



Pre Budget Submission 2023






FEDERATION OF IRISH SPORT
Irish Sport HQ,
National Sports Campus,
Blanchardstown,
Dublin 15

FEDERATION OF
**IRISH
SPORT**



Sport embodies
who we are
as a nation.
We believe Sport
Matters to all!



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Foreword

The Federation of Irish Sport is the representative body for all the main national governing bodies of sport (NGBs), Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs) and other sporting bodies such as the Olympic Federation of Ireland, Paralympics Ireland, Cara and Ireland Active. These are the organisations that bring sport and physical activity to life throughout the island of Ireland. Collectively they encompass the more than 13,000 clubs that in turn give everyone in the country - young and old - the opportunity to become involved in sport, to be active, and just as importantly to stay active. They work hard to ensure that those participating - be they athletes, volunteers, or supporters- do so in a fun and safe learning environment that is welcoming to all.

‘Sport has the potential to serve as a driver of positive changes in Irish society assisting in the delivery of wider government policy objectives particularly in the areas of public health, education, social integration, tourism, and economic growth. It is important to preserve sport as a public good and realise policy goals through sport.’

In making this submission we are conscious of the many demands on government to help so many different parts of the economy particularly at these most difficult of times. We believe however that sport and physical activity is more important than ever if we are to successfully navigate what lies ahead. However, in recognising the many competing calls on government funding at this time we have also looked to see how the funding for sport might be created in a number of innovative and relevant ways.

As we have found in the past withdrawal of funding for sport has long term impacts that take a great deal of time and energy to repair. We have been delighted that the government has recognised this both in the National Sports Policy 2018-2027, and the subsequent National Sport Policy action plan 2021 -2023.

It is vital that the NGB's and the LSP's have continuing access to the funding necessary to facilitate the achievement of the aims of the National Sports Policy and as we have said on many occasions it is equally important that the government commits to such funding on a multi-annual basis if we are to realise the potential of all funding.



The decisions made and support provided by government in this post pandemic period will define the sport and physical activity sector as well as the wellbeing and health of our nation for generations to come. We must fully harness sport and physical activity sector to improve the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of the nation and support our renewal as a country post-pandemic.

Our submission is made not alone on behalf of our members but also on behalf all who participate in Sport and Physical Activity in Ireland whether they be beginners or those who represent the country at the very highest levels.

Mary O'Connor,
CEO Federation of Irish Sport

Sport Matters... more than ever

Research published (September 2021) by Sport Ireland and Sheffield Hallam University illustrated the value of Sport to Ireland pre-Covid and illustrates to all why Sport matters.

Consumer Expenditure

€3.3bn

- €3.3bn spent by people in Ireland on sport-related goods and services in 2018
- Sport made up 3.1% of all consumer expenditure in Ireland in 2018 (up from 2% in 2008).
- The sport economy has grown faster than the economy as a whole over the last 10 years.

Gross Value Added

€3.7bn

- €3.7bn (GVA) Total value of sport to the Irish economy in 2018.
- The sport economy is driven by the participation elements of sport.
- Sport's economic contribution was 1.4% of total GVA in 2018 (up from 1.1% in 2008).
- A small change in participation rates would have a strong positive impact on the economy.
- Any investment aiming to increase sport participation is likely to be self-financing.

Employment

64,080

- 64,080 people were employed in sport in Ireland in 2018. Sport-related jobs account for 2.8% of all Irish employment, up from 2.1% in 2008

