



SPÓRT ÉIREANN
SPORT IRELAND

Sport Ireland Statement of Strategy 2023-2027



CONTENTS

Chair and Chief Executive's Vision	4
1 Introduction and Context	6
2 Mission, Vision and Values	14
3 Current State of Affairs	21
4 Sports Development Framework	26
5 Strategy	36
6 Sport Ireland - In five years time	46
7 Appendices	50
Appendix 1: The strategy development process	51
Appendix 2: Definitions	52
Appendix 3: Key strategic and policy documents	53
Appendix 4: Review of Sport Ireland's 2018-2022 strategic objectives	54
Appendix 5: 2023-2027 High level strategic objectives	59



Chair and Chief Executive's Vision

The development of our new five-year strategy is an opportunity to reflect upon and review Sport Ireland's vision, mission and values. It builds upon the progress made during our previous strategic cycle.

It acknowledges and reinforces the alignment of Sport Ireland's work with the National Sports Policy, the importance of our connection with the Irish Government and our strong relationships with partners, in particular NGBs, LSPs, other funded bodies and the wider sport sector including clubs, communities, coaches, officials, administrators, and volunteers. All these underpin our commitment to increasing participation, the cornerstone of the National Sports Policy through the delivery of more and better sporting opportunities to a wider range of people throughout Ireland.

It sets out our ambitious plans for Sport Ireland and the sector. Strategy implementation will ensure that we collectively deliver a best-in-class, comprehensive, and continuously improving safe and fair sporting experiences throughout the country.

As the statutory development agency for sport, Sport Ireland is committed to delivering excellent leadership and support. To do this we intend to review our own structure and service delivery model to ensure that the guidance we provide is of the highest value and quality. Underpinning this, we shall improve the evidence base which underpins our decisions and continue to develop people, organisations, work practices and culture to optimise our ability to lead the sector effectively.

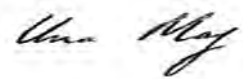
Integral to the delivery of this strategy is balancing the support of the sector with proactively looking to reach and engage new and broader audiences. The key measure of success will be our ability to deliver on the participation and high-performance National Sports Policy targets, which we will pursue relentlessly over this next cycle. Included in this is the extent to which we deliver diversity and inclusion; ensuring that people in all communities of Ireland engage in sport, benefit from the personal enjoyment and wellbeing benefits that it provides and augment the success of our high-performance athletes and teams.



This strategy sets out a five-year vision of how Sport Ireland will lead the sport sector to further develop sport and physical activity in Ireland. We have been both encouraged by the number of contributions received and impressed by the quality of inputs throughout the consultation process. These have influenced and improved the strategic priorities for the next cycle and reinforced Sport Ireland's confidence in the plans being presented.



John Foley,
Chairperson, Sport Ireland Board



Dr. Úna May,
Chief Executive, Sport Ireland

1.

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Sport Ireland is the statutory agency tasked with leading, advocating and providing directed investment for the development of sport in Ireland.





Sport Ireland is announcing an ambitious and goal-oriented strategy for the period of 2023-2027. It demonstrates a commitment to delivering high levels of participation, engagement, achievement and performance in all facets of sport in Ireland. Coming from an already solid foundation and with energetic plans for the future, including that of the new vision for the Sport Ireland Campus, the next five years will be an exciting time for Sport Ireland.

Sport Ireland is the statutory authority tasked with leading, advocating and providing directed funding for the development of sport in Ireland. With integrity as the clear foundation upon which this is built, it advises, supports and works with and through partner organisations, such as National Governing Bodies (NGBs), Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs), and others who deliver sport and physical activity to:

- Increase levels of participation in sport, with a particular focus on diversity and inclusion – with innovative programmes and initiatives to engage and encourage low participation groups.
- Champion high performance sport – helping Irish teams, athletes, and support staff to be the best they can be and to be successful on the world stage.
- Empower people to build a commitment to their sport and take part for longer.
- Increase the number and quality of the coaches, officials, administrators, and volunteers who run and support sport.
- Deliver key support services such as safeguarding and anti-doping so that sport is ethical, safe, and fair.
- Further develop and improve the Sport Ireland Campus and the sporting infrastructure in Ireland.

Sport Ireland is an agency of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. It works in tandem with the Ministers and Department officials to develop and implement national policy on sport. This strategy reflects the legal framework of the Sport Ireland Act, 2015 and the policy context of the National Sports Policy 2018-2027, for which the following table highlights the key performance indicators for active participation, social participation, governance and high performance.

Active Participation	Baseline 2017	Actual 2021	Targets 2023	Targets 2027
Increased number of adults regularly playing sport	43%	40%	47%	60%
Elimination of active sport participation gradient between men and women	4.5%	4.9%	2.5%	0%
Reduced levels of adult sedentarism	22%	18%	18%	15%
Increased number of primary and post-primary children regularly playing sport in the community	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Increased number of adults from the three lowest income groups regularly participating in sport	30%	30%	34%	40%
Increased participation in sport among those with a long-term illness or disability	29%	26%	34%	40%
Social Participation	Baseline 2017	Actual 2021	Targets 2023	Targets 2027
Increased number of adults regularly involved socially in sport through volunteering club membership and/or attendance	45%	32%	50%	55%
Increased club membership	34%	30%	36%	40%
Increased attendance at sporting events	19%	9%	22%	25%
Increased number of people regularly volunteering in sport	11%	7%	13%	15%
Governance	Baseline 2017	Actual 2021	Targets 2023	Targets 2027
Increase in number of NGBs and LSPs adopting the Governance Code for Sport	12%	79%	100%	100%
Gender Balance in Board membership of NGBs	24%	29%	40%	50%
High Performance	Baseline 2017	Actual 2021	Targets 2024	Targets 2028
Increase in number of medals at successive Olympics and Paralympics	13	11	17-23	20-26
Number of Olympics and Paralympics events with Irish athletes in Top 10 positions/Finals	49	47	45 - 55	49 - 60
Country ranking in Olympics Medal Table	63	39	55	Top 50
Country ranking in Paralympics Medal Table	28	32	25	Top 20
Increase in number of medals at junior & senior European and World level	255	244	270	290

As outlined above, this ten-year National Sports Policy sets out targets for Irish sport to achieve in the coming years which include;

- Overall adult participation in sport to rise from 43% to 60% by 2027.
- Reducing the participation gradient between men and women from 4.5% to 0%.
- Social participation in sport (through volunteering/club membership/event attendance) to grow 10% by 2027.
- Increased targeted high performance funding to deliver more Olympic/Paralympic medals (from the securing of 13 medals in 2016 to a target of 20 in 2028).
- All funded bodies adopting the Governance Code for Sport and achieving the gender representation requirements on their Boards.



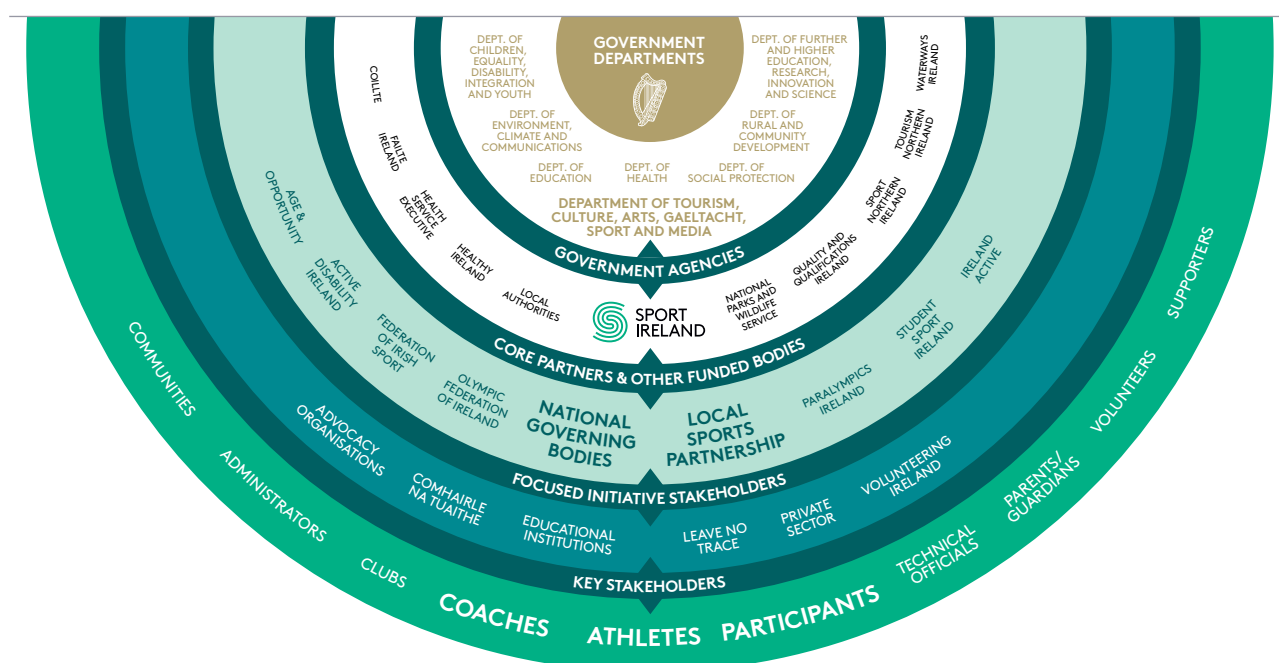
Sport Ireland is passionate about the promotion and improvement in the status of all sports in our country. When referring to sport we mean “all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation aimed at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental wellbeing, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels”.¹ It includes both recreational sport and competitive sport:

- **Recreational sport** - all forms of physical activity which, through casual or regular participation aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental wellbeing and/or forming social relationships.
- **Competitive sport** - all forms of physical activity which, through organised participation, aim at improving physical fitness and/or obtaining improved results in competition at all levels.

Sport Ireland recognises the value of the Lifelong Involvement in Sport and Physical Activity (LIPSA)² philosophy and works with and alongside a range of significant stakeholders highlighted in the below diagram, who have an interest in the positive outcomes derived from sport. The diagram outlines the complexity of the sport ecosystem with stakeholders ranging from athletes and participants to core partners, government agencies and other government departments. Sport Ireland is committed to supporting the design and delivery of relevant policies and programmes and facilitating multi-agency collaboration to deliver its strategic objectives at all levels of participation and performance.

This strategy, however, differentiates between this work with stakeholders focused on physical activity (e.g. Dept. of Health etc.), and Sport Ireland driving the outcomes that apply more specifically to sport – its core remit.

Graphical illustration of the sport ecosystem in Ireland highlighting that sport is the product of, and influenced by many different players – not-for-profit, public, private and at local, regional and national levels*



*This is a representative illustration of the sport ecosystem in Ireland and as such does not include an exhaustive list of all involved but an overview of the different departments, agencies, organisations and individuals that contribute to a more active Ireland.

