



# MAYO

SPORTS PARTNERSHIP  
ANNUAL REPORT

# 2023

Mayo Sports Partnership



Comhpháirtíocht Spóirt Mhaigh Eo

— SPORT IRELAND —



[www.mayo.ie/sportpartnership](http://www.mayo.ie/sportpartnership)



Comhairle Contae Mhaigh Eo  
Mayo County Council







**MAYO** SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

**2023**  
**2023**

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# FOREWORD

We are delighted to introduce the 17th Mayo Sports Partnership annual report utilising Sport Irelands evaluation framework. It highlights the significant contribution that Mayo Sports Partnership is making to advance the goals set out in the Department’s National Sports Policy 2018-2027 and also of our own Strategic Plan “More People Enjoying More Sports”.

Mayo Sports Partnership has continued to help people get active and reap the benefits of being active by removing barriers to participation in sport and physical activity. The 2023 Mayo Sports Partnership Annual Report highlights the innovative, inclusive and progressive programmes and initiatives MSP has delivered to ensure that everyone in our society has the opportunity to be physically active. The case studies section of this Annual Report provide a small glimpse at the bespoke programmes on offer across the county.

With the continued support of Dormant Accounts, HSE Section 39 and Healthy Ireland funding, MSP has once again been able to increase resources for harder to reach communities; removing barriers to participation and continuing to showcase the positive impact that sport can have on people’s lives. A successful application to Sport Ireland for the pilot Physical Activity for Health project brought funding, through HSE / Slaintecare, towards a full time officer along with programme support. This support has allowed us to reach out to people who have chronic illness engaging them to get more physically active.

During 2023 MSP core staff and externally contracted hub co-ordinators continued to deliver a high quality menu of activities that was especially inclusive to those hard to reach groups ie People with a Disability, New Communities, Traveller Community, Disadvantaged Youth, Teenage Girls & Women etc. Our staff continue to be highly motivated and innovative especially in utilisation of modern technology that appeals to younger populations.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the MSP staff, MSP committee, partners, agencies and volunteers who continue to contribute to the success of Mayo Sports Partnership. All have been vital to the successful delivery of programmes that make sport and physical activity accessible to all at a local community level. On behalf of the committee & staff we would like to thank Sport Ireland CEO Dr Una May and all the staff of Sport Ireland for their unwavering support.

Finally we thank CEO Mayo County Council Kevin Kelly & Director of Services Joanne Grehan for their continued support for the Partnership in 2023



*Cllr Michael Loftus*  
**CHAIRMAN**  
Mayo Sports Partnership



*Charlie Lambert*  
**HEAD**  
Mayo Sports Partnership



## Key Findings



## I.1 Key Findings

This report is the 17th annual report of MSP using the Sport Ireland evaluation system.

### Background, Resources and Funding

- €967,598 was invested in MSP in 2023. This figure includes benefit-in-kind support of €232,500 from partners
- Funding from Sport Ireland accounts for 47% of the total MSP funding in 2023, 13% from Dormant Accounts, 11% locally leveraged funding with the remaining 29% coming from other sources
- 15 people served on the MSP committee in 2023 with 40% female members
- In 2023, 7 people worked full-time on behalf of MSP and 4 part time Sports Hub co ordinators
- 3 were 100% funded by Sport Ireland with the other 4 full time staff partly supported

### Achievements of Mayo Sports Partnership in 2023

#### Development of Sports Infrastructure in Mayo

- In 2023, MSP provided funding supports of €121,105 to 140 clubs and community groups throughout the county.
- 55 groups have been supported in the delivery of their activities
- 15 clubs/communities were helped in developing their organisational, policy or management structures;
- MSP planned and delivered 30 training and education courses, workshops and online webinars
- 1944 people attended these courses

#### Delivering Sport Ireland Programmes Code of Ethics – Safeguarding 1, 2 & 3

- 295 participants completed 18 Code of Ethics Basic Awareness – Safeguarding 1 courses
- 28 participants completed 2 Club Children's Officer – Safeguarding 2 courses
- 22 participants completed 2 Designated Liaison Person – Safeguarding 3 courses

#### Local Programme Delivery

- 17,454 people participated in 155 locally delivered participation programmes, tasterdays, events.
- 5334 participated in 7 Physical Activity Interventions ie Daily Mile, Operation Transformation, Marathon Kids, Playground Markings etc
- 3615 female participants took part in 19 local Women in Sport programmes
- Sports Disability Inclusion Programme – 1145 participants

#### Building and Sustaining Partnerships

- In 2023 MSP was involved in 43 different policy actions

#### Information Provision

24,141 individuals provided with general or specific sport-related information through MSP website, online newsletter, social media or text promotion

Mayo Sports Partnership



Comhpháirtíocht Spóirt Mhaigh Eo

2023  
MAYO SPORTS  
PARTNERSHIP



€967,598  
INVESTED IN 2023

17,454  
participants

155  
LOCALLY  
DELIVERED  
PROGRAMMES

5,334



PARTICIPATED IN 7 PHYSICAL  
ACTIVITY INTERVENTIONS

ie. Daily Mile, Operation Transformation, Marathon Kids, Playground Markings etc.

SPORTS  
DISABILITY  
Inclusion  
Programme



1,145  
participants

1,944  
Volunteers



attended 30  
Training &  
Education  
Workshops



24,141

individuals  
provided with information through  
MSP WEBSITE,  
online newsletter,  
social media or  
text promotion



SAFE  
GUARDING  
1, 2 & 3  
345 Volunteers  
trained in 22  
Courses

3,615  
FEMALE  
participants  
took part in

19  
Local women in sport  
PROGRAMMES



FUNDING  
SUPPORTS

MSP provided funding  
supports of €121,105 to  
140 clubs and community  
groups throughout the  
county



# 2

## Background, Funding and Resources

### 2.1 Background to MSP

On the 25th July 2018 the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport launched the 2018-2027 National Sports Policy. The National Sports Policy aims to increase sports participation in Ireland from 43% to 50% by 2027, the equivalent of 1% per year. To achieve this the policy highlights the need to tackle participation gradients by targeting groups in our society that participate significantly less than the overall average. These include people with disabilities, people from lower socio-economic backgrounds, women and girls and ethnic minority groups, such as the Traveller community. The National Sports Policy recognises the key role played by Mayo Sports Partnership in sports participation and how it can assist in the delivery of the participation actions set out in this Policy.

“The Sports Partnership network plays a vital role and has been tasked, in particular, with increasing participation levels in sport and physical activity, especially among those sectors of society that are currently underrepresented in sport. Their capacity to remove barriers and ensure that opportunities for participation in sport are progressive, innovative and fully inclusive at a local level is a unique and valuable strength.” – National Sports Policy 2018-2027

The National Sports Policy has a total of 57 actions, 26 of which relate to sports participation. Fundamental to delivering on the Participation Actions of the National Sports Policy is increasing the capacity of the sports sector to deliver, especially the Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs) and the smaller National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs). Thanks to an increase in government investment in 2023, Sport Ireland was in a position to increase capacity and capability of Mayo Sports Partnership and provide additional regional supports to the smaller NGB's. In 2023 Mayo Sports Partnership had 7 Mayo County Council contracted staff, namely:

- Coordinator / Head
- Administrator
- Sports Inclusion Disability Officer (SIDO)
- Community Sports Development Officer (CSDO).
- Club Development, Diversity and Outdoor Sport Development Officer
- Promotions, Awareness and Evaluation Officer
- Physical Activity for Health Officer

This report is the 17th annual report of Mayo Sports Partnership . It reflects the work of the Partnership for 2023. Information provided through the Sport Ireland reporting system is collated into a database tracking the depth and breadth of MSP initiatives. MSP activities from this database are highlighted as examples of good practice and are presented as case studies later in Section 4 of this report.

### 2.2 Project Funding Sources

#### CORE INVESTMENT

Sport Ireland supports Mayo Sports Partnership to co-ordinate and promote the development of sport at local level and increase levels of participation in sport and physical activity. Core investment in MSP has been increasing year on year, from €210,540 in 2014 to €421,409 in 2023.

This core investment supports the core work of MSP; including the delivery of national Programmes, Education & Training initiatives, Strategic Development, Community Sports Development Officer(CSDO), the Sports Inclusion Disability programme, Women in Sport programmes and general participation programmes.

Additionally in 2023, Sport Ireland allocated an additional €70,000 to employ 2 additional officers namely Club Development / Diversity Officer, Promotions Awareness and Evaluation Officer, to cater for the need for increased capacity at a local level to effectively support the delivery of the National Sports Policy. Also an additional €30,000 was allocated to MSP for the appointment of a grade 6 programme manager which is hoped to be appointed in 2024.

In 2023, 81% of the Sport Ireland Core Investment covered the core salaries and operating costs of MSP. With the support of local partners, especially Mayo County Council, this Sport Ireland investment provides the core resources and framework needed to develop sports participation at a local level. This core resource facilitates the implementation of programmes and initiatives, which are funded and supported through Sport Ireland Dormant Accounts but also locally through Mayo County Council, Healthy Ireland, HSE and other partner investments.