Volunteering

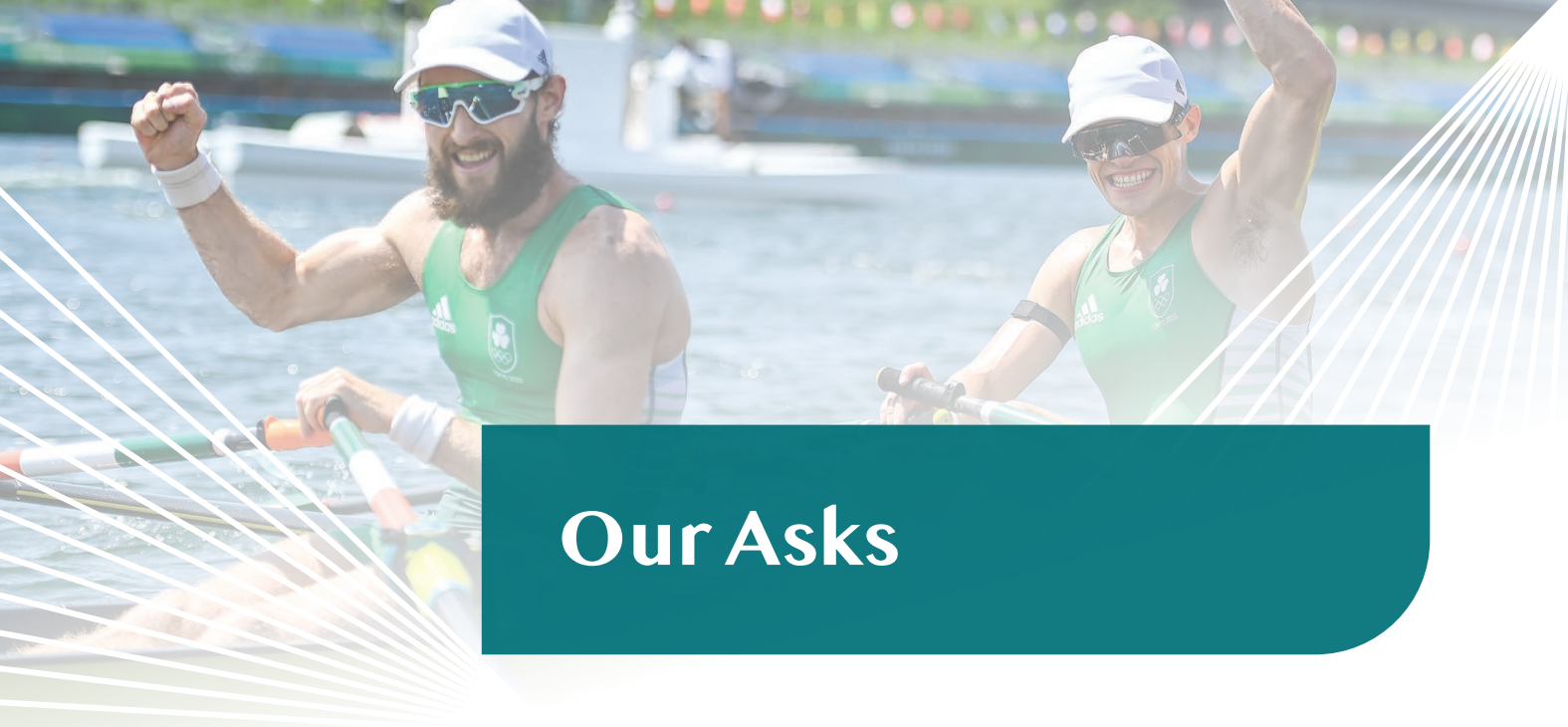
€1.5bn

- Estimated €1.5bn economic value of volunteering in sport and physical activity in Ireland in 2018.

Health

97,000

- 97,000 cases of disease in Ireland in 2019 were prevented by participation in sport and physical activity.
- The net value of health care and wider costs savings achieved was €0.4bn in 2019.



Our Asks



Our overall ask is that the government continues to demonstrate its commitment to the National Sports Policy **by increasing core funding for our members the NGBs and LSPs** in line with its stated ambition to double the level of overall sports funding over the life of the National Sports Policy.

In tandem with that we would ask government to move **to a multi-annual system of core funding for sport and physical activity** by confirming the annual increase in funding in line with the National Sports Policy - thereby giving the NGB's and LSP's the opportunity to plan ahead.



However as previously stated we would also ask government to look seriously at how sport might be supported by reforming elements of our tax system to benefit Sport and Physical Activity.

Action 3.7 of the Sports Policy action plan 2021-2023 contains a number of tax expenditure reforms which at their core seek to help make sporting organisations become more self-sustainable and less reliant on government. The Federation of Irish Sport was given responsibility to drive this action and we have enlisted the support of *A&L Goodbody* to do just that. A full report has been made available, but we felt it important to reference elements of it in this submission as it can and should have important positive implications for both sport, physical activity, and government.

In keeping with seeking to help government find the funding for sport and health related activities we would also ask government to consider -

- committing the allocation of 2.25% of the total amount of betting duty raised annually to establish a support and education body for those most affected by gambling addiction and demonstrate a whole sector approach that gambling has no place in sport.



- redirecting (4.5%) of the sweetened sugar drinks tax exchequer returns to fund a -specific campaign to tackle the obesity problem in Ireland. This tax was created to change behaviors. Entrust sport to accelerate that change as a health intervention.



Finally, we would ask government to look closely at insurance reform. We need Insurance Reforms that will quickly reduce liability premiums to affordable levels. These reforms have been identified but they are not happening fast enough.



Sport : Our Health and ultimately our real wealth

The governments Healthy Ireland Framework and Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025 highlights the role of Sport and Physical activity in increasing the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life. Sport and Physical Activity reduce health inequalities, protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing and create an environment where every individual and sector can play their part in achieving a healthier Ireland.

The truth is that an active population is not just a healthier one but also an economically stronger one. According to findings in a report by (Hafner et al., 2022) it is estimated that between US\$8.7 billion - US\$11.2 billion in present global healthcare expenditure could be saved by making people physically more active. The report also highlights that there is an economic cost associated with physical inactivity and it estimates that by 2025, the global GDP could be between US\$138 billion – US\$338 billion higher with increased activity, compared to current physical activity levels.[1]

In an Irish context increasing physical activity could substantially reduces the estimated cost to the health budget of €1.5 billion per annum due to obesity and physical inactivity. The seeds to reverse this ever-increasing bill must be sown now.

Sport has the potential to serve as a driver of positive changes in Irish society assisting in the delivery of wider government policy objectives particularly in the areas of public health, education, social integration, tourism, and economic growth. It is important to preserve sport as a public good and realise policy goals through sport.

It is proven and agreed that the legacy of the Covid19 pandemic will have consequences for the Sport and Physical Activity sector in Ireland as evidenced in the recently published Irish Sport Monitor (ISM) report published in June 2022.

According to the Irish Sports Monitor Report for 2021 the Covid-19 Pandemic saw significant fluctuations in Physical Activity Levels and has hampered progress towards the National Sports Policy targets.



