



# Basketball Ireland

## Annual Report



# 2024/25





### National Basketball Committees and Chairs

- Elite Performance Committee (EPC) – Deirdre Brennan
- National Area Boards Committee (NABC) – Jason Thornton
- National League Committee (NLC) – Mike Heskin
- National Basketball Referees Association (NBRA) – Jim Dudley
- Commissioner Table Officials Committee (CTOC) – Rovena Fahey
- National Basketball Colleges Committee (NBCC) – Darren McGovern
- Post Primary Schools Committee (PPSC) – Marie O’Toole
- Primary Schools Mini Basketball Committee (PSMNC) – Noel Keating

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#Greenmeansgo



# Board of Directors



**S**eamas Donnelly is Professor and Head of Medicine at Trinity College Dublin. He coaches at Meteors Basketball Club and was named underage Women's Coach of the Year at the Basketball Ireland Annual Awards in 2023. He has coached at national, provincial and club level over recent years.

He previously played national league basketball with Galway Democrats and with North Mon in the Cork Leagues. He has served previously on the Board of Basketball Ireland and currently serves as Chairperson of the Hall of Fame Committee and as medical advisor to Basketball Ireland.

**P**aul McDevitt, FCCA Registered Auditor & Accountant, has been a partner in McDevitt & McGlynn since 1992. Paul has extensive experience in dealing with SME's and Not For Profit Organisations advising them on taxation, financial, corporate governance and auditing matters.

Treasurer of both the NWAB and the NABC, Paul has been a director since 2018 and served as Chair of the Board for 4 years from 2019-2023. He is actively involved in coaching at both club and Area Board level.



**B**ill McCotter is an SME owner and director operating in the retail and commercial property sectors. Specialising in the set up of international fashion brands in the UK and Irish retail markets Bill has provided consulting on planning, distribution, marketing and financing for route to market.

Bill is a founding member of Belfast Star in 1964 with 60 years of experience in various roles within the Irish basketball community. Having played, coached and served as an administrator in various committee's most recently as a member of the NLC, Bill has extensive knowledge of basketball in Ireland at all levels. He is currently president of Belfast Star and director of an independent fashion agency.

**T**heresa Walsh is a public servant with vast experience in a variety of administration roles.

Theresa has been involved in basketball for over 30 years as an administrator, player, coach, technical officer (at both local and national levels) and as the President of Basketball Ireland, serving in the role for two terms, from 2016 to 2020.



**M**ichael Ryan has been involved in basketball in Ireland since his school days at all levels as a player, coach and in the past as a referee. He is a member of the BI FinARC committee. Michael is a Chartered Accountant, Chartered Tax Adviser and a member of the Institute of Directors.

Michael brings a wealth of experience in financial management and corporate governance to the board. He has recently retired as a partner in a leading law firm and currently acts as a director of a number of companies and serves on the governing body of a third-level educational institution.

**C**ommercially focussed founder, CEO and entrepreneur. Dr. Brendan O'Brien has founded and scaled three Irish startups and led them to international acquisition. Significant experience in global marketing, business development and sales, with deep expertise in digital transformation, data derived insights, IoT and new business models. Active in multiple sports and previously represented Ireland at World and European level in Orienteering and Mountain Running.

Currently Director & Chair Finance/Risk at 'The Wheel'. Chairperson of Adventure Racing Ireland. Former High-Performance Director and Chairperson of Irish Orienteering Association. Formerly a board member of multiple organisations in Ireland and the USA.



**D**olores Geaney has been involved in basketball since school, as a player, coach and referee and subsequently in club basketball in Galway and Dublin, in a player and management capacity. Geaney is currently chair of Meteors Ladies Basketball Club and part of the Irish senior women's management team.

Professionally, Geaney has worked in the financial services industry for over 25 years, at company director and C-suite level, focusing on governance, strategy, integration, change management, and regulation.

**S**usan Johnston is a former scientist, now management consultant with Deloitte UK and has extensive experience working with clients across the pharmaceutical industry and public sector. With a specific focus in R&D innovation, Susan has advised clients on strategy development, operating model design and supported large scale programme implementation.

She has been involved with basketball for most of her life, primarily as a player for Phoenix Basketball Club, but also as a coach, table official and former board member of Basketball Northern Ireland.



**N**uala Walsh is a global advisor, non-executive director, and behavioural scientist with three decades in global investment management.

She is CEO at MindEquity Consulting, Advisor at World Athletics, and Deputy Chair at The Football Association's Inclusion Board. Other appointments include Founding Director, Global Association of Behavioural Scientists; President of Harvard Club of Ireland; Trustee at The Innocence Project; and advisor at JDH executive search.