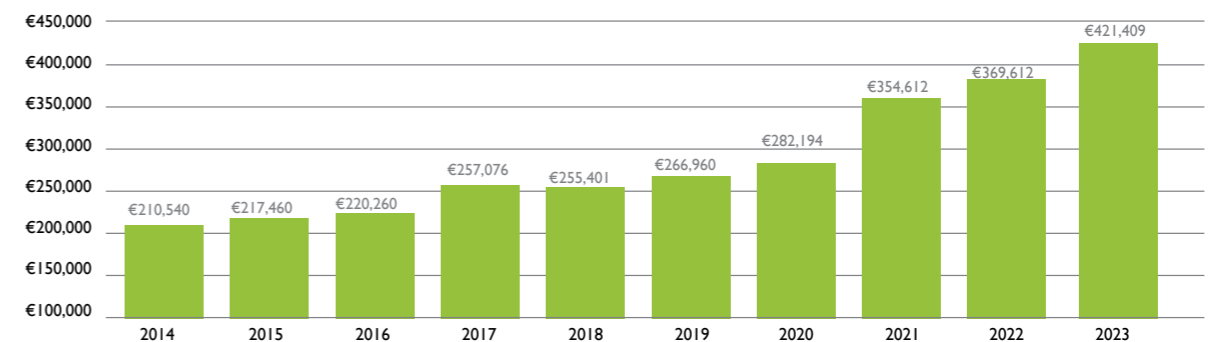


Figure A – Breakdown of MSP Core Investment 2014-2023



## DORMANT ACCOUNT INVESTMENT

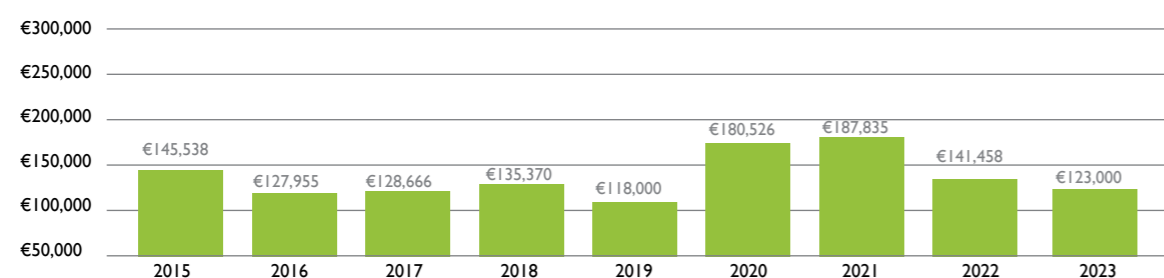
MSP's national funder Sport Ireland has worked with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport on developing a series of measures under the Dormant Accounts Action Plan since 2015. Under Dormant Accounts, MSP delivers on a range of sport and physical activity programmes under the following measures which align with the National Sports Policy and the National Physical Activity Plan (NPAP). While this funding has increased over the years it is expected that this stream will reduce in the future.

<b>Measure 1</b>	Community Sport and Physical Activity Hubs	<b>Measure 3</b>	Sports measures for Disadvantaged Communities to support NPAP
<b>Measure 2</b>	National Sport Education and Training Hub	<b>Measure 4</b>	Provision of Sports Equipment in Disadvantaged Areas

All projects funded by Sport Ireland through Dormant Accounts target:

1. The personal and social development of persons who are economically or socially disadvantaged;
2. The educational development of persons who are educationally disadvantaged;
3. Persons with a disability (within the meaning of the Equal Status Act 2000).

Dormant Account investment in MSP has been hugely significant in helping to deliver on a range of innovative projects at a local level. In 2023 Sport Ireland allocated MSP €123,000 through Dormant Account funding measures.



**Figure B** – Breakdown of MSP Dormant Accounts Fund investment 2015-2023

## 2023 ENERGY GRANT SCHEME FUNDING

In an additional response to the cost of living increases, Sport Ireland allocated funding for a round 2 Energy Costs Grant Scheme to the Local Sports Partnership network. €29,000 was allocated to MSP to allocate to community sports facilities which may not have received funding in round 1 as they were not under a governing body of sport. In total 6 groups / facilities were allocated varying levels of funding which was dependent on documentation submitted.

## HSE SEED FUNDING FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR HEALTH OFFICER

In May 2023, following a recruitment process by Mayo County Council, a pilot Physical Activity for Health Officer was appointed to Mayo Sports Partnership. The Physical Activity for Health Officer roles have been designed to bridge a gap that exists for those with a chronic condition who need more attention and care engaging in or returning to community based physical activity opportunities. In September 2023 following an application process the HSE through its Slaintecare programme allocated €20,000 towards programme funding for the new position.

## HSE GET ACTIVE & SOCIAL INCLUSION FUNDING

Mayo Sports Partnership applies annually for section 39 funding towards programmes that increase participation in the general population ie Walking, Cycling, Couch to 5K, Swimming etc as well as programmes that target those hard to reach groups such as disadvantaged children, new communities, travelling community and those not in education / employment. In total the HSE allocated €29,000 to these programmes in 2023.

## OTHER MSP FUNDING SOURCES

Funding from Sport Ireland (Core, Disability and Women in Sport) accounted for 44% of the total MSP funding in 2023. Additional funding was also secured for MSP by Sport Ireland for specific projects under the Dormant Accounts Scheme, Energy Grants and Physical Activity for Health to the value of 18% of overall funding. The remaining 38% was raised from local sources, including benefit in kind, HSE, Mayo County Council, Healthy Ireland, Department of Transport and event/course fees.

2023 Total €	€	%
Monetary Funding (Locally Leveraged)	110,689	11%
Benefit In Kind (Locally Sourced)	232,500	24%
Sport Ireland Core/Programme & Disability Grant	406,409	42%
Sport Ireland Women in Sport & HER Outdoors Grant	17,000	2%
Sport Ireland Energy Grant Scheme Funding	29,000	3%
HSE Funding (Physical Activity for Health, Get Active)	49,000	5%
Sport Ireland Dormant Accounts Funding	123,000	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>967,598</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 1** – Breakdown of Funding and Benefit in Kind Received by MSP in 2023

After funding from Sport Ireland, event / course fees, HSE grant aid, Mayo County Council support and Bike Week allocation were the next most significant sources of monetary funding with benefit in kind support mainly coming from Mayo County Council. Included in this benefit in kind from the local authority is €32,000 towards physical activity initiatives from the Healthy Ireland fund.

## Below are the top contributors of locally monetary sourced funding to MSP, excluding Sport Ireland.

West of Ireland Womens Mini Marathon	39%	Department of Transport (Bike Week)	5%
Course / Event Fees	36%	Other	2%
Mayo County Council	18%		

**Table 2** – Local Monetary Funding Providers to MSP in 2023

## Below are the contributors of locally sourced benefit in kind funding to MSP, excluding Sport Ireland.

Mayo County Council	51%	MSP Committee Members	2%
Healthy Ireland	14%	Sports Organisations	2%
Media (Western People & Local Radio)	5%	Mayo ATU	2%
Mayo North East Leader Partnership	4%	South West Mayo Development Company	1%
Local Support Services (Disability Groups, Family Resource Centres, Garda etc)	12%	Mayo Education Centre	1%
HSE	6%		

**Table 3** – The Local Benefit in Kind Providers to MSP in 2023

MSP continues to be successful in securing funding from local sources, 14% of total monetary funding has been contributed locally (including HSE €29,000). Benefit in Kind accounts for 24% of the total support for MSP in 2023.

The 2005 Fitzpatrick & Associates Review of the LSPs recommended that 50% of total support for MSP should be sourced locally. If we omit Dormant Account funding which has increased dramatically over the last few years, locally leveraged funding / in kind support amounts to 43% of total support. However if we include Dormant Account funds then that percentage slips back to 35%. This percentage decrease is largely due to the large increase in Sport Ireland funding provided to MSP through Dormant Account, Energy Grants plus additional pilot programmes such as the Physical Activity for Health Initiative.

MSP will continue to monitor this area to ensure the Partnership is strengthened and returns to meeting the recommendations of the 2005 Fitzpatrick & Associates Review.



## 2.3 MSP Management and Staff

### COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION

Following the 2019 local elections the current MSP committee was formed, 2024 is when the next change will take place. Cllr Michael Loftus chairs the committee who meet every two months and where sub committees are appointed for particular projects and tasks.

- A total of 15 people served on the MSP committee in 2023 40% of MSP committee members are female which is ahead of the Women in Sport Policy and National Sports Policy target which set a minimum female representation of 30% on the boards of funded bodies by 2027.
- Committee members bring specific skillsets to their work within MSP. This expertise is in the areas of finance and management, as well as public relations, governance and human resources. All of this helps to contribute to the effective running of MSP.

As with recent years, representatives from Mayo County Council, local agencies and the Sports Sector continue to be the three most active participants on MSP's committee.

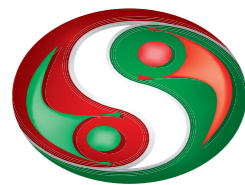
### MSP STAFF

MSP core staff members are funded by Sport Ireland while other part time personnel are funded through other sources. Along with the Co Ordinator / Head and Administrator, MSP employs a Community Sports Development Officer (CSDO), a Sports Inclusion Disability Officer (SIDO), Club Development/ Diversity / Outdoor Sport Development Officer, Promotions /Awareness Officer and most recently in 2023 a Physical Activity for Health Officer. MSP also contracted in 2023 on a part time basis two Community Sports Hub (Ballyhaunis & Ballinrobe) co ordinators plus Outdoor Hub co ordinators in Ballina & Castlebar with the aid of Dormant Account funding. Service level agreements are in place with partners such as Family Resource Centres in Ballinrobe & Ballyhaunis, Mayo North East Leader Partnership in Ballina and Canoeing Ireland in Castlebar.

MSP also contracted a further 25 tutors to deliver programmes, courses, and initiatives within the Partnerships structure.