[1] Hafner, M., Yerushalmi, E., Phillips, W., Pollard, J., Deshpande, A., Whitmore, M., Millard, F., Subel, S. and Van Stolk, C., 2022. The economic benefits of a more physically active population: An international analysis. [online] Rand.org. Available at: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR4291.html

Key findings from the ISM report

- In 2019 46% of Adults were regularly* playing sport (*excluding recreational walking) however in 2021 that was down to 40% it is worth noting that in this context that the National Sport Policy target is 60%.
- Social participation in sport has fallen across all three areas surveyed during this ISM wave. Overall, 32% of the population regularly participate socially in sport, a decline from 47% in 2019.
- The numbers participating socially in sport have fallen by similar levels across the board. Three in ten (30%) report being a member of a sports club (2019: 36%), 9% report attending a sporting event (2019: 19%) and 7% report volunteering at sport (2019: 12%).
- Across all three activities, some of the largest declines in social participation have come in key age groups. These include 20-34 year old club members (2021: 35%; 2019: 45%), attendance at events among 35-54 year olds (2021: 12%; 2019: 25%) and volunteers in the 45-54 age group (2021: 11%; 2019: 20%).



- The social gradient in activity levels which began to emerge between the 2017 and 2019 ISM waves has significantly worsened in 2021. Significantly stronger rates of growth in activity levels among those of higher socio-economic status mean that a social gap in overall physical activity has opened up which did not exist four years ago.

If the targets set out in the National Sports Policy are to be realised, then the main providers of sport and physical activity in this country our NGB's and LSP's need to be resourced accordingly and have certainty in their funding. Their volunteers are the biggest single supporter of their work and they need to be supported and resourced through policy and planning. Volunteers in sport are the number one driver of volunteerism in Ireland with estimated economic value of volunteering in sport and physical activity on an annual basis at €1.5 billion. Sport builds social cohesion. It unites our communities old and new. It is the constant pulse in every community and its strength should not be taken for granted.

Finally, in our 2022 pre-budget submission we stated that there has never been a better opportunity to harness the multifaceted power of sport for our country and we repeat that belief for 2023. We believe that an increased investment now and taxation reform will have a disproportionate positive impact for generations to come. Investing in prevention is the key, otherwise as a nation we will end up paying way over the odds for a cure.



What our members are saying

In June 2022 research was conducted on behalf of the Federation of Irish Sport by the Research and Development unit of the Sport and Recreation Alliance UK covering topics such as Covid19, organisational priorities, opportunities, and barriers, funding, and the **National Sports Policy Sports Action Plan 2021- 2023**.

The key findings from the research are outlined below

Impact of Covid 19

- More NGB's have seen a reduction in the number of their members (59%) than have seen growth (41%). *(For NGB's that have seen a reduction in the number of members, the average level is down 23%)*
- More NGB's have seen a reduction in affiliated clubs (54%) than have seen an increase (45%). *(For NGBS that have seen a reduction in the number of affiliated clubs, the average level is down 14%.)*
- More NGBs have seen a reduction in their estimated number of participants (66%) than have seen an increase (33%). *(For the NGBs that have seen a reduction in the number of individual participants is down 45%.)*
- Responding NGBs identified that young people (teenagers and young adults), and most specifically teenage girls were the key groups that have been disproportionately negatively impacted by Covid 19.
- LSP's reported a net increase of 9% in the estimated number of people participating in physical activity.
- LSPs identified older people (those aged 65+) as the specific group to have been disproportionately negatively impacted by Covid 19.
- 83% of NGBs indicated that they had not recovered financially from the impact of Covid19. The average number of years NGBs projected it would take for their organisation to have fully recovered is 11 years.
- In contrast, LSPs presented a more positive picture with 55% reporting they had already recovered financially. For those not to have yet recovered the average estimated the recovery time was 8 years.
- When asked what the biggest impact of Covid19 on their organisation has been, or the community it serves, 90% provided a response that can be summarised as: 'A legacy of disruption to participation and events at grassroots level'.

Organisational Priorities, Actions, Barriers

Members were asked to consider the next 12 months and what their top three priorities and actions were for their organisation.

They indicated that their top 3 priorities for the next 12 months are:

1. Grassroot clubs/memberships
2. Organisational Recovery/funding/staffing
3. Strategic Planning/Organisational Development

Top 3 actions to meet these priorities over the next 12 months:

1. Planning/Strategy Generation
2. Relationship Building/networking/external stakeholder engagement
3. Securing Funding and Revenue Generation

It should be noted that 'delivering core priorities', 'liaising with / convening key internal stakeholders', and 'engaging with Sport Ireland' were other actions that were also 'bubbling under the surface' for respondents.

The top 3 challenges / barriers respondents cited over the next 12 months are:

1. Organisational capacity to achieve priorities
2. A lack of strategic support
3. Volunteering, or a lack of volunteers

When asked what were the most important elements of the 2021-2023 action plan respondents identified the following (ranked in order):

1. Funding/investment
2. Co-ordination of strategic plans and actions
3. Grassroot participation
4. Facilities

Respondents were also asked their support for ring fencing portions of money raised from the betting levy and sugar taxes to fund sport and physical activity. The results show that 100% of organisations support the ring fencing of funds from the sugar tax (with 70% 'strongly' supporting and 21% offering 'general' support). 97% of respondents support ringfencing funds from the Betting Tax, with 70% offering full support, 18% offer 'general' support, and 9% offering 'limited support'.

This finding is consistent with the rest of the results from our survey that shows increasing sourced of funding for the sector as a key consideration for members.