1 In accordance with the Council of Europe, European Sports Charter, 2001.

2 <https://www.sportireland.ie/coaching/coach-support/lispa-model>

A photograph of a man and a young boy on a grassy soccer field. The man, wearing a black t-shirt and shorts, is smiling and high-fiving the boy. The boy, wearing a white t-shirt and blue shorts, is also smiling and has his arm raised. In the background, there is a soccer goal and some trees. A large green abstract shape is in the top left corner.

Sport Ireland provides direct, regular, financial support for 100³ sports organisations including 61 NGBs, 10 other funded bodies and 29 LSPs.

It is committed to working in partnership with them and for them, supporting capability and capacity building.

³ As of Jan 2023

CENTRAL TO SPORT IRELAND FUNCTIONING AT A HIGH LEVEL ARE:



PEOPLE

Sport Ireland recognises that our people are one of our most important assets and will continue to invest in its highly talented workforce, further expanding their skill base and diverse range of talent and expertise. Through effectively resourcing our workforce and improving on our operational structures, we can work with our partners to deliver on targets set for us.



FINANCES

Sport Ireland's 2023 budget is €89.72m plus a base capital budget of €9.6m. The ambition is, over the strategy period, to deliver further Government investment in sport, in line with the below National Sports Policy commitments.

- *That State investment in sport would exceed €220million in 2027 (Action 43).*
- *That funding will be delivered on a multiannual basis for high performance and participation programmes (Action 44), with the latter expected to really help to deliver on the participation targets.*
- *That Government funding for high performance will be increased to match the investment made in comparator nations. Sustained funding will be committed for each Olympic cycle (Action 50).*
- *To provide additional capital funding to progress the further development of world class sports facilities at the Sport Ireland Campus, in line with the priorities identified in the Master Plan and in support of Sport Ireland's High Performance Strategy (Action 53).*

Sport Ireland has operated on a budget of €96.21m and a headcount of 111 people in 2022. There is an evident need for increased financial and human resourcing to realise these increasing duties and deliver on the aspirations of this strategy.





PARTNERSHIPS



Collaborative working is central to Sport Ireland's delivery. Development of sport in Ireland is dependent on an infrastructure of organisations, people and facilities, and the systems and communication via which they interact. Sport Ireland's key role is to sustain, grow and improve the impact and effectiveness of the sector in the long term.

THE SPORT IRELAND CAMPUS



The Sport Ireland Campus is a state of the art 520-acre site, which provides a range of world class facilities. The Campus Masterplan proposes a vision and framework for its growth and the long-term development of associated facilities over the next 15-20 years. Aligned with the National Sports Policy commitments (within the finances section), there will be a need for capital funding to enable the renewal of current facilities and future delivery of major capital projects at the Campus over the lifetime of the Campus Masterplan.

POLICY FRAMEWORK



Recognising the influence and importance of sport across Irish society, the Government's 10-year National Sports Policy sets out the vision for Irish Sport in 2027 and defines key actions that it will undertake to achieve its ambitious goals. Sport Ireland plays a key role in the delivery of many of these actions, with the earlier table highlighting some of the Policy's key performance metrics that will be key deliverables within this strategic cycle. While the impact of Covid-19 saw some targets naturally fall below baseline, it is worth highlighting how well other metrics performed in spite of this and how sport in Ireland continued to achieve impressive heights during this challenging period.

The background of the page is a photograph of a person running on a dirt path through a forest. Sunlight filters through the trees, creating a dappled light effect. In the foreground, there are large, overlapping teal and light green abstract shapes that partially obscure the bottom left of the image.

2.

MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

The development of our new five-year strategy is an opportunity to reflect upon and review Sport Ireland's mission, vision and values.

As the statutory development agency for sport, Sport Ireland will focus its work on ensuring that Ireland is an active nation where people are encouraged to start, continue to participate, progress and achieve in sport.

Key to this is, working closely with its partners, to optimise the effectiveness and impact of the agencies, people and places providing sporting opportunity.

To do this Sport Ireland will work to:

- Support its partners, particularly NGBs and LSPs, to increase levels of introductory and sustained participation in sport and physical activity – for all.
- Deliver high performance sport success.
- Communicate the value and benefits of, and lead national thinking on, sport.
- Develop a stronger and more effective, safe, fair sport sector with the ambition to achieve the highest standards of governance.
- Increase the number and quality of the coaches, officials, administrators and volunteers who run and support sport.
- Promote diversity and inclusion and be pro-active in supporting the sector to provide opportunity to develop physical literacy and for lifelong participation in sport for everyone.
- Optimise the impact of Government investment in sport.

In driving this mission, Sport Ireland recognises that it has work to do to be an exemplar in terms of leadership, governance, strategic priorities, communication, adherence to its values and operational effectiveness.

OUR VISION





An active Ireland where
everyone can enjoy the
lifelong benefits of sport
and physical activity.

OUR VALUES



Sport Ireland takes pride in its unique and leading role in Irish sport and strives to deliver value for money and excellence in everything it does. Sport Ireland acts with integrity, upholding the highest ethical standards. It is honest, inclusive and transparent in all its partnership and funding relationships, decisions, and actions. These values will guide Sport Ireland in its delivery of a more active Ireland.

Sport Ireland's core values and guiding principles are summarised below.



INCLUSION:

- We listen, actively engage, support and collaborate wherever possible to build a stronger and diverse sport sector
- We are "all-in", fostering an inclusive environment in everything we do
- We welcome and value people from all backgrounds, seeking out diverse opinions
- We provide opportunity to be involved and/or included



INTEGRITY:

- We do what we say, we say what we do
- We live up to our standards, representing the organisation well, in everything we do
- We are open and honest; we admit when we are wrong
- We pursue our work in an honest and ethical manner



RESPECT:

- We value ourselves and others
- We create an accepting environment, ensuring people are encouraged to share their opinions and ideas
- We act with kindness and fairness in all that we do
- We recognise accomplishments



EXCELLENCE:

- We lead by example, embracing challenge and going the extra mile
- We deliver to the best of our ability and to the highest standards
- We are consistently professional and aspire to deliver excellent results
- We develop world class systems and services, underpinned by continuous improvement



ACCOUNTABILITY:

- Our decision-making is evidence-based and we are open and transparent in what and how we do things
- We are committed, understand what we are responsible for and deliver on our commitments and responsibilities
- We communicate regularly and clearly, ensuring key stakeholders are informed of the full picture
- We are open and approachable, accepting of feedback and willing to change



3.

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS





Sport in Ireland has seen a phenomenal period of achievement as of late. As a country ranked 125th in the world in terms of population, it has achieved and continues to achieve incredible levels of success in a wide variety of sports.

In November 2022, Ireland has achieved number one in the Men's World Rugby Rankings, won the first World Championship gymnastics medal, has qualified for the FIFA Women's World Cup and Katie Taylor is the undisputed World Champion of female professional boxing. Irish sporting teams and individuals continue to perform far above their weight and one can see Irish athletes in sports including athletics, rowing, cricket, hockey, equestrian and many others, perform and succeed at a very high level. Outside of high performance, there have been many improvements in participation levels during the first half of 2022. Sports participation reached 44%, still slightly behind the 2019 level of 46% but above levels recorded in 2021 as reported via the Irish Sports Monitor (ISM) results.

Whilst sport in Ireland continues to flourish and achieve new heights, it is also worth noting that sport both nationally, and internationally, has been facing and continues to face a period of unprecedented change as compared to the previous strategic cycle (2018 to 2022).

The Irish economy is moving from a position of strength and growth into a more challenging, uncertain time. It will almost certainly be further impacted by the lasting effects of the global pandemic, inflation, and the UK's exit from the European Union. To meet the challenges ahead, Ireland's future economic and social prosperity critically depends on a robust response and improvements in knowledge, innovation, and effectiveness across all sectors.

The significant social changes seen in our nation have implications for workplaces and leisure activity. Ireland's diversity is increasing; Central Statistics Office (CSO) data from April 2022 indicates that one in eight people in Ireland are non-Irish nationals⁴. Sport Ireland understands and is committed to ensuring that its work reflects diversity within society.

Throughout the course of this strategy, the number and proportion of teenagers and older people will rise and it will be important to ensure that the specific demands that this will create can be met. In addition, the number of people in the age groups from which sport's voluntary workforce is drawn will reduce. It may, thus, be necessary to do more to recruit effectively and keep people involved to ensure that the quality and accessibility of the sport options available remains high.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a dramatic effect on Irish society; work and recreational behaviours, how people use their time/free time and the priority given to sport and physical activity.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a dramatic effect on Irish society; work and recreational behaviours, how people use their time/free time and the priority given to sport and physical activity. This necessitates an agile response and an appreciation of the needs of the sector – which the Government and Sport Ireland has, thus far, been able to provide. Ireland has consistently been ranked as one of the best countries in the world in terms of its resilience and response to the pandemic. Whilst there have been some negative impacts on the sport sector including, for example, reduced gate receipts and periods where certain sports were put on hold, there is confidence in how positively the sector has responded and continues to perform in spite of the challenges posed by the pandemic. During the pandemic, Sport Ireland worked collaboratively with its partners to provide excellent services even in the midst of very challenging times.

The Government's Climate Action Plan 2021 sets out indicative target emissions reductions for each economic sector and the actions needed to deliver them. Ireland's commitment to these targets presents both opportunity (in areas such as active travel) and challenges. Sport Ireland's holistic Sustainability Vision will set out how it will meaningfully contribute to commitments set out by the Government in relation to both sustainable development and climate change. Sport will be encouraged to bring down its carbon footprint by reducing energy and water use and producing less waste. This will be achieved by improving sports facility efficiency overall and when implementing the ambitious plans being taken forward for the Sport Ireland Campus. Alongside these are the United Nations "Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs), to which Ireland has responded by publishing the SDG National Implementation Plan 2022-2024⁵. Responsibility for delivering this plan rests with a range of agencies but Sport Ireland is determined to play a key role in achieving its key objectives.

Over the next five years, Sport Ireland will work to achieve the increased participation and engagement targets as set out by the Government's National Sports Policy. The outcome of this will be that 60% of adults are regularly playing sport and that 55% of the adult population of Ireland is regularly involved socially in sport - through volunteering, club membership and/or event attendance - by 2027. It is worth noting that due to the impact of the pandemic, the baseline figures are now behind where they were when initially set in 2017. As such, the challenge to reach the 2027 targets is a great one but one that Sport Ireland will strive to achieve through successful strategy implementation.

⁴ [CSO Data, April 2022](#)

⁵ [National Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals 2022-24](#)

The development of new technologies, the increased sophistication of communication and the automation of roles and activities is changing how organisations function and individuals' work and play. Sport Ireland will keep up to date with the exciting advances in technology and communications in working with current membership and potential customers. Key priorities are to build innovation, drive collaboration across the sector and promote a digital first approach. This must be underpinned by development of data collection and analytical capability to support evidence-based decision-making. This will continue to be a key feature of Sport Ireland's work going forward.