Mayo Sports Partnership



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**Charlie Lambert**  
Head of Mayo Sports Partnership



**Tracy Cunnane**  
Ballyhaunis Sports Hub Co-ordinator



**Janette Slattery**  
Promotions, Awareness & Evaluation Officer



**Ray McNamara**  
Sports Inclusion Development Officer



**Deirdre Donnelly**  
Community Sports Development Officer



**Celena McCormack**  
Office Administrator



**Cathal Brady**  
Club & Diversity Development Officer



**Pat O'Brien**  
Ballina Community Hub Co-Ordinator



**Graham Clarke**  
Castlebar Outdoor Hub Co-Ordinator



**Brian Gibbons**  
Temporary Office Administrator



**Mark Smith**  
Ballinrobe Sports Hub Co-ordinator



**Edel O'Malley**  
Physical Activity for Health Officer



**3**  
**Achievements of MSP in 2023**



### 3.1 Introduction

MSP undertakes a wide range of actions with the aim of increasing sport and physical activity participation levels in their local communities. These actions are grouped within four outcome areas:

- Working to develop clubs, coaches and volunteers and supporting partnerships between local sports clubs, community based organisations and sector agencies
- Creating greater opportunities for access to training and education in relation to sports and physical activity provision
- Provision of targeted programmes, events and initiatives to increase physical activity and sport participation
- Providing information about sport and physical activity to create awareness and access.

### 3.2 Development of Local Sports Clubs & Communities

A key focus for MSP is that there is a sustainable level of development within the local sports structures. MSP works with clubs and groups to ensure that structures are in place to enable participation for all community members in a wide range of sport or physical activity options.

This sustainable environment is facilitated through supporting volunteers and coaches in opportunities to enhance their skills and improve the quality of sports participation in their communities.

#### FUNDING FOR CLUB AND COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

In 2023, MSP provided funding supports (Club Development Grants, Volunteer Supports or Other) to 140 clubs and community groups throughout the county.

Fund	No of Groups	€
Covid -19 Community Support Fund (Round 4)	50	€49,500
Annual Special Participation Grant Scheme	47	€27,500
Volunteer & Training Support	6	€4,580
Energy Support Scheme	6	€27,043
RESTART Support	4	€3,522
HER Outdoors	13	€2,000
Bike Week Funding	14	€6,960
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>€121,105</b>

**Table 4** – Breakdown of Funding Allocated to Local Groups in 2023

#### CLUB DEVELOPMENT WORK

MSP supports providers of sports and physical activity across the county, as well as working with sports clubs, communities and individuals to introduce new sports opportunities and pathways for participation in physical exercise.

To this end, in 2023:

- 140 Clubs / Community Groups were supported in Funding (Club Development Grants, Volunteer Supports or Other) 55 clubs/communities were supported in the delivery of activities;
- 15 clubs/communities were helped in developing their organisational, policy or management structures;
- 80 clubs/communities availed of MSP resource packs;
- 10 clubs / communities attended Club Development Workshops; 70 clubs/communities were provided with templates from MSP
- 140 meetings or phone calls took place between clubs/communities and MSP to share advice;

**Table 5** – Club Development Work in 2023

MSP plays a key role in advising clubs in the areas of planning, evaluation and in the development of governance standards and policies. This support work helps clubs to make improvements to attract and retain members.

### 3.3 Training and Education Courses

MSP provides a range of important upskilling and training opportunities at local level for volunteers, coaches and administrators. Two such programmes are Youth Leadership and Volunteer Supports.

#### YOUTH LEADERSHIP

This programme develops generic leadership skills that can be applied to a variety of sports and/or recreational situations as well as contributing to the personal development of the learner. It also continues to develop trained volunteers who can assist with the delivery of sport and recreation initiatives within their community while providing training for young people, keeping them engaged, increasing their responsibility and developing their confidence and self-esteem and provides them with an opportunity for lifelong volunteering.

#### VOLUNTEER SUPPORTS

This initiative aims to successfully identify and assist targeted individuals who are volunteering in disadvantaged communities or with people with disabilities to gain community sport and physical activity leadership skills e.g. as coaches, leaders, referees, committee members, etc.

- MSP planned and delivered 30 training and education courses, workshops and seminars with their partner agencies;
- 1944 people participated on these training courses.

Course	No of Participants	Course	No of Participants
Crew Helm Course (Dragon Boat)	4	Go For Life - PALs Physical Activity Leader Training	15
Disability Awareness Training	5	Autism In Sport	20
PDP3 SOCCER COACHING	7	Castlebar Kayak Club Rolling Sessions	20
European Week of Sport - Petanque Taster Session	8	Basketball Level I	23
Parents in Sport Pilot - Coaches Workshop	10	Volunteer Strategy & Recruitment - Mayo Volunteer Centre	23
Volunteer Support Supervision & Recognition- Mayo Volunteer Centre	10	Killawalla Badminton Club	24
Parents in Sport Pilot - Club Committee Workshop	11	Volunteer Dealing With Difficult Behaviour - Mayo Volunteer Centre	24
Active Leadership	12	Castlebar Kayak Club Rolling Sessions	30
Garda Vetting Basics - Mayo Volunteer Centre	12	Disability Inclusion Training	72
Introduction to Basketball	12	Balance Bike Programme	48
Tri Leader coaching course - Triathlon Ireland	12	Youth Sport Leadership	48
Parents in Sport Pilot - Parents Workshop	13	Coach/Instructor Training	190
Supporting Volunteers with Additional Support Needs - Mayo Volunteer Centre	13	Sports Capital Workshop	95
Remote Emergency First Aid	14	Sports First Aid	139
		Schools Introduction to Orienteering Day	180
		Tri Heroes	850
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1944</b>

**Table 6** – Breakdown of Training and Education Courses delivered by MSP in 2023



### 3.4 Delivering Sport Ireland Programmes

#### SAFEGUARDING WORKSHOPS & ROLES

MSPs Safeguarding programme is aimed at sports leaders and adults who are involved in the organisation of sport for children and young people. The goal of the programme is to promote awareness of best practice and legal requirements in the area of safeguarding and child protection. To advance this function, Sport Ireland offers three workshops in the area of safeguarding and child protection.

- **Safeguarding 1** - Basic Awareness (all coaches)
- **Safeguarding 2** - Club Children’s Officer (role specific)
- **Safeguarding 3** – Designated Liaison Person (role specific)

The details of these workshops are outlined below:

Safeguarding 1 - Child Welfare & Protection Basic Awareness Workshop	Safeguarding 2 - Club Children’s Officer	Safeguarding 3- Designated Liaison Person
All Coaches, Children’s Officers and Designated Liaison Persons must first complete the 3 hour Child Welfare and Protection Basic Awareness Workshop. This Workshop educates participants on the implementation of best practice & legal requirements in protecting the welfare of children involved in sport.	A person appointed to the Club Children’s Officer position in a club must complete Safeguarding 1 (Child Welfare & Protection Basic Awareness Workshop) and follow this with the Club Children’s Officer 3 hour workshop. This workshop will help the Club Children’s Officer to carry out the function of their role in the club and support the implementation of best practice in the area of safeguarding in the club.	A person appointed to the Designated Liaison Person position in a club must have completed Safeguarding 1 (Child Welfare & Protection Basic Awareness Workshop) and should complete the Designated Liaison Person 3 hour workshop. A club may appoint the same person to both the CCO and DLP positions however best practice advises that they are kept as separate roles.

#### CLUB CHILDREN’S OFFICER (ROLE SPECIFIC)

The Club Children’s Officer should be child-centred in focus and have, as the primary aim, the establishment of a child-centred ethos within the club. They are the link between the children and the adults in the club. They also take responsibility for monitoring and reporting to the Club Management Committee on how club policy impacts on young people and sports leaders.

#### DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON (ROLE SPECIFIC)

Every club/organisation should designate a person to be responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of children. The Designated Liaison Person is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to TUSLA Child and Family Agency and/or An Garda Síochána. It is recommended that this person is a senior club person. However, if there is difficulty identifying a separate individual to take this role, the Club Children’s Officer can be appointed as Designated Liaison Person once the club/organisation is clear about the responsibilities of each role. The organisation’s child protection policy and procedures should include the name and contact details of the Designated Liaison Person and the responsibilities attached to the role.

In 2023, 266 sports leaders and volunteers completed the Safeguarding 1 training across 18 courses run by MSP. Some 28 volunteers attended the follow-on Children’s Officer training across 2 courses. In the rollout of Safeguarding 3, 22 Designated Liaison Persons received training in 2 programmes organised by MSP. 2023 saw MSP continue to deliver the vast majority of these courses online.