Recognized among the Top 100 Most Influential Women in Finance, former positions include Vice-Chair, UN Women (UK), and Chief Marketing Officer at Standard Life Aberdeen. She has led many high-profile sports campaigns in tennis, rugby, golf, and motor racing.

# CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Prof. Seamas Donnelly



**W**e can reflect on another successful year at Basketball Ireland, we took the next step towards a new National Basketball Arena with planning permission granted last November, we grew our registered membership by 9% and our domestic game goes from strength-to-strength, complimented by our recent partnership with Domino's as Men's and Women's Super League and Division One title sponsors.

Commercially it has been a strong year, in August we announced our six-year partnership with Nike, it's wonderful to see the iconic swoosh on our international playing jerseys and to have the world's number one sports brand aligned with Basketball Ireland. We followed it up with partnership announcements with AIG as our new Club and Community Partner and the aforementioned Domino's title partnership.

On the international front I'd like to thank Mark Keenan and his coaching staff for their exceptional service over the last six years. Mark's contribution to Irish international basketball has been immense, from winning the FIBA European Championship for Small Countries in 2021, to leading our Irish men's team on their return to FIBA EuroBasket and most recently picking up three wins in our inaugural FIBA Basketball World Cup 2027 Qualifying campaign.

I'd also like to extend my gratitude to all our international coaches, staff, and players - from senior to underage - who dedicate so much time and energy in representing Ireland. The future looks bright too, with a host of fine performances a FIBA Youth EuroBasket last summer, including a fifth-place finish in the FIBA U20 Women's EuroBasket. Our U20 men also secured three wins, while there were five wins at both FIBA U18 Women's EuroBasket and FIBA U18 EuroBasket. Our U16's had plenty of success too, with four wins at the FIBA U16 Women's EuroBasket and three at FIBA U16 EuroBasket.

I'd also like to congratulate Claire Melia on her silver medal at the FIBA EuroCup Women with her Spanish club Baxi Ferrol, a tremendous achievement. She came through the Irish underage set-up and is the first Irish woman to play in a FIBA European final, she truly is an inspiration to those picking up a basketball.

Our registered players continues to rise and I'm proud to say that our playing membership is gender balanced, with 47%

female and 53%, while at post-primary schools it is 50/50, with 48,387 players competing in post-primary schools basketball, a 2% rise, in 965 schools in every corner of Ireland.

Among the areas of growth is 3x3, Basketball Ireland increased the number of domestic 3x3 events by 26% last year, with numbers participating in 3x3 also up 26%. Ireland also competed in the FIBA 3x3 Women's World Series for the first time in summer 2024 and will do so again in 2025, as Basketball Ireland target future Olympic qualification through this format of the game.

Basketball Ireland's Development Officers are working tirelessly to engage on the ground, in the first three and a half months of 2025 13,000 people participated in Basketball Ireland programmes, such as SOCIA-Ball, Urban Hoops and Basketball For All. Our Development Officers also have been on hand in the creation of several new clubs, including the first ever established on the Aran Islands, Inismore Celts.

In April we lost Hall of Fame inductee Tony Burke. Tony had an infectious personality and will be greatly missed. He gave a lifetime of service to the game, firstly as a player with Corinthians and Killester. He subsequently became one of the most respected referees we've produced, becoming a FIBA referee and commissioner, not to mention being a team manager with multiple national teams and serving on the Basketball Ireland Board.

Finally, on behalf the Board I would like to thank CEO John Feehan and the Basketball Ireland staff for their endeavours over the last year and extend my gratitude to the committees, volunteers, officials, coaches and players who contribute so much to our sport.

**Professor Seamas Donnelly,**  
Chairperson of Basketball Ireland Board

Pictured: Ireland senior women's international Grace Prenter from Meteors Basketball Club at the launch of Basketball Ireland's Club and Community Partner AIG ahead of the AIG All-Ireland Club Championships.







Pictured: Players from Templeogue BC and St. Mary's Castleisland battle for possession during the U16 Girls AIG All-Ireland Club Championship in Gormanston in April.



# PRESIDENTS' REPORT

Margaret Miley

Presidents' Report

It gives me great honour to write this as the 26th President of Basketball Ireland. My first 12 months in the role has allowed me the privilege of representing our organisation across various events from senior international games, right through to grassroots level, with each one emphasising the growth and passion the game of basketball is enjoying in Ireland right now.

My thanks go to the professional staff and players, coaches and volunteers across the island who are working hard to continuously grow the sport we all love.

Both our senior men's and women's international teams enjoyed success on the court in their most recent qualifying campaign. Securing back-to-back wins at home over Kosovo and Azerbaijan during FIBA Basketball World Cup 2027 European Pre-Qualifying is an obvious highlight for the senior men's programme. The atmosphere inside the National Basketball Arena on those two occasions in the space of four days was fantastic, and to see the number of children and supporters waiting for autographs and photographs after the game is a fitting tribute to the achievement

of Mark Keenan, his staff and players on that occasion. I'd like to place on record my thanks to Mark, as he departs the role of head coach of the national team after six years and wish him all the best in his future coaching career.

