) on sport and physical activity.

ISC - Irish Sports Council. The Irish Sports Council is a statutory authority that aims to plan, lead and co-ordinate the sustainable development of competitive and recreational sport in Ireland.

LEADER - LEADER is the EU Community Initiative for Rural Development that provides approved Local Action Groups with public funding (EU and National) to implement multi-sectoral business plans for the development of their own areas.

LSP – Local Sports Partnership. Local Sports Partnerships are an initiative of the Irish Sports Council to co-ordinate and promote the development of sport at local level. The key aims of the LSPs are to increase participation in sport, and to ensure that local resources are used to best effect. The LSP initiative lies at the heart of the Irish Sports Council’s participation strategy.

NGB – National Governing Body. An organisation, recognised by the Irish Sports Council, that coordinates the development of a particular sport or sports through constituent clubs.

PAL – Physical Activity Leader. A Physical Activity Leader is someone who can lead members of their own groups or communities in short exercise routines, straightforward dances and recreational sports.

POBAL - Pobal is a not-for-profit company with charitable status that manages programmes on behalf of the Irish Government and The EU.

RAPID – Revitalising Areas by Planning Investment and Development. The RAPID Programme is a Government initiative, which targets 45 of the most disadvantaged areas in the country by focusing State resources available under the National Development Plan.

SDO – Sports Development Officer. SDOs aim to provide opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity for all sections of the community.

SIDO – Sports Inclusion Disability Officer. SIDOs aim to provide opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity for people with a disability.

SPEAK – Strategic Planning, Evaluation and Knowledge system. The SPEAK system is a product of NEXUS Research (a not-for-profit research co-operative based in Dublin) which offers organisations the capacity to self-evaluate, leading to a comprehensive understanding of the work of the organisation and the impacts of that work.

SPORT NORTHERN IRELAND – Sport Northern Ireland is the lead agency for developing sport in Northern Ireland. Its corporate vision is to promote “a culture of lifelong enjoyment and success in sport which contributes to a peaceful, fair and prosperous society”.

VEC – Vocational Education Committee. VECs are local statutory education and training authorities. Their service encompasses Second Level Schools, Further Education Colleges, Adult and Community Education, Literacy Support and Youth Support Services.

WIS – Women in Sport. An initiative of the Irish Sports Council to increase participation of women in sport, through providing alternative opportunities and developing specific programmes.

Appendix E – Images

The Irish Sports Council wish to acknowledge and thank the following Local Sports Partnerships for the images used in this document.

Page 9 Courtesy of Kerry Local Sports Partnership

Page 13 Courtesy of Laois Sports Partnership

Page 37 Courtesy of Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership

Page 45 Courtesy of North Tipperary Sports Partnership

Page 51 Courtesy of County Cork Sports Partnership





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