	Safeguarding 1	Safeguarding 2	Safeguarding 3
	2023	2023	2023
Number of courses delivered	18	2	2
Number of participants	295	28	22

Table 7 – Summary of Safeguarding outputs for 2023



PIC: Participants Marathon Kids

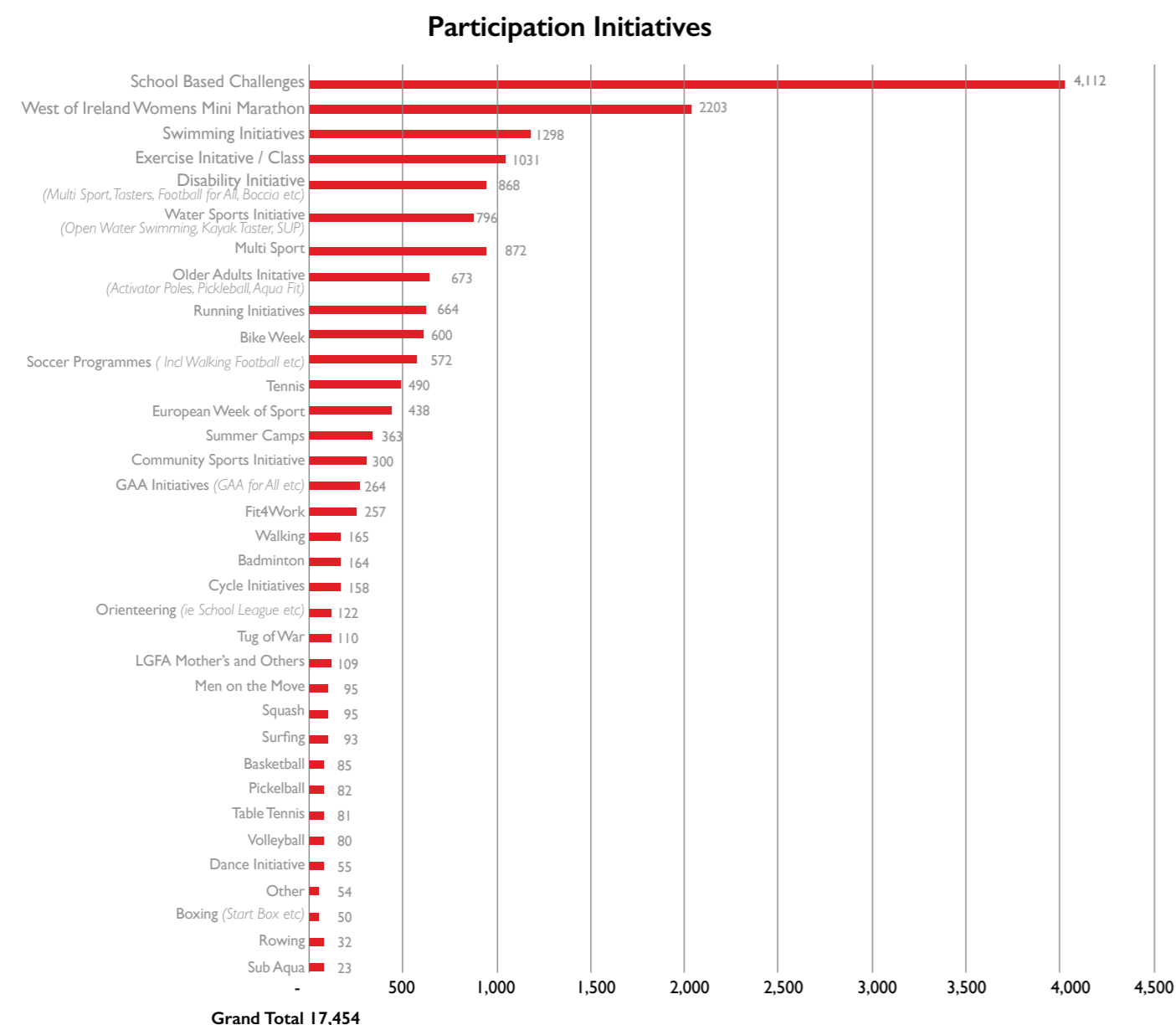
#### 3.4.1 MSP Participation Initiatives

The design, delivery and review of targeted programmes by MSP directly increases the level of local participation particularly amongst the harder to reach social groups. Through their local expertise and connections within the sports infrastructure, MSP is able to identify specific needs and plan accordingly. In 2023, MSP maintained its delivery of an innovative range of participation programmes;

- 17,454 people participated in 155 locally delivered participation programmes, taster days / events
- 14,505 participants were marginally, very or extremely disadvantaged
- In addition 5,334 participated in 7 Physical Activity Interventions ie Daily Mile, parkrun, Marathon Kids, Playground Markings etc
- 3,615 female participants took part in 19 Women in Sport programmes
- 1145 people with a disability participated in MSPs Sports Inclusion Programme



**Table 8 – Breakdown of Programmes delivered by MSP in 2023**



In addition to the above initiatives, MSP also supports a number of physical activity interventions such as parkrun, Playground Markings, Marathon Kids, Active School Flag, Daily Mile and Get Ireland Walking initiatives. These interventions have not been included in our reach figures as they are either primarily lead by external stakeholders (e.g. parkrun), or are difficult to measure (i.e. how many people were active and how frequently they were active e.g. Playground Markings). They are however important interventions which contribute significant figures towards participation levels in the county.

Intervention	Number
Playground Markings	200
Operation transformation walks	300
National Play Day	500
Marathon Kids	750
Parkrun	1,084
Daily Mile	2,000
Active School Flag	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,334</b>

**Table 9 – MSP Physical Activity Interventions**

### 3.4.2 MSP Initiative Categorisation

Of the 17,266 participants reached by these initiatives in 2023, 4,948 people were engaged through MSP programmes, 6,601 people were engaged through MSP events, 4,354 people were reached through NGB programmes, 1,213 people were engaged through taster sessions and 150 people were reached through sports camps. A brief description of the 5 categories of LSP initiatives are highlighted in the table below.

**Table 10 – Description of Initiative Categories**

Initiative Category	Description
MSP Programmes	Defined as fixed duration participation opportunities which last longer than one or two sessions. Usually delivered over a number of weeks or non-consecutive days e.g. Men on the Move, Go For Life, Community Walking Programme
MSP Events	Defined as fixed duration participation events usually lasting single days. Participants would usually set a goal to enter the event and undertake some training or require underlying fitness or skill to take part. E.g. 5k runs, Cycle Series, Mini Marathons
Taster Session	Defined as once off participation opportunities which offer no more than a single experience, although they may sign post to more long term opportunities. Participants usually need no training in advance and minimal previous skill/fitness to take part e.g. Fun days, Be Active Nights, family events, promotional weeks etc.
Sports Camps	Defined as sports camps which offer sports participation opportunities in a sport or multi sports. Usually lasting less than a week e.g. FAI Soccer Camps, GAA Cúl Camps
NGB Programmes	Defined as participation opportunities with and NGB as the main deliverer of the initiative. Support and resources may be provided by MSP. E.g. Rugby tournaments, GAA blitzes, soccer leagues

The below information illustrates the number of participants reached by each category.

Category	Programmes	Participants
MSP Events	14	6601
MSP Programmes	78	4948
Taster Sessions	20	1213
NGB Programmes	38	4354
Sports Camps	6	150

**Table 11 – Participants by Initiative Category**



**Pic:** Participants HER Outdoors, Achill



### 3.4.3 MSP Initiatives delivered in 2023

The following presents an overview of the types of initiatives delivered in 2023

Type of Sport	Participants	Programmes
Running	4290	8
Multi Sport	2471	26
Walking	826	11
Cycling	768	7
Athletics (excl. running)	2805	2
Swimming	1357	12
Canoeing/Kayaking/SUP/Dragon Boating	747	9
Orienteering	12	1
Exercise (inc. Gym, Yoga, Pilates, Chair Fitness)	1062	14
Badminton	164	3
Soccer	701	15
Gaelic Games	433	9
Tug of War	210	2
Tennis	611	5
Basketball	159	5
Dance	128	5
Squash	95	3
Rugby	88	2
Boxing	50	1
Cricket	30	1
Boccia	82	2
Table Tennis	81	2
Volleyball	80	1
Rowing	32	2
Bowling	18	1
Scuba & Snorkeling	23	1
Surfing	101	3
Karate	10	1
Pickleball	20	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>17454</b>	<b>155</b>

**Table 12 – Participation Initiatives by Sport and Number of Participants**



**Pic:** WPIMM Volunteers

### 3.5 Building and Sustaining Partnerships

#### INFORMATION PROVISION

MSP acts as an information hub and point of contact within communities. MSP works to share information, as well as direct, signpost and refer their target groups to the most appropriate next step, whether that is a link to a sports club, a community-based organisation or a volunteering opportunity

MSP collects ongoing information on the nature and extent of their work to provide information to their communities and profile their activities and programmes.

The following table presents an overview of the range of communication platforms that MSP use, both via traditional and social media outlets.

Providing Information to Community Through Traditional Media	2021	2022	2023	Providing Information to Communities Through Social Media	2021	2022	2023
Number of Radio Interviews	10	10	10	Facebook: Number of posts / updates	1300	1000	1030
Number of articles in local press / radio	22	20	20	Facebook: Number of followers	6,300	6,700	8,600
Number of newsletters written	10	6	4	Twitter: Number of Tweets	345	360	290
				Twitter: Number of Followers	2,500	2,500	2,600
				Instagram: number of posts	450	430	490
				Instagram: number of followers	1,000	1,160	1,440

Providing Information to Communities Through Online Promotion	2021	2022	2023	Providing Information to Communities Through Text-based Services	2021	2022	2023
LSP Website: Number of new articles	40	41	42	Number of texts sent via text service	300	300	300
LSP Website: Number of hits	3519	3900	4200	Number of WhatsApp groups	20	20	24
				Number of people in WhatsApp groups	600	600	650

**Table 13:** Summary of MSP Promotion in 2023

In 2021 MSPs website was redeveloped and incorporated into Mayo County Councils Mayo.ie overall website. MSP continues to use this platform to increase community engagement in physical activity, providing a wide-range of online programmes and initiatives to keep people active while also developing sport and physical activity resources for the public which could be accessed on their website [www.mayo.ie/sportspartnership](http://www.mayo.ie/sportspartnership)

MSP is also active in developing specific resources to highlight and promote the range of activities and opportunities available locally. This can be in the form of newsletters, press releases, booklets, directories, as well as through translated documents. MSP maintains active databases of local organisations and groups as well as email contact lists.