There has been substantial growth in the breadth of Sport Ireland's remit, its budget, status and range of responsibilities. Not least among these is the further development and management of the Sport Ireland Campus. With the support of Government, the next five years will be key to driving forward the Masterplan and vision for the Campus.

All of this has had a significant impact on the thinking that informs this document. It is vital that Sport Ireland works collectively to support development of the sustainability and effectiveness of NGBs, LSPs and other partner bodies so that the wider sport system continues to grow and thrive.

Sport Ireland has demonstrated its resilience and readiness to successfully adapt and change. It will continue to improve its operational agility to respond to new and emerging challenges in the coming years, combining a long-term strategic approach with a capacity to respond quickly and effectively. The commitment to organisational and structural review confirms this determination to continue to provide quality leadership, direction, and support.

Sport Ireland will keep up to date with the exciting advances in technology and communications in working with current membership and potential customers.



Over the last strategy period, there has been much public and media discourse on the topics of governance, and regulation, in Irish sport. As a development agency, Sport Ireland has an acknowledged sectoral leadership role in this area, introducing for the first time in December 2021, mandatory compliance in governance. The result has been, and will be, to challenge those within the sector not just to revise their existing governance structures and practices but in some cases to address their fundamental philosophy and approach to the way that sport is run.

Mindful of Sport Ireland's developmental role, the true mark of success will be in the implementation of long-term, sustainable change, borne out of cultural maturity. This shift, however, requires a focus on the promotion and incentivisation of good governance practices and crucially, the support needed to implement improvements given that Sport Ireland is not a regulatory body and has limits to its legal powers. Progress towards more robust, modern arrangements is hugely welcome but Sport Ireland recognises where some organisations are starting from in terms of their governance changes, where the challenge will be to ensure that attitudes and mindsets keep pace.

Mindful of Sport Ireland's developmental role, the true mark of success will be in the implementation of long-term, sustainable change, borne out of cultural maturity.

This is a pivotal time for Sport Ireland but out of recent uncertainty and change comes an opportunity to refocus its goals and consider the role that all agencies can play in building a stronger and healthier sport sector. Sport Ireland remains confident that it can achieve the goals and targets set out as part of this five-year plan and continue to improve on the already successful sport sector in this country.



4.

SPORTS DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The All-Ireland Physical Literacy Consensus Statement is at the forefront of the work that Sport Ireland does.





The All-Ireland Physical Literacy Consensus Statement is at the forefront of the work that Sport Ireland does. It defines Physical Literacy as *“the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding that enables a person to value and participate in physical activity throughout life.”*

Ireland’s Lifelong Involvement in Sport & Physical Activity (LISPA) framework illustrates how, based upon a foundation of physical literacy, people can choose to get and stay involved in sport and physical activity at recreational level or through active living, can go on to participate in organised sport and can progress to involvement at the high performance level.

The gravity of advocating for the development of physical literacy is apparent from its inclusion in the National Sports policy 2018-2027 (Actions 1-4), as well as being a component of the Sport Ireland Strategy 2023-2027. Sport Ireland recognises the need to have the principles of physical literacy underpin all strategy and initiatives that are adopted. To that end, Sport Ireland will roll out a physical literacy plan in 2023 and the implementation of this Sport Ireland strategy will see physical literacy’s integration into policy, practice and research; and greater collaboration between key organisations and the sector.

Sport Ireland has created and refined a compelling Sports Development Framework, encompassing its vision, mission, values and enablers. This serves as the basis from which we have developed an ambitious and dynamic strategy, with the Sport Ireland Campus an integral part of this framework. This Framework will engage and enable many people to take part in, or improve their performance in their chosen sport through supporting, developing and streamlining the opportunities, processes, systems and structures in place. Its key components are described in the following pages.



PARTICIPATION/RECREATIONAL SPORT

This term is used to describe people taking part in purposeful participation in sports related physical activity – normally during their leisure time. Key factors which affect people's propensity to take part include fun and enjoyment, perceptions of competence, the involvement of their friends and peers (and for young people often parents/carers) and the opportunity to improve fitness and health.

Developing participation entails enabling people from all backgrounds to start playing a sport (or a range of sports) and ensuring that they stay involved – whether as participants, coaches, officials, or volunteers. It also encompasses provision of entry-level opportunity where people (often but not always young people) have the option to develop their physical literacy, learn new skills and to take part in a sport for the first time. Organisations and leaders need to create a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for participants with developmentally appropriate instruction, suitable (if necessary adapted) equipment, and facilities with a programme orientation to nurture physical literacy and the desire and confidence to participate for life. This Strategy will continue to prioritise the six key goals from the Sport Ireland Participation Plan as outlined in the graphic, to deliver on our vision for a more active Ireland.

It is a central role of Sport Ireland to support partners, programmes and initiatives to drive up levels of participation in sport. It is committed to finding the best ways to meet Government National Sports Policy targets to ensure that a significantly higher proportion of Irish children and adults from all sectors of society are regularly involved in all forms of active and social participation in sport. This requires effective engagement with non-participants, sedentary and low participation groups. To do this, Sport Ireland and partners must also meaningfully and equitably address issues related to diversity, inclusion, disability, female participation, and socio-economic disadvantage.





COMMITTED OR ORGANISED PARTICIPATION / COMPETITIVE SPORT

This refers to people maintaining and often increasing their level of participation in sport, i.e. competing or taking part at a good level. It is linked to the importance that taking part in sport has in their lives based upon their physical literacy and factors such as their levels of competence, enjoyment gained and their personal investment in it as well as environmental factors such as competing work, school and family priorities, accessibility of valued opportunities and a sense of belonging.

Sport Ireland's role, working with partners, is to ensure that every opportunity is taken to keep people playing sport for as long as, and at the level, their ability and motivation allows. Equally important is that they are encouraged to stay engaged in sport by taking up coaching, officiating, volunteering, administrative and board roles – and given access to the relevant training, qualification and personal development processes to make this positive and rewarding.

Sport Ireland will focus on getting more people involved in organised and committed forms of sport. It will ensure that those who choose to be involved experience a positive and inclusive sporting culture, fostering stronger connections within communities and a lifelong relationship with sport. It will support the sector to endeavour delivery of sporting experiences that are engaging, rewarding, and create positive memories that encourage lifelong involvement.

TALENT RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

This refers to the process of recruiting and developing talented athletes so that they can engage in a sport pathway which facilitates their development and allows them to maximise their abilities. A robust effective talent development pathway will provide those with high performance potential the opportunity to excel, whilst also being inclusive of those who wish to participate in the sport long-term, in a holistic, athlete centered culture and environment.

Sport Ireland's role is, by working with our partners to ensure that effective talent recruitment, development and retention pathways are in place. This ensures that the routes to high-performance opportunity for Olympic, Paralympic and other talented athletes are visible, available, and effective.

Using development and performance pathways helps people progress to their chosen level, supported on their journey by people and resources in an athlete-centered way. Sport Ireland helps sports develop robust pathways which enable people to progress to their desired level, take on different roles and potentially move across sports. Working closely with our partners, it will ensure that resources are suitably aligned across all environments.



HIGH PERFORMANCE

High performance sport or elite sport relates to people taking part at the highest level of competition where the emphasis is on securing medals at major games or winning prestigious international competitions. Sport Ireland's role in this sphere is to ensure that more Irish athletes and teams systematically and fairly achieve world-class results at the highest level of international competition. Sport Ireland was tasked in Action 24 of the National Sports Policy to develop a new long-term High Performance Strategy for Ireland. This document has been completed and informs Sport Ireland's commitment to supporting Ireland's high performing athletes. To do this, it is necessary to continuously improve the governance and delivery of high performance sport and to optimise Ireland's investment by ensuring that the nation's athletes are supported to perform at their best and win medals in international competition; and to transition into and out of this environment.

THE GOAL

The Sport Ireland High Performance Strategy 2021-2032 informs Sport Ireland's strategic direction in respect of high performance sport. The vision of the High Performance Strategy is that Ireland will consistently achieve podium success on the world stage inspiring the nation and future generations.

TARGET OUTCOMES

- Ireland will consistently win on the world stage across Olympic/Paralympic cycles
- Ireland will be a 12-16 medal country consistently over the next two Paralympic cycles (Paris 2024, LA 2028) and sustain that success in 2032
- Ireland will be an 8-10 medal country within the next two Olympic cycles (Paris 2024, LA 2028) and sustain that success in 2032
- Ireland will win medals across at least four sports in both Olympics and Paralympic Games
- Ireland will win medals in European and World championships across multiple sports in Olympic and Paralympic events









THE SPORT IRELAND CAMPUS

In November 2022, the Sport Ireland Campus Masterplan Vision was unveiled. This ambitious blueprint proposes a vision and framework for the growth of the Sport Ireland Campus and the long-term development of associated sporting facilities over the next 15–20 years. The masterplan captures the aspirations of Sport Ireland and identifies a proposed guide for the delivery of this vision.

The Campus is already home to world class sporting and support facilities and more will be added in the coming years. In addition to the larger facilities detailed within the masterplan there will be a strong emphasis on the delivery of multiple small and medium-sized projects on an annual basis that support NGBs and strengthen the core value of community participation. There will also be particular focus on improving public transport links to the Campus and a strong commitment to sustainability.

The Sport Ireland Campus masterplan will be realised through a capital development programme over the next 15–20 years. It is envisaged that individual building and infrastructure projects will be delivered in a series of phases over the life cycle of the masterplan, with the detailed phasing and programming of the delivery being determined by the needs of the athletes and the growth of sport in Ireland.

Reflecting Sport Ireland’s mission ‘to develop a Campus that becomes the heartbeat of Irish sport’, Sport Ireland will work closely with Government and the sector to realise and achieve the vision of the Campus masterplan. Although its primary role is to support elite and performance athletes and programmes, it will also be an inspirational and internationally comparable venue where performance, participation and recreational sport can live side by side, that hosts great events and is a home for the sporting community.

Facilities such as the Campus have a proven track record in increasing participation, attracting new people into sport and helping them get more out of their experience. Investment in facilities therefore remains at the heart of the Government’s investment strategy in the future. Capital funding is essential to realising the goals of improved sporting infrastructure such as the Sport Ireland Campus.

The Campus will be the home for Sport Ireland and most NGBs and will be a centre for learning and training for athletes, and the professional and voluntary workforce. The Campus will be associated with innovation, research, learning, sports delivery and recreation.

Sport Ireland will ensure that further Campus master-planning and facilities development reflect best practice in energy efficiency, building methods, sustainability, access to nature and accessibility. It will, following completion of the National Velodrome and Badminton Centre, focus on development of the village centre and athlete accommodation and then further grow the planned range of specialist and community facilities.

There is also a need to clarify the operational vision for the Campus - addressing how the financial and programming demands that it faces will be balanced. This means addressing, as a priority, the financial demands that the delivery of elite training, events and community sport creates and securing beneficial commercial partnerships to further enhance this.