Our Asks





Ask #1. Increase Core Funding for NGBs & LSPs' and commit to multi-annual funding

In 2018 the commitment was made by government at the launch of the National Sport Policy to double funding for Sport by 2027. It is the view of the Federation of Irish Sport that one of the priority stakeholders for the successful implementation of the National Sports Policy are the NGB's and the LSP's given their expertise in delivering relevant sports and activity programmes and also their close relationships with the many loyal volunteers (mostly club members) associated with their organisations – the volunteers that are essential to the delivery of all sport in Ireland.

It has always been our contention, and that of our members that it is essential that the government's commitment to doubling sports funding (over the ten-year life of the NSP) should be done incrementally, year on year, every year. Never has this been more important than for 2023.

We are calling on government in 2023 to deliver the monies already identified in the National Sports Policy to double the funding for sport over the ten years of the NSP and when aligned to the funding commitment being multi annual it will lead to transformative outcomes and sustained impacts on a cross section of Irish society.

Core funding for NGBs increased from €10.8 million in 2018 to €13.845 million in 2020 and remained flat at €13.8m in 2021 with a €1.5 million increase delivered in 2022. It is important to note that the core funding of €15m in 2022 is distributed across 58 NGB's.

A stated focus of Sport Ireland is to assist NGBs and LSP's to develop sustainable and effective structures with the aim of increasing numbers of participants and volunteers in sport and ensuring long term sustainability of NGBs and for LSP's to deliver participation opportunities in local communities. The core grant covers the implementation of strategic plans and participation programmes, coach development, the hosting of events, the employment of professional staff and the administration costs of developing and delivering the sport.

Sport Ireland has outlined its priorities for sport in 2023 as being diversity & inclusion along with improved governance & greater gender balance. Our network of NGB's and LSP's will be key in the delivery of all these priorities.

As we have outlined our members have self identified the multitude of challenges they face to deliver all priorities in 2023. Our members face huge challenges and the number one barrier our members cited for the next 12 months is organisational capacity to achieve priorities. This was further underpinned that for our members the number one element for the 2021-2023 NSP Action plan is funding and investment.

In addition to seeking increased investment in sport in Budget 2023, The FIS believes it would be timely at this point of time for the National Sports Policy to introduce multi-annual funding for Sport Ireland. This would allow Sport Ireland to provide for multi-annual funding to the NGBs and LSPs.

This was first mooted in 2014 by our Tanaiste Mr Leo Varadker TD. who was at that time Minister for Sport but it has not come to fruition for core funding despite the Minister stating that :

‘This measure would benefit NGB’s by facilitating the development of more strategic and longer term planning for their sports, and would provide them with more certainty around their funding than currently exists’

Tanaiste Mr Leo Varadker TD

In addition to facilitating improved budgeting, the provision of *multi-annual funding would allow: -

- **Recruitment**

Multi- annual funding would provide security of tenure for those employed by NGBs. This in turn would facilitate recruitment by increasing the attractiveness of a career in Irish sport particularly to high quality candidates who are likely to have offers in various different countries.

- **Improved strategic planning**

This is particularly important given the cyclical nature of sport and the necessary long term strategic planning to ensure both retention, growth and emerging high performance talent. Multi-annual funding would also allow for the implementation of long-term sports development projects difficult at present given the annual nature of funding.

- **Value for Money**

This would provide for a more efficient use of resources compared to the amount of work and time involved in the annual process.

*Multi-annual budgeting describes a more modern approach to budgeting whereby budgets are planned for the medium term and not just for a period of one year.

Sport has an incredible and unique power to do social good for society and increased investment in sport and physical activity in Budget 2023 can ensure that our NGBS' and LSP's work will continue to deliver impactful outcomes and make a positive impact on people's lives.



Ask #2. Taxation Reform

Avail of Opportunities by making some simple changes to the taxation system as it applies to sport

Action 3.7 Sports Policy Action Plan 2021 – 2023

In 2018, the Irish Government published the National Sports Policy 2018 – 2027 (Policy). As noted in the foreword to that document the publication of the Policy represented an important milestone for the Irish sporting community. The emphasis of Government when launching the Policy was the importance of sport to people's lives, the positive effect that a physically active lifestyle has for physical and mental health (with a particular focus on tackling obesity) and the wider benefit to the State in terms of economic and societal benefits.

Following an extensive consultation process and consideration of international best practice, the Policy sets out a vision for Irish sport in 2027 along with 57 actions to transform the Irish sporting landscape. The Sports Policy Action Plan 2021 – 2023 (Action Plan) forms part of the Policy and focusses on near term developments to progress the overall strategy.

Action 3 of the Action Plan deals specifically with funding requirements.

Taxation reform is highlighted as means of assisting the drive for more funding/ available income for sporting bodies and to incentivise sport participation with a number of key taxation reforms highlighted in that vein.

The need for tax reform in this area becomes particularly acute when one considers the impact of COVID-19. The pandemic impacted sport in so many ways and despite the welcome government assistance during this period serious damage was caused to the NGB's and LSP's in terms of membership and finance.

Whilst the pandemic confirmed the validity of the Policy, it is beyond dispute the significant damage caused to the State's sporting organisations, in particular financially but also from an engagement perspective. Action needs to be taken now to assist with rebuilding and future proofing these organisations with an overall objective of making them more self- sustainable into the future.