I'd also like to congratulate and commend our senior women's team and staff for their performance and handling of a very difficult FIBA Women's EuroBasket qualifying campaign. It was a proud moment to see you competing with the Olympic silver medalists and regardless of the end result - it gives female basketball players in Ireland the belief that we can play on the same stage as teams such as France in the future.

Your resiliency as a group off the court however, in the face of a very difficult situation of drawing Israel in the current geopolitical climate, was most impressive to me. Taking a different decision could have set women's basketball back a decade and on behalf of the basketball community, I want to say thank you once again to James Weldon, his staff and all of the players in his squad, who had to deal with issues

and circumstances that no person who is representing their country in their chosen sport should face. You had a very strong end to the campaign on home court against Latvia and it was very unlucky that you did not pull off the win, but I am confident that the programme is in an excellent place going forward.

At grassroots level, I was delighted to see AIG come on board as the primary partner of the All-Ireland Club Championships and the latest running of the competition in Gormanston didn't disappoint. Four weekends of superb basketball and I look forward to seeing how the AIG AICC's continue to progress with their backing. This impetus is mirrored in the National League with another global brand like Domino's coming on board, I am sure that domestic basketball will continue to developing in the right direction.

I've been lucky to experience many fantastic moments this season. Basketball continues to showcase itself as a great sport and diverse community to be a part of and we should all be proud of our role in that.



# CEO ADDRESS

John Feehan



It has been another hugely successful year for Basketball Ireland, with continued growth in membership, welcoming new commercial partners and being granted planning permission for the National Basketball Arena.

Our goal to redevelop the National Basketball Arena remains as steadfast as ever, we were granted planning permission by South Dublin County Council in September 2024, however we weren't successful in achieving Government funding through the Large Scale Sports Infrastructure Fund in November 2024. We remain in dialogue with Government, who have stated that a reserve list is in place. We'll continue to highlight the positive impacts a state-of-the-art multi-sport and multi-use Arena will provide to indoor sport in Ireland and to the economy - both locally and nationally.

There was a 9% annual growth of our registered membership to 45,456, this is a 38% increase since 2019/20. Our 5-year Strategic Plan 2023-2027 targeted a figure of 42,000 registered players by 2027 and we're very much in line to achieve this goal - our registered playing population now stands at 39,604, having achieved an annual increase of 6% in the 2024/25 season.

In addition we have 48,387 players competing in post-primary schools basketball, a 2% rise, with a 50/50 gender split among the playing cohort. There are 965 schools across Ireland playing basketball, with a 16% growth in the number of girls schools and a 22% increase in boys schools participating in the sport in the last five years. We also launched our 2024/25 Primary Schools Mini-Basketball programme, attended by Minister Catherine Martin, it is a crucial part of

our strategy to get more children active and playing the sport from an early age.

Our turnover has more doubled, to €4.5m, compared to €2.03m in 2021, which is hugely positive, as this is reinvested into our sport. There was an operational deficit for 2024, however there were extenuating and unforeseen circumstances, such as having to play in a neutral venue for the FIBA Women's EuroBasket 2025 Qualifier with Israel and the costs that accrued as a result of this. Our National Basketball Arena revenue was also reduced and measures have been put in place to return it to profitability in 2025.

On the court our men's team picked up three wins in Ireland's first ever FIBA Basketball World Cup pre-qualifying campaign, while our women's team came agonisingly close against Latvia in their FIBA Women's EuroBasket 2025 Qualifier, with TG4 providing excellent coverage of the fixtures. We also had our inaugural campaign in FIBA 3x3 Women's World Series in summer 2024 and I would like to thank Government and Sport Ireland for their continued support of our 3x3 international programme, as we target future Olympic qualification in this discipline.

We were delighted to bring Gus Lewis in as our new Head of Commercial and Brand, who continued the excellent work of Mark Russell, who provided interim cover in the role. Both have helped secure partnerships with Nike, AIG and Domino's. Having such highly-regarded and established entities associated with Basketball Ireland illustrates the strength of the sport and we look forward to working with each of them to increase participation and engagement in basketball.

We are also working with the Feder-

ation of Irish Sport to establish a new indoor sports lobby group within the Federation. It will be able to emphasise the benefits of indoor sports and the important role they play in society.

I'd like to conclude by thanking the Basketball Ireland Board for their unwavering support, they continue to share the vision we have for the sport. I'd also like to acknowledge the excellent work being done by Basketball Ireland staff, who put in so much time and dedication day-in, day-out. In addition, my thanks to clubs, schools, colleges, committees, officials, coaches, volunteers and players, who put in tireless hours to bring our wonderful sport to life.