MSP can also promote their work through annual reports such as this document. Research publications and presentations are also used regularly to disseminate their key messages regarding participation. In 2023, 8 presentations were delivered to Councillors, Local Authority staff, community groups and other partners/stakeholders.

Production of Information Resources	2023	Local Community Interest	2023
Number of newsletters	33	Number of directories produced / updated	15
Number of press releases issued	15	Number of people / clubs / groups on email list	5,900



Dissemination of Research and Reports	2023
Number of annual reports issued	200
Number of presentations delivered	8

**Table 14:** Summary of MSP Information Production and Dissemination 2023

### 3.6 Networking, Advocacy and Awareness Raising

Building alliances and relationships with local and national partners is an important area of work for MSP, as well as representing key concerns in the policy arena. In order to carry out this strand of its work, MSP actively engages in committee work and networking activities at local and national level. In 2023, MSP has participated in some 43 actions associated with building networks and advocating on behalf of their target groups.

The local and national networks bring together sports clubs, statutory and non-statutory agencies, volunteers and other working partners and provide opportunities for partnership endeavours that influence and resource sport and physical activity at county and national level.

These networking and awareness raising actions allow for an increase in the reach of MSP, as well as profiling their ongoing work. They are also a sounding board for advice and recommendations as to what MSP can do to assist sports clubs and partners.



**PIC:** Participants Basketball, Ballyhaunis

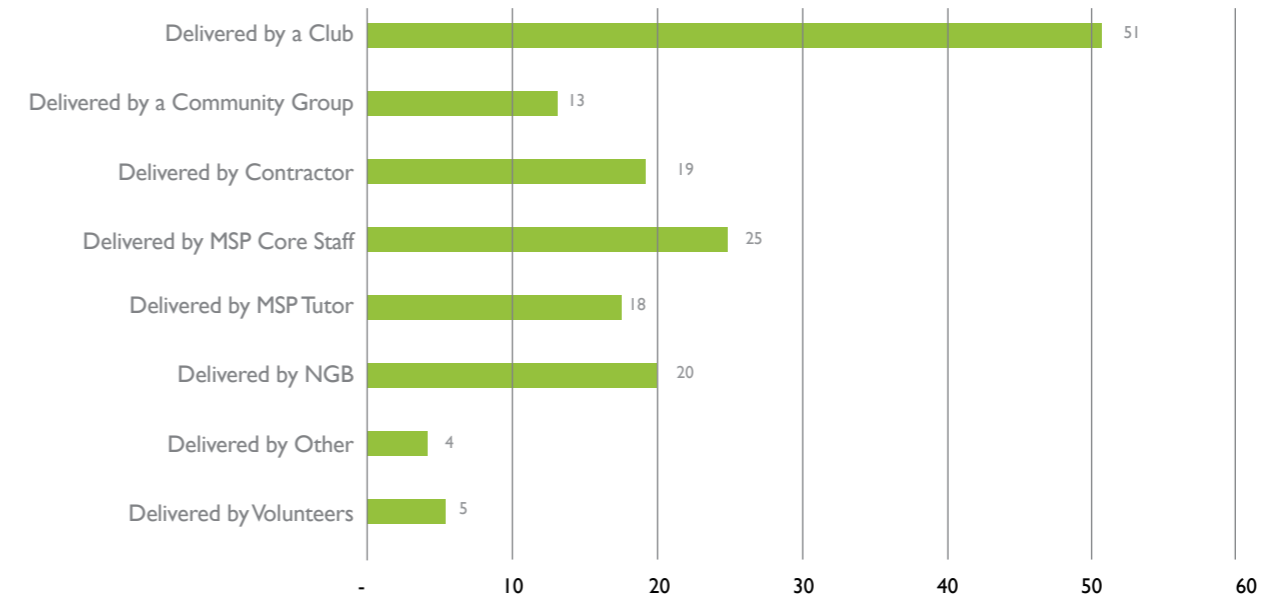
**Table 15:** Overview of the type of actions MSP has been involved in 2023.

Actions in the area of advocacy and policy allow for MSP to promote the importance of sport in community life.

TYPE OF ACTIONS	NUMBER OF ACTIONS	2023
Local Networks, forums or Committees participated in	29	29
Regional and National Networks participated in	7	7
Research Projects Involved In	1	1
Seminars or Conferences attended	4	4
Submissions made	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>43</b>

### 3.7 Partnership Engagement

MSP aims to lead and coordinate sport and physical activity opportunities locally. In 2023, 51 initiatives were delivered by clubs, 25 initiatives were delivered by MSP core staff, 20 by National Governing Bodies, however, contractors, community groups, tutors, volunteers and other partners were responsible for delivering 59 initiatives. The below figure illustrates the range of deliverers of initiatives in 2023.



**Table 16:** Primary Delivery Mechanism for Participation Initiatives

Developing partnerships with other organisations to promote physical activity and sport participation is also a key part of MSPs work. To this end, MSP engaged with some 65 organisations in 2023 including 28 National Governing Bodies of Sport, 5 Disability NGBs, 2 other Sport Ireland funded bodies and 30 additional external partners.

Outside of core staff, Clubs, NGBs, contractors, tutors community groups and volunteers were the main delivery partners for MSP in delivering initiatives in 2023.

During 2023 MSP engaged with a range of different sports in providing participation opportunities to their audience. The following image shows the range of sports that participants were engaged in during their involvement in participation initiatives in 2023. Over 28 sports were participated in during this period. Excluding Multi Sport, the most popular 5 activities in 2023 were running, athletics, swimming, exercise and walking.



**PIC:** Participants Cul Camp



### 3.8 Publications



**PIC:** MSP Bimonthly Online Newsletter - June 2023 Newsletter



**PIC:** Online Flyer for Autumn HER Moves Programme 2023

#### MONTHLY ONLINE NEWSLETTER & FLYERS

MSP currently now produces a bimonthly newsletter via the Poppulo (Formerly Newsweaver) platform to almost 6,000 recipients. The licence is purchased by Mayo County Council annually and training was provided to staff by the communications office. In addition to newsletters Mayo Sports Partnership also utilises the platform to promote events or important news items such as events, grant schemes, campaigns etc.

All newsletters can be found on MSP Website:  
[www.mayo.ie/sports-partnership/resources/newsletters](http://www.mayo.ie/sports-partnership/resources/newsletters)



#### ANNUAL REPORT

MSP produce both a hardcopy and softcopy Annual Report document which is submitted to Sport Ireland as part of MSPs governance and also to stakeholders on our social media / website platforms. The document is signed off by the MSP committee and is also submitted to our host body Mayo County Council.



**PIC:** Petanque at Castlebar Outdoor Sports Hub.



# 4

## MSP Case Studies



## Case Study I

### Physical Activity for Health (PAfH): Modified Activator Pole Walking for people with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

#### Was this a programme funded through Dormant Accounts?

No

#### What was the purpose of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- To offer people living with COPD in Erris an opportunity to exercise safely in a modified Activator pole walking exercise programme run under the Physical Activity for Health Pilot by Mayo Sports Partnership

#### What are the aims of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- Bridge the gap following Pulmonary Rehabilitation programmes. Individuals with the long-term respiratory condition, COPD, struggle to find opportunities to continue to exercise safely in the community due to lack of appropriate exercise programmes.
- To have a positive impact on the quality of life of individuals with a diagnosis of COPD, a long-term health condition which can benefit from exercise interventions to maintain endurance and fitness levels.



**PIC:** Participants from Belmullet taking part in PAFH Programme

#### What was involved in the running of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- Collaboration with FitWalk Ireland to develop a modified activator pole programme.
- Induction and training of an MSP tutor to deliver the modified programme.
- Participants in the Belmullet Pulmonary Rehab programme were signposted together with individuals living in the community with COPD were invited to try the 8 week programme.
- Registration forms with the Par-Q and the Single Item Measure were prepared.
- A participant feedback survey was devised.

#### What were the outcomes of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- Design and development of a structure modified activator pole walking programme.
- Tutor development and training in adapting a class to a very specific group of participants with a chronic respiratory condition.
- Individuals with COPD in Erris were supported for the first time by a PAFH initiative run by Mayo Sports Partnership; an 8 week modified activator walking with poles programme.

#### What are the next steps for the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- Continue to support the Modified Activator Pole walking programme in Belmullet.
- Design a modified home exercise programme leaflet for participants with COPD.
- Liaise with COPD Support Ireland to encourage their members to participate in the programme.

#### Quotes from participants, teachers, parents, partners etc.

“Activator Pole class is helping me to get fitter”.

“I found doing exercises suitable to me and meeting other people really good.”

“having a follow class (from pulmonary rehab) and the social side was enjoyable”

#### Numbers Involved & Statistics

- 9 participants
- 5 female and 4 male
- 8 week programme
- Age range 7 participants 75+ 2 participants 65-74
- Inclusive event

## Case Study 2

### Ballinrobe Sportshub - Walking Football

#### Was this a programme funded through Dormant Accounts?

Yes

#### What was the purpose of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

The event was introduced to engage older adults in Walking Football

Walking Football was being promoted by Mayo Sports Partnership as part of a county-wide Mens Health programme and the Ballinrobe Sportshub Coordinator agreed to facilitate the 6 week event in Ballinrobe.

The Coordinator worked with Ballinrobe Town AFC and other community groups to promote and initiate the event.