FIS is of the view that the time is right to now bring these Action Plan proposals forward to be taken on board in the context of Budget 2023 and further budgetary deliberations. The proposals fall under the following headings and in order of preference:

1. Extending relief on donations to approved sporting bodies.
2. VAT relief for sporting bodies.
3. Granting of charitable status to those NGBs and LSPs who wish to pursue that option.
4. Tax-driven incentives for personal exercise.

We include a summary outline of each on the next page.



Proposed legislative amendments

S. 847A TCA relief on donations to approved sporting bodies

1. Extending relief on donations to approved sporting bodies

To enable the ease and Incentivisation of donation giving to approved sporting bodies the proposals (in order of preference) are:

1. Monetary threshold: eliminate the €250 eligibility threshold such that all donations qualify for relief regardless of quantum.
2. Current expenditure: extend relief to certain current expenditure, in particular expenditure on sporting equipment and coaching.
3. Small cash donations: introduce relief for small cash donations (€50 or less) to S. 235 TCA approved sporting bodies in respect of all individual donations by way of standard 25% top-up payment (with appropriate limitations).
4. Administration: system of Enduring / Annual Certificates for qualifying donors / donations in excess of small cash donations to align administration with charitable giving (with adjustment given relief at marginal rather than a blended rate).
5. High earner restriction: removing the current inclusion of S. 847A TCA relief from the high earner restriction.

2.VAT relief for sporting bodies

To mitigate the VAT cost incurred by sporting bodies and incentivize personal exercise:

1. Compensation Scheme: introduce a VAT compensation scheme similar to that in place currently for charities.
2. Exercise classes: introduce the second reduced rate of VAT (9%) to the supply of sport or physical exercise classes (given the adjustment to the EU VAT Directive having effect from 6 April 2022).

3.Granting of Charitable status to those NGBs and LSPs who wish to pursue that option

The Charities Act 2009 specifically excludes approved sporting bodies by reference to S. 235 TCA. In line with international precedent and FIS' Vision for Irish Sport, the proposal is to extend charitable status to NGBs and LSPs on an opt-in / opt-out basis. This would result in potential tax benefits for qualifying bodies (e.g. donation giving, VAT, business rates) and align the status of sporting bodies with their inherent societal and cultural benefits.

4. Tax-driven incentives for personal exercise

With a view to incentivizing personal exercise amongst the wider population:

1. Introduce a system of tax refund on qualifying costs associated with personal / recreational exercise.
2. Introduce an Employee Exercise Scheme modelled on the Cycle-to- Work scheme under which willing employers make a per annum purchase of personal / recreational exercise membership on behalf of the employee to a maximum of €500 as a non-taxable benefit-in-kind.

Given the nature of these measures it is proposed the Department of Finance engage with FIS and certain numbers of its members in design and implementation of these proposals.

In conclusion, in relation to Action 3.7 FIS proposes the following legislative amendments

Action 3.7 proposed legislative amendments

1. **S. 847A TCA** : €250 threshold; non-capital; cash donations; admin & HER
2. **VAT relief** : VAT Compensation Scheme; exercise class reduced rate
3. **Charitable status** : Extend charitable status to NGBs / LSPs
4. **Incentivisation of personal exercise** :
Tax credit / deduction; Employee Exercise Scheme



Ask #3. Tackling Gambling Addiction

Use part of the Betting Levy to set up an educational body to tackle gambling addiction

The Federation of Irish Sport is calling on the Government to allocate funds to establish a support and education body for those most affected by gambling addiction. Deliberate, focused and sustained interventions must be taken to combat the spiralling gambling harms in Ireland. We propose that the funds be equivalent to **2.25% of the total amount of Betting Duty raised annually.**

Sport has long been recognised as a wonderful platform to reach a much wider audience. For instance, major brands today annually spend well in excess of €150 million in the Irish market on sponsorship of major sporting events and also on the individual sports stars that we have in our country. These brands that are usually household names do this as they recognise the power of sport in reaching audiences, they wish to have a relationship with.

Even more interesting has been the trend in recent years for companies to invest in sport as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility programmes. In this instance they are harnessing the reach of sport to bring home serious messages. In the case of rugby Zurich Insurance have invested serious funds with Rugby Players Ireland in

their “Tackle your Feelings” campaign to highlight how mental illness can impact everyone including even the strongest of athletes.

Irish Life has backed the GAA's innovative “Healthy Clubs” for quite a number of years. This programme, which has been recognised internationally, uses the GAA club as a conduit to tackle many health issues in local communities countrywide. The programme features modules to tackle alcohol and drug addiction; obesity; activity for older people; social inclusion and many other issues. It is being rolled out to more and more clubs / communities every year.

The Federation believe that there is a real opportunity to do something similar for Gambling which would capitalize on the fact that the Federation acts for over 100 NGB's and LSP's countrywide and through them opens up a network of over 13000 clubs.

We must harness the power of Sport and the audience it has created to challenge any entity that would seek to undermine the true value of sport to so many.

The Health Research Board 2019-2020 report found that there are 137,000 people who experience problematic gambling, in Ireland – across the categories of ‘low-risk’ (90,000), ‘moderate risk’ (35,000) and ‘problem gamblers’ (12,000). These data would appear to indicate that a person has a 1 in 3 chance of progressing to the next highest ‘risk-level’ if no harm-reduction intervention is made. As such, it is imperative to implement early interventions in order to prevent escalating levels of gambling-related harm – both for the individuals who gamble and their loved ones (including child dependents).