5. STRATEGY

Sport Ireland's vision of "An active Ireland where everyone can enjoy the lifelong benefits of sport and physical activity" will be realised through clarity of its mission and values, supported by core focus areas and their underlying enablers





Sport Ireland's vision is of "An active Ireland where everyone can enjoy the lifelong benefits of sport and physical activity".

This will be realised through the clarity of its mission and values, supported by core focus areas and their underlying enablers, delivering across the sports development framework from participation to high-performance. The Sport Ireland Campus is an integral part of this, providing a home for Irish sport and an inspiring location where sporting experiences and opportunities for lifelong involvement are realised on a daily basis.

All elements of the sports development framework are central to Sport Ireland's mission of ensuring that, across the island, more people are encouraged to start, continue to participate, progress and achieve in sport and physical activity provided via a thriving, well organised and supported sport sector.

Delivery of the strategy is based on the below three core focus areas, underpinned by specific enablers, which reflect the emphasis of strategy consultation and indicate an intention to increase emphasis in key areas. The enablers build upon Sport Ireland's work over the last strategy period providing a strong degree of continuity.



SPORT DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Delivering a thriving sport sector that provides opportunities for participation and performance.



EXCELLENT LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Optimising capability and capacity.



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Acting in the best interests of the sector and wider society.



SPÓRT ÉIREANN
SPORT IRELAND

VISION:

An active Ireland where everyone can enjoy the lifelong benefits of sport and physical activity

MISSION

Ireland is an active nation where people are encouraged to start, continue to participate, progress and achieve in sport

VALUES



PARTICIPATION

COMMITTED
PARTICIPATION

SPORT
IRELAND
CAMPUS

TALENT
RECRUITMENT &
DEVELOPMENT

HIGH
PERFORMANCE

CORE FOCUS AREAS



SPORT DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Delivering a thriving sport sector that provides opportunities for participation and performance.



EXCELLENT LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Optimising capability and capacity.



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Acting in the best interests of the sector and wider society.

ENABLERS

Structures, programmes and project development

Volunteer and professional workforce development

Coaching and officiating

Innovation and digital transformation

Delivery of major events

Leadership and resources

Good Governance

Communication and marketing

Research, insights and evidence-based practice

Integrity and ethical sport

Equality, equity, diversity and inclusion

Sustainability





SPORT DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Delivering a thriving and cohesive sport sector that provides opportunities for participation and performance....



Structures, programmes and project development

Sport Ireland will focus its work on ensuring that the organised sport sector is connected, sharing insights, developing structures, coordinating projects, and integrating systems so they operate more effectively and as a result, deliver greater value to participants and communities. Sport Ireland will help the individuals' driving organisations within the sector to access the supports necessary to perform their roles, develop their sports and deliver successful outcomes.

To deliver on this enabler, Sport Ireland will:

- Design and promote best practice principles, standards, learning and education to support sporting organisations deliver better experiences for all their participants.
- Drive sector collaboration and cross-sports innovation through programme development and innovation projects.
- Lead and facilitate knowledge sharing across the sport sector to support informed decision-making and sport delivery.
- Help sport participants and sporting organisations connect more securely and easily to digital services (membership systems, use of data and insights, sport streaming) across the sport sector.
- Encourage people to stay engaged in sport and to take up coaching, officiating, volunteering, administrative and board roles – supported by the relevant qualification and personal development processes.



Volunteer and professional workforce development

Volunteers are crucial to the sector and delivery of all levels of sport in Ireland and play a major role in sustaining the high level of sporting activity. As Central Statistics Office metrics highlight, demographic changes may adversely affect volunteer numbers over the next strategic cycle. Sport Ireland will look to fully embed and implement the objectives of its National Volunteer Policy – the primary objective being to increase the number and raise the quality of active volunteers in sport.

It will also ensure that access to volunteering in all sports is as open and inclusive as possible. Sport Ireland is committed to working for and with those who are not currently in the sporting system. Development of a diverse and inclusive volunteer base will be crucial to the success of this objective and will have a massively positive effect on participation and engagement in sport, regardless of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation or economic background.

Sport Ireland will ensure that those working in sport professionally are equipped with the necessary knowledge and expertise to do their job effectively; this may be management and governance, commercial or media skills, ethics, inclusion, child protection, human resources or working with young or disadvantaged people. Development at this level is crucial to improving the capability and capacity of the sporting workforce and it will be guided by the development and implementation of Sport Ireland's workforce development plan.



Coaching and officiating

Having sufficient coaches and officials of the right quality with the right experience and approach is fundamental to the delivery of sporting opportunity. Also essential to the sector is that it attracts and retains people of the right quality into paid professional roles.



Sport Ireland intends to extend the role of Sport Ireland Coaching to include work with officials and support NGBs to develop coaches and officials at all levels. Having fully developed NGB coaching pathways from entry level to high-performance is a key goal for Sport Ireland Coaching.

Alongside this it will align the work of Sport Ireland's High Performance, Coaching and Institute teams to best develop the high-performance coaching pathway with a view to increasing the number and improving the quality of high-performance coaches.



Innovation and digital transformation

Mindful of the Government's desire to embed innovation across the public service and position Ireland as a world leader in this field, Sport Ireland is committed to driving a culture of innovation, openness to learning, embracing of digital technologies internally and across the sector. As part of this, it intends to:

- Develop a culture of innovation, connectivity and openness to learning internally and across the sector.
- Optimise its use of data science and digital technology to underpin effective service design, the development of new ways of working and improve communication with (and within) the sector.
- Drive digital transformation among sector partners – encouraging collaboration and joint ventures with industry and academic bodies.



Delivery of major events

Hosting major sports events boosts the economy, highlights the positive benefits of key sports (individual and multiple) and is a key chance to shine the national spotlight on specific venues or destinations. With a particular focus on the opportunities presented by the Sport Ireland Campus – as presently configured and in its future form, Sport Ireland will further develop its relationship with the Department's Major Sport Events Unit to develop a more strategic approach to the process of assisting NGBs and others to attract major sporting events to Ireland.

Additionally, Sport Ireland will ensure that major sporting events will look to drive key legacy outcomes in terms of sport participation, economic and community (including volunteering and culture) benefits. To attract Government and Sport Ireland support, NGBs and other organisers of major events will need to demonstrate that they have made plans to drive appropriately scaled legacy improvements. Women's events, in particular, can further raise the profile of women's sport in the media and support delivery of Sport Ireland's Women in Sport policy.



EXCELLENT LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

Optimising capability and capacity.....



Leadership and resources

As the lead development agency for sport, Sport Ireland is well positioned to play its part in supporting and developing a thriving and cohesive sport system in Ireland. It does this by influencing, informing, and investing in the organisations and people who deliver sport and physical activity.

It is constantly evolving to reflect its leadership role in strategic planning and implementation, evidence-based policy making, delivery of an ever-increasing range of functions and allocation of progressively higher levels of Government funding. The development and improvement of its own governance, organisational structure, operating model, people, and culture is therefore an integral component to enable it to lead by example.

As the delivery of a new strategic cycle provides an opportune time for reflection, Sport Ireland intends to:

- Clarify, promote and strengthen its role as the national lead development agency for sport in Ireland.
- Take steps to ensure that it obtains best value from the expertise and influence of its Board.
- Review its organisational structure and executive function to be an exemplar in leadership, governance, sport development, operational effectiveness – and continuous improvement.
- Design and promote best practice industry principles, standards, learning and education to support sporting organisations deliver better experiences for all their participants.
- Review the current Governance Code for Sport and associated process, with a view to introducing a more sport-specific governance code, underpinned by a sustainable governance support programme

Sport Ireland recognises that fundamental to its leadership role is the extent to which it enables, supports and encourages its core partner bodies, in particular NGBs, LSPs and other funded bodies, to build their capability and capacity to be better and more effective at what they do. Helping them to meet the challenges faced and to maintain a focus on the outcomes for which they are responsible is essential to drive the impact and effectiveness of the sector and to Government continuing to obtain a high-quality return on its investment in sport.



Good Governance

Sport Ireland will support the improvement of governance effectiveness, to plan longer-term for their sport, to enhance operational effectiveness and, with a particular focus on smaller organisations, look to reduce the administrative burden proportionally.

With reference to the sports development framework, Sport Ireland intends to:

- Assist NGBs to review, improve and innovate in the approaches taken to providing entry level opportunity.
- Ensure they are well equipped to keep people participating and engaged in playing sport for as long as possible – at up to the level that their talent, ability and motivation enables.
- Work with NGBs and other partners (such as third level institutions) to ensure that the talent recruitment and pathway systems and processes in place to nurture talent are visible, accessible, fair and effective for all athletes.
- Continuously improve the governance and delivery of high-performance sport to optimise Ireland's investment in this - the primary intention being to deliver on commitments made in, and implement, the 2021-2032 High Performance Strategy.

Additionally, Sport Ireland will continue to support LSPs enhancements to their governing structures and processes and to be clearer about what is expected of them. This will enable them to focus more specifically upon programmes and initiatives that deliver outcomes that lead to more (new) people taking part in sport. Aligned to partnerships and policy, participation and promotion, information, areas of emphasis will include:

- The quality and effectiveness of their partnership relationships with all NGBs, clubs and other bodies to offer sustainable 'local participation pathways'.
- Maintaining the focus on equity, diversity and inclusion and increasing participation levels among agreed targeted groups.



Communications and marketing

Sport Ireland is committed to communicating the value of, and leading national thinking on, sport and encouraging people to take up sporting and active lifestyles via the delivery of clear messaging and marketing campaigns (e.g., Sport for All).

An immediate priority is to build and extend its own communications and marketing capability in the first instance, while in the longer-term, looking to support sector partners to deliver more effective external and internal communication.

A key requirement will be to create improved internal and external clarity about its structure, areas of responsibility and the core functions of Sport Ireland business units.

The key themes of its communications policy are to:

- **Protect and enhance the reputation of sport and Sport Ireland** – building on this and being more proactive in its communications framework.
- **Deepen and strengthen key relationships** - promoting a positive, trusting, and inclusive strategic and operating environment based upon an effective, open, two-way dialogue with internal and external stakeholders and enhancing transparency
- **Broaden understanding about Sport Ireland** – utilising new formats and media to speak directly and clearly to its varied audiences.



Research, insights, and evidence-based practice

Underpinned by Sport Ireland's mission to progress the national thinking on sport in Ireland, it will deliver on its Research Strategy to lead the generation and mobilisation of knowledge and insights for the sector. It will do this through a progressive and powerful research agenda.

Significant strides forward have been made in this area over the last strategy period, Sport Ireland is committed to maintaining this momentum and intends to optimise the effectiveness of its monitoring, evaluation and research function. It will encourage and embed improved 'on the ground' impact evaluation processes to inform both its own work and that of partners.



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Acting in the best interests of the sector and wider society...



Integrity and ethical sport

Sport Ireland is committed to integrity, moral and ethics in all aspects of sport. It refers to those involved in sport acting in a way consistent with their values and principles and manifests itself in policies, codes of practices, standards of good conduct, safeguarding, fair play, and the elimination of doping in sport.