#### What are the aims of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- To introduce Walking Football to a new cohort of players
- To provide benefits both physically and mentally to the target group
- An opportunity for older adults to engage in a team/group activity



**PIC:** Participants from Walking Football

#### What was involved in the running of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- The target group were identified by the Coordinator through local sports clubs, community groups, social media and Whatsapp groups
- Partnership were formed with: Ballinrobe Town AFC, Ballinrobe Town Parks Astropitch, Mayo Sports Partnership, Tacu FRC, Ballinrobe Community Sportshub
- Risk Assessments, Sign in sheets and Single Item Measure sheets were prepared

##### Resources:

Resources were from existing equipment and facilities:

- Coordinator supplied balls and bibs
- Astropitch hire funding was provided by Mayo Sports Partnership

##### Format

Weekly event on a Thursday at 8pm for 1 hour.

#### What were the outcomes of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- A very successful programme that attracted new players and developed to a point where the sessions continued regularly after the initial programme and also became self-funding
- A fun social and physical outlet for older adults
- Health benefits from regular activity
- The Coordinator encouraged an intergenerational aspect by inviting children of the participants to take part and this led to a "lads, dads and granddads" element which increased participation levels and added to the event.
- The group have been invited to participate in national and international Walking Football events.

#### What are the next steps for the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- The Walking Football group will look to continue and encourage more members to play regularly
- Ballinrobe Town AFC have agreed to include a Walking Football section within the club to avail of insurance, member benefits and encourage participation in the club in general

#### Quotes from participants, teachers, parents, partners etc.

##### Participants feedback

"I am really enjoying the walking football and feel so much better for being able to play each week. I am currently off the cigarettes and feel the football keeps me fitter and focused on improving my health. I really hope we can continue playing each week as it has been a huge benefit to me and my health. Long may it continue" - participant C

##### Partners Feedback

"it's great to see this group meeting regularly and enjoying playing football, it goes to show that you are never too old" - Ballinrobe Town AFC.

#### Numbers Involved & Statistics

- 8 weeks from 15/06/23 - event continued throughout 2023 and in to 2024
- 21 Adults over 8 weeks - (20 Males - 1 female)
- 6 male youths took part
- Age range 16 to 80
- Intergenerational and multi cultured event.
- Inclusive event





## Case Study 3

### Ballyhaunis Sportshub – Exercise to Music

#### Was this a programme funded through Dormant Accounts?

No

#### What was the purpose of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

Exercise to music was introduced to engage the parents & ladies of all communities and ethnicities to exercise in the Ballyhaunis Area

#### What are the aims of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- To introduce Exercise to ladies in a fun environment
- To provide benefits both physically and mentally to the target group
- Integration of communities & an opportunity for women to meet new people

#### What was involved in the running of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- The target group were identified by the Ballyhaunis sports hub Coordinator & the Family resource centre Ballyhaunis, friends of the old Convent group, Ballyhaunis Community & national school
- Partnership were formed with the local National school & community school teachers identifying parents whom could benefit from this
- Programme was run in the Community hall in Ballyhaunis
- Ballyhaunis created a poster & promoted through wats app & facebook

#### Resources:

Resources were from existing equipment and facilities:

- Ballyhaunis Sports hub coordinator run the programme
- Community hall, coordinator own stereo & Exercise mats

#### Format

Weekly event on a Thursday 930am for 1 hour.

#### What were the outcomes of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- A very successful programme that run for 2 x 6 weeks
- A fun social and physical outlet for parents & women
- Health benefits from regular activity
- The Coordinator encouraged participants to join a second class on a Tuesday
- Some members joined the Ireland lights us walking programme with Ballyhaunis GAA club out in the Connacht GAA centre of excellence

#### What are the next steps for the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- Exercise to music continues in 2024 Thursdays In the community hall & Friday evenings in Ballyhaunis Rugby club

#### Quotes from participants, teachers, parents, partners etc.

##### Participants feedback

"I am really enjoying the group, I am 77 and feel great to be able to exercise with girls atleast half my age, and my family in America are happy to see me getting on ok since my son died, Merrilyn

##### Partners Feedback

"it's great to see regular use of the hall from people of all backgrounds & its inclusive regardless of age & abilities: Ballyhaunis community Hall caretaker Mike Griffin

#### Numbers Involved & Statistics

- 2 x 6 weeks from September 28th to December -2023 and in to 2024
- 26 ladies 1 class weekly
- Ballyhaunis national school funded 6 places in a 2nd class, those on low income
- 2 members travelling community
- 8 nationalities
- Age range 25 to 77
- Inclusive exercise class



## Case Study 4

### Parents in Sport Pilot – Ballina

#### Was this a programme funded through Dormant Accounts?

Yes

#### What was the purpose of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

The event was introduced to approach Parents, club committee officials and coaches from the same club to come along and learn the impacts about how all three individuals in their roles influence and shape the child's experience with the club. It is these three people who can foster a positive experience for the child.

Parents in Sport is a Sport Ireland Coaching course and was being promoted by Mayo Sports Partnership in the Ballina area.

There were three separate courses.

- Parents in Sport – Parents
- Parents in Sport – Coaches
- Parents in Sport – Club Committee members

#### What are the aims of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- To instil empathy within all parties (parents, coaches & committee members).
- To help create an open-door policy where communication can be made between all three stakeholders.
- To instil a three-pronged approach to improving and positively effecting a child's experience with sport & physical activity.
- To bring the focus away from win at all costs to a more fun and inclusive environment within the club.
- Coach the children to have fun and provide a safe environment.

#### What was involved in the running of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- A town/area was identified to achieve a diverse number of clubs. A decision was made not to provide a county wide approach as to get a more quality group rather than quantity.
- A hall was booked for the four hours and projector, tea, sandwiches were provided.
- An Eventbrite link was organised advertising all three courses four weeks before the event.
- The event was advertised through the Ballina Sports Hub database of clubs and through Ballina sports hub and Mayo sports partnership Facebook pages.
- Numerous meetings took place with Sport Ireland Coaching in preparation.
- Flights & accommodation had to be arranged for the facilitator of the course who was coming from England.

##### Resources:

- Glasgow Kennedy House was used as a venue with projector, kitchenette, tables and chairs.
- Sport Ireland Coaching flyers and brochures were used and Mayo Sports Partnership flyers were also distributed.

##### Format

This course was held over one night and face to face. There were three separate one hour courses held with a 15 minute break between each course.

- 6pm – Parents in Sport (club committee)
- 7:15pm – Parents in Sport (coaches)
- 8:30pm – Parents in Sport (parents)

#### What were the outcomes of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

This was a pilot course that Sport Ireland Coaching wanted to use to see if it could be rolled out across the rest of the country.

- Very positive engagement among all groups.
- Most individuals identified the lack of communication between parents, coaches, and club committee. Especially when everyone has the same desire and goals within the group.
- All individuals who took part wanted more literature and the course PowerPoint slides which they received.
- More clubs across the county expressed interest in partaking in the course.
- Sport Ireland Coaching were very happy with the results they received from the evening and were happy with the quality of clubs who took time out of their evening to come along.

#### What are the next steps for the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- The next steps will be to roll out the programme to the rest of the country
- This will rest with Sport Ireland Coaching

#### Quotes from participants, teachers, parents, partners etc.

Participants feedback

'Thank you for organising this course. I attended the Parent in Sport Coaches Module and found it very good. I have definitely taken away some new information'.

#### Numbers Involved & Statistics

- 40 participants in total
- 25% Male



## Case Study 5

### Visually Impaired Tennis

#### Was this a programme funded through Dormant Accounts?

No

#### What was the purpose of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

The purpose of the programme is to provide opportunities for people with a disability to take part in activities within their local community

#### What are the aims of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- To introduce Tennis to a new Visually Impaired participants
- To provide benefits both physically and mentally to the target group
- An opportunity to engage in a club/group activity



**PIC:** Participants from Visually Impaired Tennis

#### What was involved in the running of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- The target group were identified by the Sports Inclusion Officer through local sports clubs, community groups, social media and Whatsapp groups
- Partnership were formed with: Castlebar Tennis Club and Tennis Ireland
- A Come and Try day was organised
- Coaches and Court times were organised by the club

##### Resources:

Resources were from existing equipment and facilities:

- Castlebar Tennis supplied balls and Racquets
- Court hire funding was provided by Mayo Sports Partnership

##### Format

Weekly event on a Saturday for Children and a Monday evening for adults for 1 hour.

#### What were the outcomes of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- A very successful programme that attracted new players and developed to a point where the sessions continued regularly after the initial programme
- A fun social and physical outlet for target group
- Health benefits from regular activity
- The Coordinator encouraged an intergenerational aspect by inviting Participants from Sligo down to take part
- The Coordinator has organised a trip to Dublin to participate in national events.

#### What are the next steps for the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- The Visually Impaired Tennis programme will look to continue and encourage more members to play regularly
- Castlebar Tennis Club will continue to run the programme and offer membership p to participants

#### Quotes from participants, teachers, parents, partners etc.

“Blind/VI Tennis in Castlebar is going from strength to strength with 4 junior players and 5 adults playing weekly. The players range from visually impaired to blind and are all so glad to have a sport that’s theirs. We are gearing up for some friendly competition in the coming months with VI clubs in Galway and Dublin and are really excited about the progress we have made so far, with numbers growing as word gets out on Mayo’s newest sport”

Olwyn O Toole

#### Numbers Involved & Statistics

- 8-week programme complete
- 4 Adults 3 children completed the programme
- Age range 8 to 60
- Inclusive event





## Case Study 6

### Women On The Water Introduction to Kayaking Programme

#### Was this a programme funded through Dormant Accounts?

Yes

#### What was the purpose of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

The purpose of the programme was to provide a space for a women only group of beginner kayakers the opportunity to develop their kayaking skills over a six week period– with the aim of obtaining their Level Two River Kayak Skills certificate. Having the level two skills would enable the women to join the Castlebar Kayak Club and progress their kayaking– should they wish. It would also allow the women to be a competent member of a group of other kayakers.