The most recent European School Survey (2019), found that Irish males, aged 15-16, had a problem gambling prevalence rate of 1.7%. This is more than 5 times the rate of the general population (0.3%) and more than 3 times the rate of 15-24-year-olds (0.5%). As all addictions are progressive – meaning that the level of harm escalates over time - this is an extremely worrying situation.

The Extern Problem Gambling website, www.problemgambling.ie has reported dramatic increases in New User traffic, since 2019 – with a 47% increase in 2020 and a year-on-year increase of 45% in 2021. In total, the site received 53,230 New Users in the three years, 2019-2021. Their counselling service has also seen a 50% increase in women seeking treatment for gambling addiction, since 2016.

A 2014 U.K. study (Wardle & Gibbons) found that professional footballers and cricketers were 3 times more likely to develop a gambling problem, than the general public. A 2020 Swedish Study of coaches and elite athletes, across four sporting codes, found that ‘2% of female athletes and 13% of male athletes were classified as being ‘at risk for gambling problems’. This equates to over 3 times the ‘low risk’ prevalence for Irish males and double the prevalence for Irish females.

Early intervention is the most cost-effective and societally beneficial approach to reduce gambling related harms. In 2010, the Institute for Public Health estimated that “the health and social costs of problem gambling appear to exceed government revenue gained from gambling taxes and businesses. Waiting for a person to hit ‘rock-bottom’ before they seek help, can have a devastating impact on the individual, their loved ones and wider society.



As Archbishop Desmond Tutu famously said: “There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they’re falling in.”

There is a severe lack of problem gambling harm prevention interventions in Ireland. We propose targeted interventions, aimed at one of the highest risk groups in Irish society. While people who are engaged in sports are less likely to smoke cigarettes and misuse alcohol or illicit substances, they are at a much higher risk of experiencing gambling related harm and/or addiction. For many sportspeople, gambling is the most obvious ‘vice of choice’.

In Australia, the ‘Love The Game Not The Odds’ campaign has had 730 sporting clubs sign up, in the Victoria region alone.

The campaign was inspired by research from Deakin University, which found that 75% of children aged 8-16 could recall at least one gambling brand – with 25% able to recall four or more. The campaign encourages sporting clubs and bodies to raise awareness of the potential harms associated with gambling, as well as reminding players and spectators that sport and gambling are not one and the same thing.

In the UK, the charity, ‘Sporting Chance’, which provides mental health supports to professional sportspeople, runs a ‘Gambling Awareness Treatment & Education’ program (GATE). This program raises awareness of the potential harms associated with gambling, as well as providing signposting to specialist gambling addiction treatment services.

We propose that funding be allocated to:

- Awareness raising campaigns to warn sportspeople and the wider community of the potential harms associated with gambling.
- Targeted educational interventions, to provide sportspeople, coaches and others involved in sports, with information of the warning signs of a gambling problem and signposting information on specialist helpline and treatment services.
- Dedicated, specialist helpline and treatment services to support anyone seeking help for their own gambling, or that of a loved one, as a result of the awareness raising and education interventions.

This Ask is in partnership with Extern Problem Gambling



Ask #4. Sugar Tax Reallocation

Use the Sugar Sweetened Drinks Tax to combat obesity

We are asking government to commit to allocating 4.5% of the total amount of the sweetened sugar drinks tax raised annually to combat childhood and adolescent obesity. International data suggests that a massive increase in sugar consumption is behind the current obesity epidemic[1]. In Ireland the cost of obesity and physical inactivity is €1.5 billion a year to the health budget.

The Federation of Irish Sport strongly believes that as part of Budget 2023 provision should be made for a broad range of interventions at the key habit-forming stages of life – childhood & adolescence.

Childhood and adolescent obesity are one of the major problems facing us as a nation today. Research worldwide points to the fact that obesity at a young age results in major healthcare problems during an individual's lifetime, with a corresponding long-term impact on the healthcare budget for decades to come. If ever there was a need for preventative action this must be it. The budget for the "cure" does not bear thinking about.

And in truth that later healthcare is only part of the story with obesity leading to so many other problems in terms of mental health, social exclusion, and inability to participate in many activities. And yet there is a solution and a solution that is readily available in this country. Active participation in sport and physical activity is that solution. Instil a love of physical activity from an early age and nurture it at every stage of an individual's growth and development. Not alone do we have the structure to tackle the problem through our schools and sports clubs, Irish sport also has the sports men and women that children look up to. They could and should be at the heart of any programmes.

The sugar sweetened tax was created to stimulate behavioural change among Irish society away from the consumption of high-sugar products. While the tax is a financial disincentive, education is key in driving any behavioural change. Provision of focused and sustained resourcing will be a preventative measure rather than the tax acting solely as a revenue raiser.

The Active School Flag (ASF) was launched in 2009 and is a Department of Education and Skills initiative supported by Healthy Ireland, and part of the National Physical Activity Plan.

The Active School Flag aims to get 'more schools more active more often' (www.activeschoolflag.ie). The ASF identifies four 'pillars' which are supportive of PA promotion in schools, and which schools are required to address in order to achieve the flag. The four pillars are: (1) physical activity, (2) physical education, (3) community partnerships (pupils, parents, local communities and national agencies) and (4) Active School Week.