Sport Ireland will champion a sector which provides fair and inclusive sporting environments, which are focused on player and officials' welfare and based on honesty, and respect. Demonstrating high levels of integrity will contribute to improved public confidence, trust and engagement in sport.

Sport Ireland will work with core partners to ensure integrity is a value and behaviour evident across all levels of sport. To provide guidance on the best approach to this area, Sport Ireland will;

- Clarify exactly what integrity means for it and the sport sector, including its position on the practices that threaten sport integrity.
- Establish a working group of key stakeholders, including referee, official, and player representatives, responsible for the development and circulation of a national Code of Conduct template across Irish sport.
- Ensure that player welfare is at the centre of sport development services.
- Promote best practice consistent with child protection guidance and legislation.
- Continue its work, with partners, to eliminate any and all abuse directed at coaches, game officials and players.
- Consider the level of resource allocated to anti-doping to ensure further development and improvement of the testing and the developmental elements of its anti-doping processes.
- Work collaboratively with the National Vetting Bureau, NGBs, LSPs and others to attempt to streamline its safeguarding processes.



Equality, equity, diversity, and inclusion

Equality relates to recognising and removing the barriers faced by people involved or wanting to be involved in sport. It is about changing the culture to one that values diversity and enables the full involvement of disadvantaged groups in every aspect of sport.

Helping overcome inequalities and associated barriers to participation in sport is a fundamental element of the National Sports Policy and a fundamental principle of Sport Ireland's work. Inclusion happens when the barriers and challenges that lead to disadvantage are removed. In doing so, everybody has a fair opportunity to participate. Sport Ireland will, thus, over the next five years, implement the actions set out in both its Women in Sport Policy and its Diversity and Inclusion in Sport Policy. The key outcomes of this will be:

- More people from targeted groups participating in sport and physical activity and greater awareness amongst people from diverse communities about opportunities to participate.
- Increased awareness and confidence in the sector to engage people from diverse backgrounds.
- More people from targeted groups holding senior and other positions e.g., coaching, management and committee level roles so that the make-up of the sector reflects that of the broader population.
- Increased club capacity at local level to be/become more diverse and inclusive.
- Ability to track change and design actions according to data and evidence generated.



Sustainability

Over the next strategic cycle, Sport Ireland will work to deliver specific public sector sustainability targets. As part of this it is committed to improving the monitoring/evaluation of its own sustainability impact and outcomes 'on the ground' and of the wider sport sector in general via research and improved use of data management and insight.

Sport Ireland intends to sign up to the United Nations Sports for Climate Action Initiative and to meeting the associated targets and requirements. It is developing a holistic Sustainability Framework to support the responsibility of sport to meaningfully contribute to commitments set out by the Government for both sustainable development and climate change.

It will ensure that further Sport Ireland Campus master-planning and facilities development leads the way in this respect and demonstrates best practice in energy efficiency, building methods, sustainability, accessibility and access to nature.

Within the wider sport sector, Sport Ireland will work with core partners to help fully consider the social and sustainability responsibilities of sport and proactively promote and respond to green agenda issues in particular climate change, carbon usage and biodiversity.



6.

SPORT IRELAND - IN FIVE YEAR'S TIME

Sport Ireland is confident that with the successful implementation of this strategy that, by 2027, Sport Ireland will be recognised for leading the sector with vision and integrity





Sport Ireland is confident that with the successful implementation of this strategy that, by 2027, Sport Ireland will be recognised for leading the sector with vision and integrity. It will be living its mission of Ireland being “An active nation where people are encouraged to start, continue to participate, progress and achieve in sport.”

There will be further streamlining and improvement of Ireland’s sports development processes, systems, and structures. This will mean that diversity and inclusion in sport is paramount. All people irrespective of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation or economic background will have a clearly visible, affordable and easily adopted opportunity to start to take part in sport and recreation – and will do so – thus meeting the Governments’ National Sport Policy targets.

This strategic plan will have been effective in achieving the participation targets set by the National Sports Policy and as such, the number of people actively involved in sport will have risen. The range of opportunities available to people to take part in sport, the number taken up and the ease of access that all people have to sport will have improved.

Once engaged in sport, participants will have every incentive to stay involved whether as players or in one or more of the many highly valued coaching, officiating and voluntary support roles that are available, invested in and appreciated. They will also, where they wish to and have the requisite talent, be afforded the opportunity to progress to high levels of performance.

At higher levels of performance, Irish athletes and teams will be achieving their very best in international competition and benefitting fully from the opportunity they have to live, train and compete at the Sport Ireland Campus. They will be well supported by the Sport Ireland Institute and the finest coaches and high-performance support teams.

Sporting opportunity across the board will be provided by well-governed, innovative NGBs, LSPs and other organisations working effectively together. The way in which sporting opportunity is presented, promoted, organised, safeguarded and delivered will make taking part a legitimate, achievable, safe and fair entitlement for all people in Ireland.

Sport Ireland will be an effective, proactive champion for sport. This will be underpinned by excellent leadership and communication internally and externally. Sport Ireland's role will be clearly defined and understood as will the fact that it aspires to the highest standards of integrity, governance and effectiveness of itself and funded partners, while maintaining a balance with its developmental responsibilities. This will apply to work areas driven by policy and funding and also those in which it is the lead delivery agent. Its leadership of and support for coaching, officiating, and delivery of ethical sport will be of the highest standards which will be leading the way for the sector.



In summary,
Sport Ireland will
be the leader and
figurehead of a
high achieving,
cohesive network
of organisations
delivering sporting
opportunity at every
level of involvement
to individuals
and communities
throughout Ireland.



7.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: The strategy development process

Appendix 2: Definitions

Appendix 3: Key strategic and policy documents

Appendix 4: Review of Sport Ireland's 2018-2022 strategic objectives

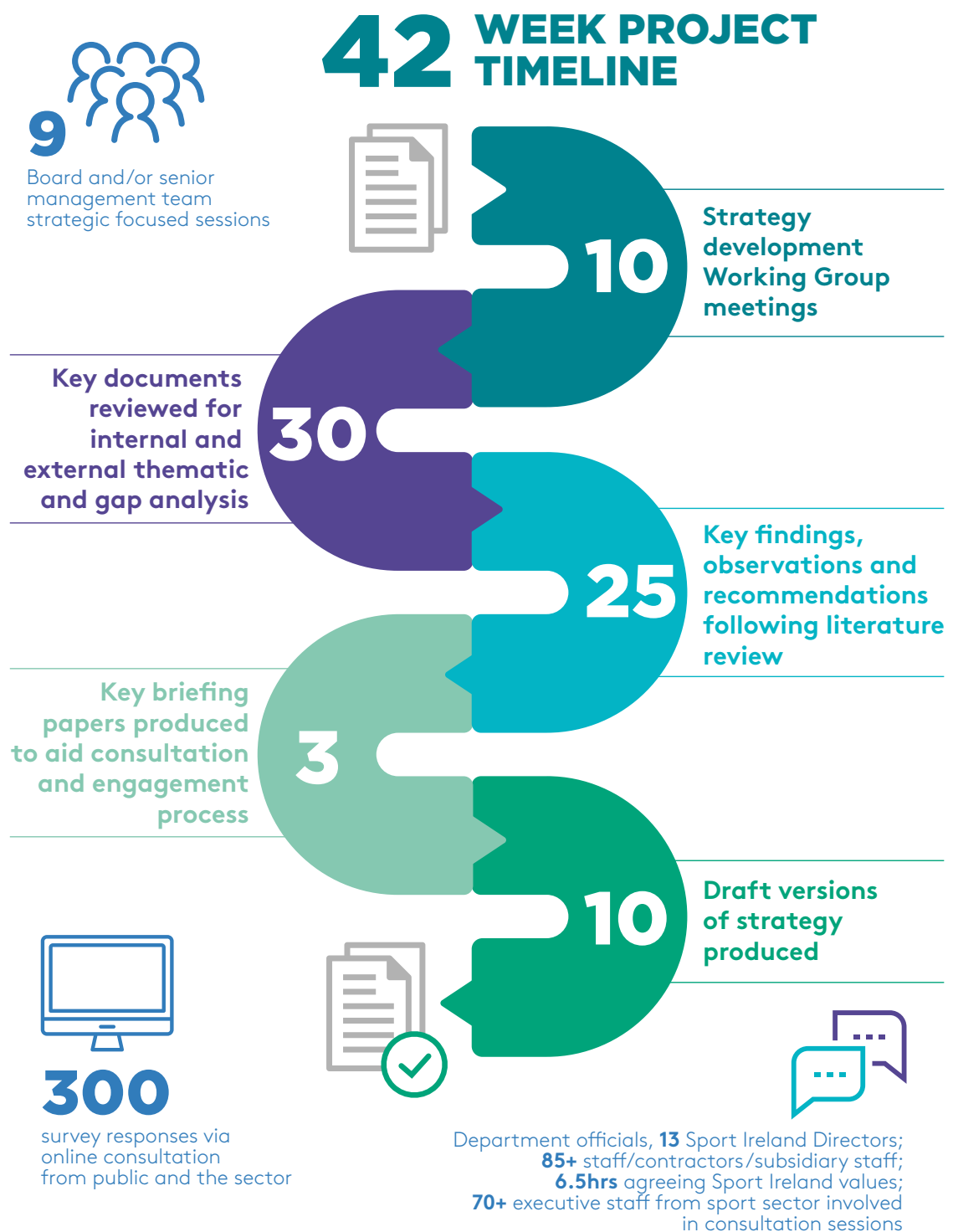
Appendix 5: 2023-2027 High level strategic objectives



APPENDIX 1

THE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Ahead of publication, Sport Ireland spent 12 months consulting with a wide range of partners and other stakeholders.



APPENDIX 2

DEFINITIONS

Throughout this strategy reference is made to a range of terms and organisations. These include:

Core funded partners: The collective group of organisations funded by Sport Ireland including NGBs, LSPs and others such as the Olympic Federation of Ireland (OFI), Paralympics Ireland (PI), the Federation of Irish Sport (FIS), Active Disability Ireland, Student Sport Ireland and Age & Opportunity.

Diversity and inclusion: Refers to an understanding and acceptance of the fact that people have individual characteristics, that these differences are valued, and that pro-active behaviours, options and actions are needed to make people feel welcome, respected and that they belong.

Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs): An initiative of Sport Ireland working with local authorities and other partners. Their core aim is to co-ordinate and promote the development of sport at local level, increase levels of participation in sport, and to ensure that local resources are used to best effect.

National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs): Organisations, recognised by Sport Ireland, that govern and coordinate the development of a particular sport or sports usually through constituent clubs and related structures.

Other funded bodies: Organisations currently funded by Sport Ireland that are not classified as NGBs or LSPs such as Ireland Active, Irish Special Schools Sports Council, Pentathlon Ireland, Snowsports Association of Ireland and others that may be funded in the future.

Participation: In its widest sense is to be understood as involving all aspects of engagement in sport including active participation, club membership, volunteering, supportive family members, attending sporting events, and governance (management and administration) of sports bodies.