#### What are the aims of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- To introduce kayaking to a new group of women – aged between 18 and 60.
- The programme took place on a Wednesday evening over six sessions.
- To provide a pathway to progression for those that completed their level 2 skills assessment. A requirement of the local kayaking club is that all members have their Level 2 River Kayak certificate.
- To provide a ‘safe’ space for women to explore the sport of kayaking. As much as possible, we aimed to have female instructors delivering the programme. Although this was not always possible.



**PIC:** Participants at Lough Lannagh Castlebar for Women on the Water Programme

#### Key Learning : What was one key learning from the Programme/Initiative/Event?

To start the programme earlier in the summer. The programme runs for six weeks. The programme didn't run until late August. Two sessions were rescheduled due to weather conditions. Which meant the last two sessions of the programme took place in October – giving less hours of daylight to run the programme.

#### What were the outcomes of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

1. The Women on the Water programme marked the first time that a kayaking training programme tailored specifically for women have been run by the kayak club.
2. Of the eleven women who started the course, seven went forward for their Level 2 River Skills assessment. And subsequently joined the kayak club. Adding more gender diversity to the club.
3. A blueprint has been established, effectively a proof of concept, on how to run these programmes. Going forward, the Women on the Water programme is likely to be an annual initiative that the kayak club will run.

#### What are the next steps for the Programme/Initiative/Event?

1. For the coordinator to engage with the local kayak club to ensure that the training is on their training calendar for 2024.
2. Seeks expressions of interest from women in the area for running a follow-on Level 3 Skills River Training Course
3. Ensure that the club committee is adequately set up to deal with the administration of the course (this was a substantial roadblock initially in dealing with the club).

#### Quotes from participants, teachers, parents, partners etc.

##### Participants feedback

...take your pick!

“Thank you Sharon and Graham for an unforgettable session on Lough Carra today. Such lovely company everyone” “The best day! Delighted with our first adventure. Thank you so much”.

“Thank you for the great times on the water. I look forward to more of these in 2024. And more rivers.”

##### Partners Feedback

“ It was great to see this initiative run for the first time. I think it'll help introduce more women to the sport and our club. It also provided the club with a valuable revenue stream which we can invest back into the club” . – Castlebar Kayak Club Committee member.

#### Numbers Involved & Statistics

- Eleven women took part in the programme.
- Seven completed the Level 2 kayak skills assessment.
- Ages ranged from 32 – 55 years.
- Programme ran for 6 weeks. Additional training covering several more weeks was provided post course.





## Case Study 7

### Women's Over 40 Strength and Conditioning

#### Was this a programme funded through Dormant Accounts?

No

#### What was the purpose of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- To cater for the specific needs and challenges that women in this age group may face when it comes to strength and conditioning.
- To Promote overall health
- To maintain physical well-being, prevent injuries and enhance quality of life.
- To promote positive body image and empower women to prioritise their health as they age

#### What are the aims of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- To encourage Women over the age of 40 to include Strength and Conditioning into their fitness regime, a holistic approach to fitness.
- To enhance bone density and maintain muscle mass.
- To improve flexibility balance and functional strength helping prevent injuries and maintain independence later in life



**PIC:** Participants at Claremorris Women's Strength & Conditioning programme

#### What was involved in the running of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- Through Sport Ireland this group/Cohort were identified as needing more time to give to themselves, therefore the 'It's my time' campaign was developed and promoted to the LSPs. Part of this was a holistic approach to exercise and fitness, one of those disciplines was Strength and Conditioning
- Partnership had been previously formed with Gym's and fitness studios throughout the County, so these had to be approached and asked if they were willing to host the Strength and Conditioning class for Women over 40 and be sure that all instructors were qualified.
- Program design for the 6-week programmes
- Education – provide educational sessions for the Women on other areas of fitness and nutrition – Menopause coach talk.
- Safety Measures – to make sure the facilities complied with safe standards in relation to equipment and facilities.
- Communication – Ensure participants are kept informed in schedule changes, Feedback links, upcoming events, and information talks – Goal setting, Nutrition.
- Promotion via social media platforms relevant to this cohort.

#### What were the outcomes of the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- Improved Strength and Fitness – Participants experienced improved physical fitness in several health-related components.
- Bone Density Maintenance - Strength training contributes to maintaining or even increasing bone density, important for women in this age group who may be at a higher risk of osteoporosis.
- Weight Management – Regular exercise can assist in weight management.
- Injury prevention – Functional movements can reduce the risk of injury and Balance and co-ordination can be improved through this type of training.
- Positive Body Image – Exercise fosters a positive body image.
- Mental Well-Being – Regular exercise is linked to improved mental health.
- Lifestyle awareness – participants are more understanding of factors influencing their health, including nutrition, sleep, and stress.

#### What are the next steps for the Programme/Initiative/Event?

- Evaluation of current programmes - to see what changes/Improvements need to be made.
- Expansion and outreach – increase the number of classes being delivered around the County.
- Collaborations – partnering with other stakeholders to offer the women nutritionists or wellness experts with information on their stage of life
- Continued education – on all aspect of Health for the tutors on Women 40 +
- Feedback and evaluation – Continue to solicit feedback from participants regularly.

#### Quotes from participants, teachers, parents, partners etc.

##### Participants feedback

'Small female only gym class with a great trainer has made working out an enjoyable experience and I feel stronger and healthier for it.' I signed up for a 6-week women's strength and conditioning program through Mayo Sports Partnership last April. At 51, and never been to a gym, I am now delighted to say that I continue to go 6 months later.

'Signing up with F&F Performance in Castlebar is one of the best decisions I have ever made.

Paddy is an excellent and patient instructor; I've learned a lot in a very short period. Through his guidance, I have completed workouts I never thought I could do before. The sessions are tailored to meet each person's own fitness abilities. Paddy keeps me motivated and has made me enjoy working out. I absolutely love my sessions and am already seeing great results. My fitness has increased, and I have seen a huge improvement in my ability levels.

I am happy and more confident. I fully intend to continue to train to maintain a good level of fitness for a very long time to come.

I would highly recommend these sessions no matter what your fitness level. My only regret is that I didn't start sooner.

Mary.'

##### Partners Feedback

'I think I've found my niche'. – Gym Owner

#### Numbers Involved & Statistics

- Over 200 Participants split over several classes.
- Yoga – 45
- Pilates – 24
- Couch to 5K – 55
- Strength and Conditioning - 100







# 5

## Next Steps for MSP

### 5.1 MAYO SPORTS PARTNERSHIP INVESTMENT

MSPs strategy, through Sport Ireland funding, to maintain investment in programming and human resources in 2024 will support new initiatives such as the Outdoor Recreation Officer and European Social Fund Investment for social inclusion initiatives. MSP is continuing to ensure that everyone in our society has equal opportunity to share in the enjoyment as well as the mental and physical health benefits of sport and physical activity during these unprecedented times. This increase in investment provides an opportunity for MSP to support a more inclusive return to sport.

### 5.2 SPORT 4 EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

Launched in October 2023 by Minister Thomas Byrne, the Sport 4 Empowerment (S4E) programme, is part of Ireland's European Social Fund+ backed Employment, Inclusion, Skills, and Training (EIST) programme for 2021-2027.

Listed under the social innovation pillar, S4E aims to create socially inclusive and innovative programmes for people at risk of social exclusion and poverty. This includes ethnic minorities, youth at risk, people with disabilities, and those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Developed by Sport Ireland, S4E's mission is to "develop and implement people-first programmes to improve lives, create meaningful opportunities and a sense of belonging through sport and physical activity." S4E programmes are designed to increase participation in sport and physical activity, enhance education and training opportunities, improve employment prospects, and boost social inclusion. To support this, the programme introduced the ESF+ Social Innovation in Sport Officer role within the LSP network. In 2023, Mayo Sports Partnership were approved to receive funding for this project.

### 5.3 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR HEALTH

The Physical Activity for Health (PAFH) programme is a pilot initiative funded by the Department of Health through Sláintecare, in collaboration with Sport Ireland. Launched in 2023, the programme currently employs six Physical Activity for Health Officers (PAfHOs) with one Edel O Malley here in Mayo Sports Partnership.

The primary goals of the PAFH programme are to:

- Facilitate access: Accept signposting from health service initiatives like Chronic Disease Management and Social Prescribing and enroll eligible individuals in subsidised LSP or partner recreational sport programmes.
- Deliver quality programmes: Coordinate and ensure the quality of free, HSE approved, structured physical activity programmes for people with chronic conditions who don't require clinically led exercise programmes. These programmes aim to build participants' skills and confidence for independent recreational sport engagement, with follow-up support provided three months post-programme completion.
- Enhance Collaboration: Increase healthcare professionals' awareness of physical activity and recreational sport opportunities available to their patients through communication, engagement, and partnerships.

### 5.4 OUTDOOR OFFICERS

As part of a wider investment to enhance outdoor recreation in Ireland, a €1.28 million 3-year pilot programme was announced in 2023. Funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and supported by Sport Ireland, the programme established six new Outdoor Recreation Officer positions in Clare, Longford, Mayo, Sligo, and Waterford LSPs.

The officers provide expertise and guidance to the outdoor recreation sector in the county and coordinate the development and the delivery of the County Outdoor Recreation Plan in their county.