In 2018 a research team from DCU asked ASF coordinators from primary schools what they perceived the BENEFITS of participating in the ASF programme were for their school. This is what they said:

- **Less active children became more active - 97.9%**
- **Greater variety of physical activity opportunities at school - 96.9%**
- **Improves children's concentration and focus - 95.3%**
- **Less active children more positively disposed to physical activity - 95.3%**
- **Creates a more positive school atmosphere - 94.3%**
- **Provides opportunities for student voice - 93.7%**
- **Improves teacher-pupil relations - 90.6%**
- **Encourages collaborative PE planning - 89.0%**

There are 3,300 primary schools in Ireland and currently 809 primary schools, attended by 144,829 pupils, hold ASF status. It is the strong view of FIS that to 'get more schools more active more often' then resourcing of the provision of this service need to improve and additional spend made available to schools to assist in delivering this option.

[1] The Lancet (a UK medical journal): NCD Risk Factor Collaboration. Worldwide trends in body-mass index, underweight, overweight, and obesity from 1975 to 2016: a pooled analysis of 2416 population-based measurement studies in 128.9 million children, adolescents, and adults. The Lancet, 2017; S0140-6736(17)321293.



We propose actions such as

- An increase in support for schools to achieve the Active School flag by providing specific funding for NGB's, LSP'S and registered practitioners to deliver programmes in schools to achieve Active School Flag certification.
- An increase in support for after school sports clubs.
- Healthy Pupils Capital fund – to give children access to top quality PE equipment.
- Educating children and Parents on the benefits of a simple, active lifestyle.

Further to the actions proposed above the Federation of Irish Sport endorse the recommendations of research conducted by Safefood entitled 'Public acceptability of policies to address obesity Findings' which states that

- All children and young people should have the opportunity to develop practical food skills and knowledge on healthy eating during their education. This should be supported by the provision of the necessary facilities to support education on eating healthily, learning essential cooking skills and staying physically active in all schools.
- The marketing of unhealthy foods including digital marketing should be restricted, particularly marketing to children. The development and implementation of further mandatory codes of practice on marketing unhealthy foods for both adults and children should be considered.

[1] [https://www.safefood.net/getattachment/8749e59c-9fdc-4819-ac64-e2d73f4e2f61/Public-acceptability-of-policies-to-address-obesity-Final-\(1\).pdf](https://www.safefood.net/getattachment/8749e59c-9fdc-4819-ac64-e2d73f4e2f61/Public-acceptability-of-policies-to-address-obesity-Final-(1).pdf)



There are 3,300 primary schools in Ireland and currently 809 primary schools, attended by 144,829 pupils, hold ASF status. It is the strong view of FIS that to 'get more schools more active more often' then resourcing of the provision of this service need to improve and additional spend made available to schools to assist in delivering the Active School Flag programme.



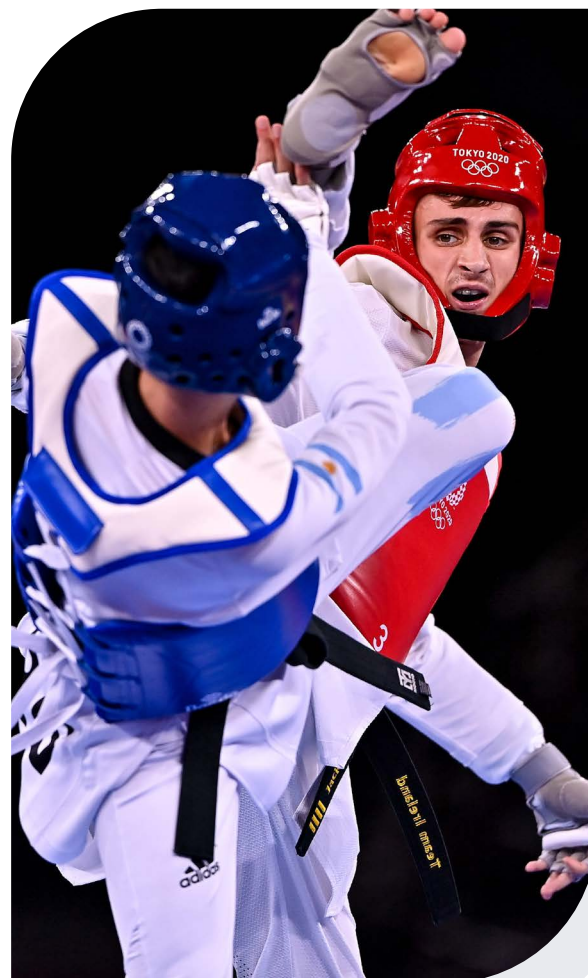
Ask #5. Insurance Reform

Recognise the burden that Insurance costs are placing on the delivery of sport in Ireland and undertake some much needed reforms

The cost of insurance continues to have a negative impact on our sector with our members experiencing increases in excesses and new exclusions which is preventing them from providing certain services, their capacity to facilitate programmes and ultimately inhibiting their ability to grow as organisations. Post-Covid the cost of insurance continues to act as a significant barrier to recovery, and will continue to hamper our sector unless it is materially resolved as a matter of urgency.

“ Action 4.5 in the Sports Policy document reads “
Convene regular sport sector stakeholder forums to facilitate collation of insurance pricing data to inform six-monthly Ministerial presentations to the Cabinet Committee on Insurance Reform.”