Sport Ireland Facilities Designated Activity Company (DAC): Sport Ireland subsidiary - the company set up in 2006 to manage the Sport Ireland Campus.

Technical Official: Any person who controls the play of a competition by applying the rules and regulations of the sport to make judgments on rule infringement, performance, time or ranking. A Technical Official acts as an impartial judge of sporting competition (e.g. referee, umpire, line official, scorekeeper, statistician, judge etc.)

The sport sector: This is taken to mean all those who make up the entire community of sport in Ireland.

Volunteers: All those who fulfil a role without receiving financial reward or salary, such as club officers, coaches, technical officials, board members, etc.

APPENDIX 3

KEY STRATEGIC AND POLICY DOCUMENTS

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL:

- [Sport Ireland Act 2015](#)
- [National Sports Policy 2018-2027](#)
- [National Sports Policy Action Plan 2021-2023](#)
- [National Physical Activity Plan](#)
- [Department Statement of Strategy](#)
- [Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018-2030](#)
- [EU Policy for Sport- Going faster, Aiming Higher, Reaching Further](#)
- [Sustainable Development Goals 2030](#)
- [WHO PA Guidelines](#)
- [A Get Active Framework](#)

SPORT IRELAND STRATEGIES POLICIES AND PLANS:

- [Sport Ireland 2018-2022 Statement of Strategy](#)
- [Sport Ireland Facilities DAC Statement of Strategy 2021-2025](#)
- [Sport Ireland High Performance Strategy](#)
- [Sport Ireland Institute Strategy](#)
- [Sport Ireland Research Strategy](#)
- [Sport Ireland Participation Plan 2021-2024](#)
- [Sport Ireland Coaching Plan](#)
- [Sport Ireland Outdoors Policy](#)
- [Sport Ireland Women In Sport Policy](#)
- [Sport Ireland Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)
- [Sport Ireland Policy for Participation in Sport by People with a Disability](#)
- [Sport Ireland Campus Masterplan](#)
- [Sport Ireland Safeguarding Guidance](#)

APPENDIX 4

REVIEW OF SPORT IRELAND'S 2018-2022 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The following table reviews Sport Ireland's sixteen **strategic objectives** for the previous strategic cycle, i.e., 2018-2022. The strategy was based on three key pillars of **participation, performance, and high performance**, underpinned by **good governance** with four objectives aligned to each of these key areas.

PARTICIPATION – LIFELONG AND INCLUSIVE SPORT		
Strategic Objectives	Outcomes	Status
1. Lead on the national ambition to increase the number of people participating in sport and physical activity.	- The Irish Sport Monitor (ISM) 2022 Mid-Year Report shows that participation in sport continued to rise in 2022 and recover from the impact of Covid-19. During the first half of 2022, sports participation rates reached 44%, still slightly behind the 2019 level of 46% but above levels recorded in 2021. - The Sport Ireland Participation Plan 2021-2024 was launched in May 2021, to target those most at risk of having lower sports participation and physical activity levels. By working closely with stakeholders and partners, to implement this plan, Sport Ireland continues to support innovative, inclusive, and collaborative programmes, which will address the challenges posed by demographic, social and economic changes.	Achieved
2. Promote the Value of Sport to include greater population awareness of the benefits of participation in sport through active and social participation, including volunteering. <i>Relevant NSP Action: Action 27</i>	- Sport Ireland has developed an array of communications campaigns across the strategic cycle to target specific population groups. Most recently in November 2022, Sport Ireland launched "It's My Time", a campaign to encourage women over 40 to be more active. In September, Sport Ireland launched "Changing the Game" campaign to communicate and encourage the "sport for all ethos". Of note in 2021, was the "Let's Get Back" campaign. Campaigns such as "HER Outdoors" encourage women and girls to discover and experience the outdoors activities and campaigns such as the annual "European Week of Sport" promotes the benefits and encourages people to take part in some sporting activity. - Sport Ireland continues to utilise various funding streams to foster social participation through the development of strong community-based organisations (e.g., dormant account investment, women in sport project funding, core investment specific to the provision of Social Inclusion and Community Sports Development Officers in all LSPs etc.) - While the National Volunteer Policy has not yet been delivered, it is currently in the final stages of development, with the relevant resources and supports forming part of the implementation plan. It is expected that this will be launched in early 2023.	Substantially Achieved

PARTICIPATION CONTD.

Strategic Objectives	Outcomes	Status
3. Build on existing proven structures whilst also seeking new and innovative approaches to increasing sport and physical activity and reducing inactivity. <i>Relevant NSP Action(s):</i> Action 46, 48	• Sport Ireland has provided investment of €1m in 2020 and 2021 via dormant account funding for Social Inclusion which has funded more than 25 innovation projects across the sector. • There is continued development and investment in Community Sports Hubs using learnings from two successive evaluations to refine the concept. 10 community sports hubs have been created in the past year, additional to 34 existing. • Sport Ireland continues to roll-out innovative programmes to encourage participation following the successful model of testing appetite via pilot studies, evaluating the impact and refining the model (e.g., Urban outdoor adventure initiatives, Active Cities, Start to Sustain, Community coaching programmes etc.) • Sport Ireland launched its Outdoors Policy in September 2020 and has been one of the leading agencies in the development of the National Outdoors Recreation Strategy that was launched in November 2022. These documents create opportunities for more people to participate in outdoor recreational sporting activities in a sustainable and responsible way.	Achieved
4. Greater access to participation opportunities, focusing on reducing inequalities. <i>Relevant NSP Action(s):</i> Action 32	• The baseline gender-gradient gap reported in 2017 was 4.9%, with the 2018-2022 strategic cycle targeting a reduction in the active sport participation gradient between men and women to 2.5%. • The 2022 ISM Mid-Year Report highlights that the gender gradient is still present and despite a reduction to 3% in Q1, it has increased again to 5% in Q2, with the figure likely being impacted by the staggered return to different types of sports by males and females during 2022. • While Sport Ireland has worked on providing greater access to participation opportunities via implementation of the Participation Plan, the 2022 ISM Mid-Year Report also highlights that sedentarism (i.e., those who do not take part in sport or recreational walking) has continued to increase as the sector exits the pandemic, growing by one percentage point, to 21%, in 2022.	Partially Achieved

PERFORMANCE –

PLAYING AND COMPETING AT A LEVEL APPROPRIATE TO ABILITY UNDERPINNED BY A COMMUNITY-BASED CLUB NETWORK

Strategic Objectives	Outcomes	Status
5. Build the performance pillar of Irish sport which is vital to active and competitive sportspeople <i>Relevant NSP Action(s):</i> Action 27, 28, 29, 31, 33 47	• Sport Ireland set ambitions to increase 1) NGB membership numbers, 2) social participation (from 45% to 48%), and 3) guidance, education and supports to deliver on this objective within the strategic period. • Despite the challenges of Covid-19, Sport Ireland reports that registered membership across the lifecycle of the strategy grew steadily from levels of 981k reported in 2017 to now over 1million in 2022. • Additionally, the 2022 ISM Mid-Year Report indicates that social participation appears to be stabilising at 34%, down from 47% in 2019. However, it is possible that the current cost-of-living crisis could further negatively impact club membership rates, especially gym memberships. • Sport Ireland's Anti-Doping and Ethics Unit and its Organisational Development & Change Unit, continues to provide support, education, and guidance specific to their respective work areas.	Achieved

PERFORMANCE CONTD.

Strategic Objectives	Outcomes	Status
6. Expanding the group of highly effective NGBs to 40 <i>Relevant NSP Action(s): Action 47</i>	64 NGBs and/or Other Funded Bodies are compliant with the Governance Code for Sport. The introduction of the Code is influencing positive change and improved governance standards. - Additionally, the average percentage of women on the Boards of NGBs has increased by 12% from 24% in 2019 to 36% in 2022. 50% of NGBs have also obtained or exceed the minimum gender on Boards target of 40%. - A core function of all NGBs is the delivery of the Performance Pillar of sport. Opportunities in developing the participation and performance pillars have grown in recent years with access to additional funding such as Women in Sport, Dormant Accounts and Healthy Ireland. - The majority of recognised NGBs will now have well developed participation, inclusion, diversity and safeguarding elements and opportunities within their respective sports which is a development that has been strengthened substantially during the 2018-2022 strategic cycle. - In addition, 19 of Sport Ireland recognised NGBs are part of the Sport Ireland High Performance Programme, indicating an ability to perform at a higher level both on and off the field of play. - Despite the challenges of finding new ways to work and to play their sport, NGBs responded well to the Covid-19 crisis, utilising the resilience funding made available to successfully manage their own business operations and to provide support to their membership base. They continue to adjust finances and operations in response to the current set of external challenges.	Achieved
7. Identify priority sports that are more likely to have lasting benefits over the life course to receive greater investment over the strategy period <i>Relevant NSP Action(s): Action 5, 20, 21</i>	- Sport Ireland has delivered concentrated investment of the priority sports identified in the NSP with combined core funding to Athletics, Swimming & Cycling increasing from €2m in 2018 to €2.5m in 2022. - In addition, annual funding under both Dormant Accounts & Healthy Ireland has been ring fenced specifically to deliver the 'Get Ireland Running/Swimming/Cycling' element of the National Sports Plan. - Combined registered membership numbers of Athletics, Swimming & Cycling have grown from levels of 100k in 2017 to 103k in 2022.	Achieved
8. Develop Sport Ireland as the lead agency for sports education in Ireland <i>Relevant NSP Action(s): Action 30</i>	- Sport Ireland Coaching has established Coaching Development Programmes in 60 NGBs, providing support in the development, evaluating and revisions to NGB coaching programmes. - The Sport Ireland Coaching Plan was launched in December 2021. Implementation of the plan is being rolled-out and continues to be monitored. - Sport Ireland's Coach Developer Programme received QQI validation in January 2022 with work continuing on agreeing additional courses for alignment and accreditation.	Substantially Achieved

HIGH PERFORMANCE –

REACHING IRELAND'S POTENTIAL AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