### 5.5 LOCAL SPORTS PLANS

Action 8 of the National Sports Policy has tasked Sport Ireland with supporting Local Authorities in developing Local Sports Plans consistent with the overall vision and objectives of the National Sports Policy. It is a priority of Sport Ireland to meet with the County and City Managers Association (CCMA) Economic, Enterprise, Community and Culture Committee to discuss the development of Local Sports Plans providing templates for development in each local authority area. Sport Ireland will also discuss the recruitment and employment of MSP staff, MSP governance code compliance in a Local Authority context and Sport Ireland funding strategies for the Local Authority based MSP. Sport Ireland has allocated budget in the 2024 participation unit budget to assist the development of Local Sports Plans.





# 6

## Appendices

## Appendices

### Appendix A

Mayo Sports Partnership Committee 2019 – 2024

Name	Organisation
Donal Newcombe	Chief Executive Nominee
Deirdre Finnerty	Community & Integrated Dev
Cllr Michael Loftus	County Councillor & Chairperson
Cllr Mark Duffy	County Councillor
Jackie Lynott	HSE West
Nigel Jennings	Mayo ATU
Pat Howley	Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim ETB
Siobhain Carroll Webb	North East Leader Partnership
Catherine Mc Closkey	South West Leader Partnership
David Tiernan	GARDA
Jenna Walsh	Mayo Mental Health
Neil Masterson	Community Sports PPN Rep
Lyndon Jones	Connacht Rugby
James Larkin	Mayo League
Fran Downey	Mayo GAA

### Appendix B

#### Glossary of Terms

##### CARA

CARA is a national organisation which provides a collaborative and partnership platform throughout Ireland to impact on enhancing sport and physical activity opportunities for people with disabilities.

##### Club Children's Officer

The Club Children's Officer is a volunteer role within a sports club. S/he is the link between the children and the adults in the club. S/he takes responsibility for monitoring and reporting to the Club Management Committee on how club policy impacts on young people and Sports Leaders. The Club Children's Officer should be a member of or have access to, the Club Management Committee and should be introduced to the young people in an appropriate forum.

##### CSDO - Community Sports Development Officer

The aim of the Community Sports Development Officer is to strengthen and enhance the capacity of the Local Sports Partnerships to further develop locally led plans and more long term sustainable physical activity programmes under the National Physical Activity Plan.

##### CSPA - Community Sport and Physical Activity Hubs

The objective of the Dormant Accounts Funded CSPAs is to bring local people together and provide a home for local clubs and sports organisations. The Hubs provide information, support and advice on a wide range of sports and physical activities to make it easier for people in disadvantaged areas to get involved in and engage in a more active and healthier lifestyle.

##### CYPSC - Children and Young People's Services Committees

CYPSC are county-level committees that bring together the main statutory, community and voluntary providers of services to children and young people. They provide a forum for joint planning and co-ordination of activity to ensure that children, young people and their families receive improved and accessible services. Their role is to enhance inter-agency co-operation and to realise the national outcomes set out in Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: the national policy framework for children and young people 2014 - 2020.

##### Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport

The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport was established in 2011. It has a key role in delivering highly critical aspects of Ireland's economic activity including further development of our transport infrastructure and services and the support and enhancement of our significant tourism and sports sectors.

##### Designated Liaison Person

The Designated Liaison Person is a volunteer role within a sports club. The Designated Liaison Person is responsible for ensuring that the standard reporting procedure is followed, so that suspected cases of child neglect or abuse are referred promptly to the designated person in TUSLA Child and Family Agency or in the event of an emergency and the unavailability of TUSLA, to An Garda Síochána.

##### DAF - Dormant Accounts Fund

The Dormant Accounts Fund is the responsibility of the Minister for The Department of Rural and Community Development. Sport Ireland receives Dormant Accounts Funding through the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport to support sport and physical activity initiative to assist in the personal and social development of persons who are economically or socially disadvantaged, the educational development of persons who are educationally disadvantaged or persons with a disability.

##### ESF - European Social Fund

Fund which Sport Ireland has secured 5 year funding to recruit sport development officers to deliver inclusion programmes.

##### ETBs - Education and Training Boards

ETBs are statutory education authorities that have responsibility for education and training, youth work and a range of other statutory functions. ETBs manage and operate second-level schools, further education colleges, pilot community national schools and a range of adult and further education centres delivering education and training programmes.



## Evaluation

Evaluation is the systematic assessment of the design, implementation, outputs and outcomes of an initiative for the purposes of learning, and to inform future decision-making.

## Fitzpatrick & Associates Review of LSPs

The Fitzpatrick & Associates Review of LSPs is a report published by the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism in 2005. The report evaluates the progress of the LSPs with reference to the key aims and objectives, and makes a number of recommendations for the LSP initiative.

## GIW - Get Ireland Walking

The Get Ireland Walking programme is a Sport Ireland initiative that aims to maximise the number of people participating in walking, for health, wellbeing and fitness, throughout Ireland.

## HI - Healthy Ireland

Healthy Ireland, A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing is the national framework for whole of Government and whole of society action to improve the health and wellbeing of people living in Ireland. It sets out four central goals and outlines actions under six thematic areas, in which society can participate to achieve these goals. The Framework identifies a number of broad inter-sectoral actions, one of which commits to the development of a plan to promote increased physical activity levels.

## HSE – Health Service Executive

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

## LCDC - Local Community Development Committees

Under Section 36 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, each local authority must establish a Local Community Development Committee. The aim of the LCDCs is to develop, co-ordinate and implement a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development.

## LSP – Local Sports Partnership

LSPs are an initiative of Sport Ireland and aim to co-ordinate and promote the development of sport at local level. The key aims of the LSPs are to increase participation in sport, and to ensure that local resources are used to best effect. The LSP initiative lies at the heart of Sport Ireland's participation strategy.

## MSP – Mayo Sports Partnership

MMayo Sports Partnership is a sub committee of Mayo County Council and core funded by Sport Ireland. Established in November 2004 its main remit is to increase participation in sport and maximise use of resources at local level.

## NGB – National Governing Body

An organisation, recognised by Sport Ireland, that coordinates the development of a particular sport or sports through constituent clubs.

## NPAP – National Physical Activity Plan

In 2016, the Government launched Ireland's first ever National Physical Activity Plan that aims to get at least half a million more Irish people taking regular exercise within ten years. The key target is to increase the number of people taking regular exercise by 1% a year over ten years by making exercise a normal part of everyday life and giving people more opportunities to be active.

## National Sports Policy

The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport National Sports Policy 2018-2027 which was launched on the 25th July 2018.

## Older People

As used throughout this report, the term older people refers to those over 50 years of age.

## OT – Operation Transformation

Operation Transformation is a health and fitness television show broadcast on RTÉ. Sport Ireland has partnered with Operation Transformation since 2011 to develop a range of events to promote participation in physical activity.

## OD&C – Organisational Development and Change Unit

The Organisational Development and Change Unit within Sport Ireland is primarily focused on providing support to the sports organisations which

receive funding from Sport Ireland including National Governing Bodies and Local Sports Partnerships.

## OCB – Organisational Capability Building

These are the services that the OD&C Unit provide to help develop and build the 8 capability areas for client sports organisations. These 8 capability areas are: Organisational Leadership, Change Management, Risk Management, Strategic Planning, Employee Performance Management, Project Management, Corporate Governance and Stakeholder Engagement.

## PAFHO – Physical Activity for Health Officer

3 year pilot programme funded through Slaintcare. 6 Local Sports Partnerships selected to host an officer who will assist people who have chronic illnesses to a pathway to mainstream LSP programmes.

## SIDO – Sports Inclusion Disability Officer

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

## SOLAS – An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna

SOLAS is the national training and employment agency with responsibility for assisting those seeking employment.

## Single Item Measure – MI

The Single Item Measure – MI is an internationally validated self-report measure which allows one to track an individual's rates of participation in sport and physical activity.

## SPEAK – Strategic Planning, Evaluation and Knowledge system

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

## Sport Ireland

Sport Ireland brings together the Irish Sports Council, National Sports Campus Development Authority, Irish Institute of Sport and Coaching Ireland to form a new, streamlined and dynamic body to drive the future of Irish sport. Sport Ireland is a statutory authority that aims to plan, lead and co-ordinate the sustainable development of competitive and recreational sport in Ireland.

## SIDP - Sports Inclusion Disability Programme

A programme to encourage and facilitate more people with disabilities to participate in sport and physical activity, developing sustainable clubs and programmes in all settings.

## Sustainability (with regard to MSP participation programmes)

A sustainable programme is one which leads to lasting participation in sport and/or physical activity which is capable of being self maintained (without direct LSP support).

## TUSLA - Child and Family Agency

On 1st January 2014 the Child and Family Agency became an independent legal entity, comprising HSE Children and Family Services, the Family Support Agency and the National Educational Welfare Board as well as incorporating some psychological services and a range of services responding to domestic, sexual and gender-based violence. The Child and Family Agency is now the dedicated State agency responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children.

## WIS – Women in Sport

An initiative of Sport Ireland which aims to increase participation of women in sport through provision of alternative opportunities and development of specific programmes targeting women and girls.



Mayo Sports Partnership



Comhpháirtíocht Spóirt Mhaigh Eo

— SPORT IRELAND —

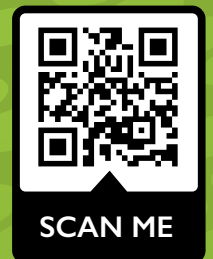
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Comhairle Contae Mhaigh Eo  
Mayo County Council



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