It is our understanding that initial work has begun on this action and such presentations are welcome but, the fact is we need urgent action.



We need insurance reforms that will quickly reduce liability premiums to affordable levels and keep them that way. These reforms have been identified but they are not happening fast enough.



We urge the Government to ensure that sufficient funding is in place to allow for the following to happen:

- Enactment and commencement this year of duty of care amendments to the Occupiers Liability Act 1995
- Enactment and commencement this year of the Personal Injuries Resolution Board Bill 2022
- Rapid consolidation of the Judicial Guidelines in the courts and transparency as to awards in cases where the Guidelines apply
- An acceleration of the work of the Insurance Competition Office at the Department of Finance to ensure the urgent entry of more underwriters into the Irish liability insurance market



Our Members

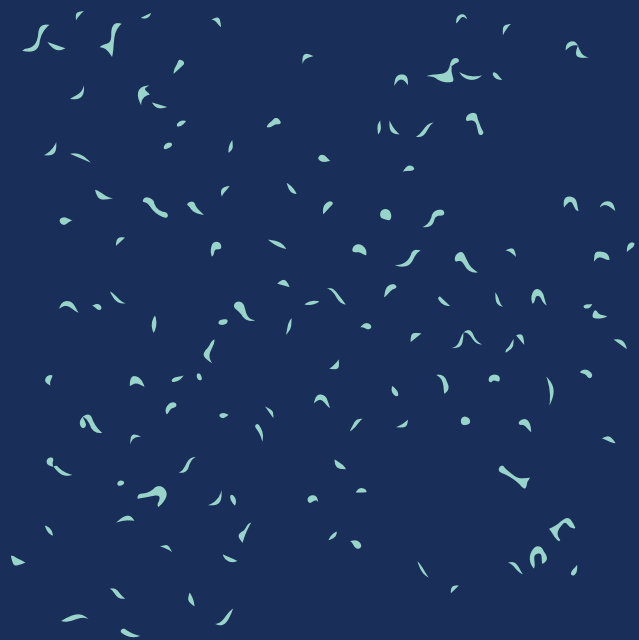
National Governing Bodies

- Angling Council of Ireland
- Archery Ireland
- Athletics Ireland
- Badminton Ireland
- Basketball Ireland
- Baton Twirling Association of Ireland
- Ból Chumann na hÉireann
- Bowling League of Ireland
- The Camogie Association
- Canoeing Ireland
- CARA Sport Inclusion Ireland
- Community Games
- Cricket Ireland
- Croquet Association
- Cycling Ireland
- Deaf Sports Ireland
- Fencing Ireland
- Football Association of Ireland
- Gaelic Athletic Association
- GAA Handball
- Golf Ireland
- Gymnastics Ireland
- Hockey Ireland
- Horse Shoe Pitchers Ass of Ireland
- Horse Sport Ireland
- Ice Skating Association of Ireland
- Indoor Bowling Association
- Inline Hockey
- Ireland Active
- Irish Amateur Wrestling Association
- Irish American Football Association
- Irish Athletic Boxing Association
- Irish Cheer Sport Association
- Irish Clay Target Shooting Association
- Irish Flying Disk Association
- Irish Ice Hockey Association
- Irish Judo Association
- Irish Kidney Association - Sport
- Irish Martial Arts Commission
- Irish Olympic Handball Association
- Irish Orienteering
- Irish Rugby Football Union
- Irish Sailing
- Irish Squash
- Irish Surfing Association
- Irish Table Tennis Association
- Irish Tae Kwon Do Union
- Irish Ten Pin Bowling Association
- Irish Tug of War Association
- Irish Underwater Council (Diving)
- Irish Water Safety Sport
- Irish Waterski & Wakeboard
- Irish Wheelchair Association Sport
- Karate ONAKAI
- Lacrosse Ireland
- Ladies Gaelic Football Association
- Motor Cycle Union of Ireland
- Motorsport Ireland
- Mountaineering Ireland
- National Aero Club of Ireland
- National Coarse Fishing Federation of Ireland
- National Target Shooting Association of Ireland
- Olympic Federation of Ireland
- Paralympics Ireland
- Pentathlon Ireland
- Pitch and Putt Union of Ireland
- Racquetball Association of Ireland
- Rowing Ireland
- Rugby League Ireland
- Snooker & Billiards Ireland (RIBSA)
- Snowsport Association of Ireland
- Softball Ireland
- Special Olympics
- Speleological Union of Ireland
- Student Sport Ireland
- Swim Ireland
- Tennis Ireland
- Triathlon Ireland
- Vision Sports Ireland
- Volleyball Association of Ireland
- Weightlifting Ireland

Local Sports Partnerships

- Carlow
- Cavan
- Clare
- Cork
- Donegal
- Dublin City Sport and Recreation
- Dun Laoghaire Rathdown
- Fingal
- Galway
- Kerry
- Kildare
- Kilkenny
- Laois
- Leitrim
- Limerick
- Longford
- Louth
- Mayo
- Meath
- Monaghan
- Offaly
- Roscommon
- Sligo
- South Dublin County
- Tipperary
- Waterford
- Westmeath
- Wexford
- Wicklow





For more information
contact :
Mary O'Connor at
mary.oconnor@irishsport.ie

FEDERATION OF IRISH SPORT
Irish Sport HQ,
National Sports Campus,
Blanchardstown,
Dublin 15

FEDERATION OF
**IRISH
SPORT**