Strategic Objectives	Outcomes	Status
9. More success and medals during the Olympic and Paralympic Cycle underpinned by a new investment framework for High Performance Sport <i>Relevant NSP Action(s): Action 44, 49, 50</i>	- Team Ireland delivered four medals from 20 finalists in the Olympic Games and seven medals from 27 finalists in the Paralympic Games in Tokyo 2021. 244 medals were achieved in the Tokyo Olympic/Paralympic Cycle from 2017-2021. Although short of target (265), the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in the cancellation of the international competition calendar in 2020. - The implementation of Sport Irelands High Performance Strategy 2021-2032 continues to inform the strategic direction in respect of high performance sport.	Achieved
10. A world class environment at the Sport Ireland Campus <i>Relevant NSP Action(s): Action 25, 26, 53</i>	- Sport Ireland delivered on Phase 2 of the National Indoor Arena and will expect to provide a National Velodrome (approved in Q4 2021 and planning lodged in Q3 2022), athlete accommodation and new office facilities for the sector over the next strategic cycle. - A revised and updated vision for the Campus Masterplan was launched in November 2022, setting out an ambitious development programme over the next 20 years. - Combined with this revised and updated Masterplan that includes a new office quarter and 190 short-term and long-term athlete accommodation rooms, Sport Ireland will be well placed to meet the needs of NGB's and athletes during the next strategic cycle.	Partially Achieved
11. Building and maintaining a strong partnership approach between all key stakeholders in High Performance sport <i>Relevant NSP Action(s): Action 24</i>	- Sport Ireland continues to frequently engage with the performance leadership of NGBs. - It also attended several major team and individual sport events throughout the strategic cycle, providing an opportunity to deepen its relationships with NGBs and understand the competition environment at the highest end of the sport. - The annual High Performance Conference (HPX) facilitates the sharing of best practice and community engagement. Additionally, in 2022 a Forum for High Performance Committee Chairs, PDs and CEOs was held as part of the Governance Gov-Enhance Programme.	Achieved
12. Sport Ireland Institute will lead a system characterised by high standards in performance, leadership, coaching and services	- Higher standards in performance and leadership are reflected via implementation of the Sport Ireland Institute Strategy and delivery of programmes such as: - Pursuit of Excellence Programme (PEP) - for HP coaches: Sparking Performance programme - for Performance Directors and the newly added Radiate Programme for CEOs of HP Sports, added to the Capability & Expertise Strategy in 2022. - In consultation with the HP Unit, the inclusion of the "athlete voice" in decision making is at advanced stages via the introduction of an Athlete Leadership Group. - In response to the increased service support demands from the HP sector, over the strategic cycle, Sport Ireland provided increases to the Institute budget and service provider contracts.	Achieved

GOVERNANCE –

DRIVE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A HIGHLY EFFECTIVE SPORTS SECTOR THAT WILL HAVE AN IMPACT THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

Strategic Objectives	Outcomes	Status
13. Support Sport Ireland funded bodies in achieving uniformly high standards in the area of Corporate Governance <i>Relevant NSP Action(s):</i> Action 31, 47, 33	64 NGBs and/or Other Funded Bodies and 28 LSPs (92 in total) are compliant with the Governance Code for Sport. And while not all organisations were compliant by the end of 2021, the sector has embraced and engaged with the journey of implementing good governance. The introduction of the Code is influencing positive change and improved governance standards, and all organisations now have a framework of recommended practices to help navigate governance challenges that may arise. - Extensive training and supports have been provided to build capacity in the sector through programmes and services delivered by the Organisational Development and Change unit including Gov-Enhance, Mentoring, Wellbeing, Leadership Development and Management Development. The above are complemented by an array of sector-wide skills-based training programmes, advisory services, accredited training, and role-specific networks. - The development of a sport sector workforce strategy is not referenced in the immediate priorities of the NSP Sport Action Plan 2021-23. Sport Ireland will look to incorporate this into the 2023-2027 strategic objectives.	Substantially Achieved
14. Continue to operate Anti-Doping and Ethics functions to the very highest international standards in testing, education, and research <i>Relevant NSP Action(s):</i> Action 41	- Sport Ireland's annual ISO audit of the Anti-doping and ethics programme took place in October 2022 and re-certification of compliance with ISO standards was achieved. - The Terms of Reference of the Anti-Doping Committee have been strengthened and the current position is for the Anti-Doping function to remain within Sport Ireland. - The Anti-Doping and Ethics Unit continues to provide feedback at an international level on their areas of expertise. The unit is also a partner on number international projects e.g., Council of Europe Expert Child Safeguarding in Sport project, Erasmus TRUST, Erasmus + RESPECT and Erasmus + NADGO projects. Continuous feedback is given on policies and documents including WADA Governance and International Conventions.	Achieved
15. Expand the Research & Evaluation Programmes as a vital resource in the progressive development of sport and physical activity <i>Relevant NSP Action(s):</i> Action 35, 36	- Sport Ireland has increased the quality, diversity and promotion of its research., establishing its first Research Grant Scheme to support the sector in delivering on research needs in 2021. - Sport Ireland also published its 2021-2027 Research Strategy in December 2021, marking a commitment to support a culture of curiosity and progress underpinned by robust research across the sector. - Sport Ireland has also finalised evaluation frameworks for the WIS Policy, Outdoors Policy and Participation Plan.	Achieved
16. Sport Ireland will invest in its own organisational development and the development of its staff to ensure that all its activities are carried out to the highest standards	- Sport Ireland continues to invest significantly in the ongoing, continual professional development of its workforce to ensure its organisational effectiveness. While the overreliance on the use of agency workers and/or contractors to deliver on its mission and purpose remains an ongoing concern, progress has been made regarding the submission of a business case in support of the regularisation of this issue. - The Executive continues to work with the Board to implement and monitor governance practices to maintain Sport Ireland's on-going compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.	Partially Achieved

APPENDIX 5

2023-2027 HIGH LEVEL STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The following tables detail Sport Ireland's **Core Focus Areas** for the period 2023-27. Under each of the focus areas, a number of high-level **Strategic Objectives** linked to **key enablers** are proposed as well as the intended outcomes and associated **Key Performance Indicators** (KPIs). These objectives identify where Sport Ireland will focus its work and efforts over the next five-year period. Sport Ireland will also develop accompanying annual work plans to support the achievement of the strategic objectives as set out in this Strategy.

CORE FOCUS AREA 1: Sport development services - delivering a thriving sport sector that provides opportunities for participation and performance....		
KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	OUTCOMES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
 STRUCTURES, PROGRAMMES AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT 		
1. Building and strengthening the "participation/recreational sport" element of the sports development framework by supporting, developing and expanding the group of highly effective LSPs/others to support delivery of quality, depth, and impact of their work.	Increased number of people participating in committed and regular sport and physical activity. Local sport plans developed for each local authority (31 in total). A strengthened outdoor recreation sector along with consistent delivery of key messages of responsible behaviour, environmental sustainability, education, and training.	1.1 Increase in % of population engaging in sport and physical activity (and reduction in the level of sedentarism) via implementation of the National Physical Activity Plan, Participation Plan, local sport plans and via specific support and increased investment in targeted under-represented groups. 1.2 Development, investment and implementation of policy, programmes and initiatives to foster general and social participation in sport and encouraging the development of strong community-based organisations. 1.3 Implementation of the actions in the Government's National Outdoor Recreation "Embracing Ireland's Outdoors" as well as the goals within the Sport Ireland policy on sport and physical activity in the outdoors leading to increases in the number of people participating in outdoor recreational sporting activities.
2. Building and strengthening of the "committed/organised sport" element of the sports development framework by supporting, developing, and expanding the group of highly effective NGBs/Core Partners focusing on those offering lasting benefits over the life course.	An acknowledged, strong NGB sector which delivers National Sports Policy and wider Government objectives and targets. More people participating on a regular basis in high-quality, well-organised sport.	2.1 Increase NGB membership, participation and volunteer levels across the strategic period via effective operational delivery, of involvement opportunities, recruitment, retention and development of participants, volunteers, coaches and officials. 2.2 Development, investment and implementation of programmes and initiatives to foster wider participation (e.g., priority sport NGBs) and address targets.
3. Ensure that more Irish athletes and teams systematically and fairly achieve world-class results at the highest level of international competition.	Major medals are achieved across a breadth of sports annually - delivered at junior/senior level, by male/female athletes. The talent pipeline for high performance sport is strong and stable; future performers are known and supported.	3.1 Delivery and implementation of the 2021-2032 Sport Ireland High Performance Strategy across all seven core pillars. 3.2 The medal targets of the Sport Ireland High Performance Strategy are achieved year on year, and cycle to cycle (Olympic/Paralympic quadrennial). 3.3 Sport Ireland Institute strategy objectives delivered and annual action plan implemented with monitoring reports approved by Sport Ireland's High Performance Committee

	The Sport Ireland Institute is an essential partner with high performance sports and athletes, in achieving sustained and repeatable podium success on the world stage.	3.4 Sport Ireland Institute Paris 2024 deliverables achieved as per Olympic Federation of Ireland and Paralympics Ireland MOUs, with agreement on further MOUs for 2025-2028 LA Games cycle.
4. Development and operation of a Campus that becomes the heartbeat of Irish sport where performance, participation, and recreational sport live side by side providing an inspirational location for the sporting community.	Progression of the Campus Masterplan from a vision and outline framework to an agreed masterplan and implementation of Campus strategic and operational plans to meet the needs of high performance and recreational users. The Sport Ireland Campus is 'home' to high performance athletes and teams that represent Ireland on the world stage.	4.1 Sporting excellence - create an athlete-focused campus to support high performance sport in Ireland via delivering on the priorities in the Masterplan of (i) the National Velodrome and Badminton Centre; (ii) NGB office accommodation and (iii) athlete accommodation. 4.2 Implementation of the actions aligned to the core strategic focus areas of the Sport Ireland Facilities DAC's Campus Plans. 4.3 Creation of a vibrant and active core to the Campus with memorable and distinctive spaces encouraging healthy living, promoting mental well-being, and providing accessible and recreational facilities leading to community participation in addition to high performance.
 VOLUNTEER AND PROFESSIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT		
5. Volunteer development – To invest in supporting the sport sector to improve the volunteer experience, to make it more enjoyable and meaningful. Support the building of a more diverse volunteer base.	Increased resources and training/development available to NGBs/LSPs/ other funded bodies to support volunteer management. Increased numbers (with a focus on under-represented groups), more diverse and improved quality of volunteering in sport.	5.1 Development and implementation of actions agreed within the national volunteering policy including the development of resources for NGBs and LSPs to support volunteering. 5.2 Increase in volunteering levels and quality of volunteering experience across the sport sector.
6. To support the sport sector to improve their capability by providing support, interventions and organisational development programmes.	Sport sector bodies increase internal capability enabling improved delivery of core responsibilities. Professional development needs of specific sport sector employees (linked to roles/levels) are addressed. Specific organisations have addressed (started to address) culture, organisational design, team effectiveness challenges etc.	6.1 Development and delivery of a sport sector workforce strategy as identified in Action 33 of National Sports Policy. 6.2 Improved sport sector organisational capability and effectiveness as measured by evaluation of organisational capability building and organisational development services.
7. Design, facilitate and evaluate a range of fit-for-purpose, role-specific networks to build collaboration and capability within and between funded organisations in the sport sector and with other sectors.	Specific ranges and types of sport sector employees are effectively supported to collaborate, share learning and further develop with peers, relevant to their specific role in the organisation.	7.1 Provision of informal peer to peer learning opportunities, combined with formal learning and development initiatives to support collaboration and knowledge sharing amongst NGBs, LSPs and Core Partners.

 COACHING AND OFFICIATING		
8. Coach Development – Lead in the support, training and development for the sport coaching system, raising the standard and recognition of coaching in Ireland.	Improved quality of coach development support with completion of NGB coaching pathways from entry level to high performance.	8.1 Delivery of the 32 actions within the Sport Ireland Coaching Plan. 8.2 In partnership with NGBs continue to increase the alignment and accreditation of coaching qualifications in line with the National Framework of Qualifications via roll-out of NGB coaching plans and alignment of coaching pathways from participation to high performance. 8.3 Coach development resourcing and inputs consistent coherent and complementary across the full range of Sport Ireland units and partner programmes underpinned by appropriate coaching investment.
9. Extend the role of Sport Ireland Coaching to include support for and the further development of officiating.	Technical officials' development work area allocated within the Sport Ireland structure.	9.1 Development and delivery of Technical Officials development plan in partnership with NGBs and LSPs. 9.2 Increased numbers of technical officials across the sport sector.
 INNOVATION AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION		
10. Drive a culture of innovation, openness to learning, embracing of digital technologies internally and across the sport sector	Sport Ireland and sport sector adoption of innovative practice, design thinking and digital technology to develop sport and improve communication.	10.1 Innovation Plan produced and implemented. 10.2 Piloting of new innovative programmes, incorporating the national rollout of successful pilot programmes following evaluation.
11. Sport Ireland will further embrace the use of digital technology and prioritise the digitisation of services, processes and operations with a view to improving effectiveness and efficiency for the sport sector.	Development of a strengthened digital and technological approach in Sport Ireland – enabling new management/ work practices, creating a network-based organisation and driving a culture of digital/ technology innovation and sharing, both internally and across the sport sector.	11.1 Development of a Digital Technology focused team/unit with the Sport Ireland structure. 11.2 Key improvements to be measured via the development/implementation and embedding of digital and technology systems such as, HR information system, unit databases, learning management systems, grants management system etc. 11.3 Development and promotion of a publicly accessible National Geodatabase of Recreation Amenities, which will include the mapping of indoor and outdoor sports facilities.
 DELIVERY OF MAJOR EVENTS		
12. To attract and run more high-profile sporting events in Ireland and to showcase the Campus via its hosting of major events.	For the sport sector to maximise on the opportunities and benefits of attracting and hosting more national and international events.	12.1 To support NGBs in coordinating a schedule/ calendar attracting and delivering high profile international sport events. 12.2 Sport Ireland Campus hosting two high-profile events per annum with event management and quality of delivery implemented to the highest standards, attracting domestic and international acclaim with an equitable split between male and female events.

CORE FOCUS AREA 2:

Excellent leadership and governance - optimising capability and capacity



KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

OUTCOMES

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



LEADERSHIP AND RESOURCES

13. The Sport Ireland Strategy 2023-2027 is adopted, endorsed, and implemented. Future strategic and policy documents are aligned to this overarching strategy.	Progress is made on all actions set out in the Strategy Implementation Plan.	13.1 The 28 objectives in the Sport Ireland Strategy are delivered on and there is alignment between this and future key policy/strategy documents. 13.2 National Sports Policy actions, targets and KPIs delivered within designated timeframes.
14. Deliver a comprehensive Sport Ireland organisational design/ redesign process (including operating model, governance, Board & Sub-committees, staff numbers, skills, systems, structure, space etc.)	Sport Ireland is effectively structured, governed and resourced to meet and deliver on its statutory remit, policy directives and current strategy.	14.1 Organisational review completed with actions agreed and annual implementation process completed.
15. Develop a co-created learning and development-based People and Culture Framework to actively drive achievement of Sport Ireland Strategy.	Sport Ireland has capability and capacity to deliver on National Sports Policy and Sport Ireland Strategy commitments based on a shared purpose, high-trust workplace culture, lived values, clear direction, whole staff engagement and accountability.	15.1 Delivery of a People and Culture Framework. 15.2 Key improvements to be measured via culture metrics, turnover rate; succession planning implementation, employee satisfaction levels, training and professional development opportunity targets.



GOOD GOVERNANCE

16. Sport Ireland and its subsidiary demonstrate and promote high standards of governance in line with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.	Sport Ireland and its subsidiary has established transparent financial, governance and reporting processes and mechanisms in place demonstrating a high level of compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.	16.1 Sport Ireland and Sport Ireland Facilities DAC plans, audited accounts and annual reports demonstrate compliance with Public Sector Duty and the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, operating to best practice financial governance, risk management, public spending code and public sector procurement guidelines. 16.2 Delivery of increased funding to sport on a multi-annual basis to provide greater certainty and securing of appropriate levels of capital funding to enable the delivery of major capital projects/Campus Masterplan and asset renewal.
---	---	---

17. The sport sector has the guidance, support, and materials necessary to be well governed and has embedded the recommended practices of the Governance Code for Sport.	The sport sector is well governed, regularly displaying evidence of good governance in practice.	17.1 Ongoing compliance and embedding of the principles and recommended practices within the Governance Code for Sport, demonstrating effective governance that cascades below the national level, delivering on Government and Sport Ireland objectives and expectations. 17.2 Resources, training, education and guidance available to support the embedding of good governance.
--	--	---



COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING

18. Broaden understanding of Sport Ireland's structure, functions, mission and vision, enhancing internal/external communication and the reputation of Sport Ireland.	Greater understanding of Sport Ireland and how it operates. Improved communication with the specific intent to deepen and extend its already strong ties with partners and stakeholders.	18.1 Delivery of communications and marketing framework actions. 18.2 Promotion and publication of communications and materials, relevant to the sport sector and public on the Sport Ireland website/via its social media channels and measurement of engagement metrics (e.g., page impressions, social media statistics.)
19. Promote the value of sport, including benefits of active and social participation.	Greater awareness of what sport is and the benefits of sport and physical activity. An improved understanding of the minimum physical activity levels.	19.1 Implementation of annual communications campaign plan promoting active and social participation and focusing on promoting the adoption of physical literacy in sport and encouraging key target groups as a priority. 19.2 Irish Sports Monitor tracking of people's understanding of what sport is and the benefits of sport and physical activity.
20. Improve NGB, LSP and other partners communication and marketing capacity and skills.	Assist sport sector partners to deliver more effective communication - encouraging active cross-NGB/LSP collaboration to accelerate progress in this area.	20.1 Delivery of a quantifiable network of communication and marketing professionals across the sport sector with impact of the networks work measured via agreed KPIs (e.g., clarity of messaging, leveraging appropriate media strategies to connect with target groups, connectivity between campaigns, on the ground activation etc.).



RESEARCH, INSIGHTS, AND EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

21. Lead the generation and mobilisation of knowledge and insights via a progressive and powerful research agenda.	Research based evidence and insight underpins development of, and ongoing support for, sports policy, strategy, investments, and programmes.	21.1 The 26 actions of the Sport Ireland Research strategy are delivered.
22. Optimise effectiveness of monitoring, evaluation, and research function to embed improved 'on the ground' evaluation processes.	Embedding of evaluation capability and capacity of the sport sector, leading to improved understanding of what works, for whom and under what conditions - to guide development of sport in Ireland.	22.1 Improved evaluation capacity and capability across the sport sector leading to increased use of evaluation processes/frameworks with programme design and investment being responsive to evaluation findings.

CORE FOCUS AREA 3:
Social Responsibility – acting in the best interests of the sport sector and wider society



KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	OUTCOMES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
 INTEGRITY AND ETHICAL SPORT		
23. Sport Ireland will promote integrity as the foundation upon which sport is built, prioritising ways to enhance integrity across the sport development framework.	A sport sector that delivers with integrity, demonstrating conduct that is honest and ethical, providing safe, fair and inclusive environments and plays by the rules.	23.1 Development of an integrity policy including resources and support for the implementation of actions identified in the policy across the sport sector. 23.2 Development and circulation of a national Code of Conduct template across Irish sport.
24. Sport Ireland will support an “athlete first” approach to sport, where the objective is to provide a safe environment for participants and promote a drug free sport ethos.	An athlete-centred sport environment and a sport sector that demonstrates a high level of integrity, player welfare is at the centre of sport development services.	24.1 Continued delivery of the Anti-Doping programme in line with International Standards and best practices (World Anti-Doping Code) and the continued delivery of Child Safeguarding programmes aligned to legislation and best practices.
 EQUALITY, EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION		
25. A diverse sport sector that promotes inclusion and is pro-active in providing opportunities for lifelong participation for everyone.	More people from diverse communities participating and engaging in lifelong sport and physical activity and reaching their full potential.	25.1 Implementation of the Sport Ireland Diversity and Inclusion Policy including focused investment to address the social gradients (i.e. age, disability, ethnicity and by social group) that exist in sports participation. 25.2 Delivery of Sport Ireland’s Policy on Participation in Sport by People with Disabilities including focused leadership (i.e. Sport Ireland Disability Lead) and investment to address the NSP targets for increased participation among those with a long-term illness or disability (i.e. 40% by YE2027). 25.3 Increase the % of participation in sport and in club membership from under-represented groups as reported via the Irish Sports Monitor.
26. Deliver Women in Sport Policy to ensure fair and equitable practices and gender balance in sport.	Increased parity in gender balance for representation, participation, and leadership roles in sport.	26.1 Delivery of Women in Sport Policy actions and objectives with focused investment in NGB & LSP programmes and projects to address the disparity in gender balance that exists. (e.g., Min. of 40% gender balance on the Board of funded organisations by YE2023 and min. of 50% by YE2027; Reduction in the active sport participation gradient between men and women to 2.5% by YE2027.)
 SUSTAINABILITY		
27. Improve Sport Ireland’s sustainability impact and that of the wider sport sector.	Improved awareness and promotion of innovative solutions to enhance the environmental and sustainability performance of the sport sector.	27.1 Sport Ireland will work with core partners to help fully consider the social and sustainability responsibilities of sport and proactively promote and respond to green agenda issues in particular climate change, carbon usage and biodiversity. 27.2 Sport Ireland will sign up to the United Nations Sports for Climate Action Initiative.

28. Delivery of Sport Ireland Campus with strong sustainability credentials.	Develop a sustainable campus that delivers on Sport Ireland's sustainability development goals, responsibilities, and climate action targets.	28.1 To deliver a strong campus wide sustainability framework that incorporates meeting the objectives and targets set down in our climate action roadmap and the public sector climate action mandate (51% reduction in emissions and a 50% improvement in energy efficiency).
--	---	---

PUBLIC SECTOR DUTY

Section 42(2) (a) of the IHREC Act 2014 requires an organisation to set out in its strategic plan "an assessment of the human rights and equality issues it believes to be relevant to the functions and purpose of the body and the policies, plans and actions in place or proposed to be put in place to address those issues".

In order to be able to meet this requirement, it is recommended that organisations integrate their assessment of their ongoing obligations under the Duty and any implementation planning arising from that assessment, into their strategic planning process, which Sport Ireland intends to do. Given the ongoing requirement in the 2014 Act to report on "developments and achievements" in realising the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, Sport Ireland will build in a review mechanism to assess progress against stated actions.







SPÓRT ÉIREANN
SPORT IRELAND