**John Feehan**  
Basketball Ireland CEO

Basketball Ireland CEO John Feehan (centre), Dips Patel, KitKing CEO (left) and Ben Russell (right) at the Nike HQ in London to confirm the global brand as our Official Kit Partner.





# FINARC REPORT

The Finance Audit and Risk Committee (FinARC) is a sub-committee appointed by the Board to assist it in its responsibilities for ensuring the adequacy of Basketball Ireland’s internal control and governance arrangements. FinARC may, subject to the approval of the Board, obtain outside independent professional advice as the committee consider necessary.

**In 2024, FinARC had four meetings with work ongoing between meetings as well. During the year most of our meetings were held remotely.**

The members of FinARC in 2024 were Michael Ryan (Chair), Dolores Geaney, Brendan O’Brien and Adrian O’Neill.

The meetings attended/held were Michael Ryan (Chair, 4/4), Dolores Geaney (4/4), Brendan O’Brien (3/4) and Adrian O’Neill (4/4). Meetings of FinARC were also attended when required by relevant members of the Board of BI and of the BI executive and staff.

Matters that were addressed by FinARC in 2024 included:

Ongoing review of the finances of BI and its performance compared to budget. Review of proposed budget for the forthcoming year. Ongoing work in relation to BI Risk Register and the Governance Compliance register and review of the processes adopted by BI in relation to these areas of risk. Sport Ireland now require National Govern- ing Bodies to submit a confirmation

on their level of compliance with Sport Ireland guidance on governance and FinArc oversaw the submissions made in relation to this. A review of the cur- rent arrangements used for banking in relation to academies and international teams was undertaken and FinArc over- saw the steps taken to bring all accounts related to such activities under the direct oversight of BI. FinArc also oversaw the opening of new bank accounts and planned capital expenditure projects. The committee also reviewed the Child Protection proce- dures that BI currently has in place.

The Committee reviewed the scope of the Annual Audit with the Exter- nal Auditors and engaged with the auditors in advance of the audit. The committee met with the auditors fol- lowing the conclusion of their audit work and examined the outcome of the external audit and the reports of the External Auditors. FinArc also reviewed the risks that the auditors identified and reported to the board on these matters.

FinArc examined and reviewed the Mid- Term Financial Report of the CFO. It

reviewed the submissions in relation to BI’s core grants as well as the revised budgets when details of actual grant funding became available. It contin- ued to review the ongoing financial implications of the participation of the senior men’s and women’s teams in the EuroBasket qualification competitions.

Matters discussed by the committee in relation to all items under its remit together with any recommendations are communicated by FinARC to the Board.

**Michael Ryan,  
Chairperson of FinARC Committee**



# FINANCIAL REPORT

## Basketball Ireland / Arena Consolidated (Combined) View

### Income & Expenditure

Sport Ireland Core Grant	€900,000	€840,000
Sport Ireland Additional 2023 Core Grant	€0	€60,000
Sport Ireland Women-in-Sport Grant	€63,908	€92,610
Sport Ireland Dormant Accounts Fund Grants	€290,332	€223,974
Sport Ireland Resilience/ Recovery & Energy Grants	€20,000	€286,063
Sport Ireland Elite 3x3 Grants	€226,009	€73,835
FIBA EuroBasket Men & Women	€120,075	€95,086
International & Academies Programmes income	€248,466	€213,557
FIBA Europe Grants	€121,967	€125,308
Other Grants/ NEIC/ FIBA Projects Grants	€86,150	€0
Camp income	€229,235	€219,781
Total Sponsorship Income	€338,969	€267,739
Capital Grants Amortisation	€14,250	€14,250
Competitions/ Club Insurance + National Finals Gate Income	€610,092	€493,678
Registrations income	€564,745	€497,596
Courses income	€72,127	€64,066
Referees Equalisation Fees	€213,949	€178,147
Misc. Income	€0	€10,313
National Draw Income	€57,770	€21,994
Arena Income (excl. Shop Sales)	€233,788	€320,606
Arena Shop Sales	€105,692	€88,059

Total Income

2024 Actual  
Audited

2023 Actual  
Audited

€4,517,524	€4,186,662
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Total Cost of Sales + Overhead Expenditure

€4,705,555

€4,144,101

### KEY PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT LINE SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR

(€188,031)

€42,561

## Basketball Ireland / Arena Consolidated (Combined) View

### Cash Flows 2023 - 2024

( Bank Current Accounts )		
Opening Consolidated Bank Current A/cs	€865,711	€984,618
Consolidated Surplus/ (Deficit) for Year	(€188,031)	€42,561
Add : Depreciation Charge	€125,281	€143,572
Less: Capital Grant Amortisation	(€74,458)	(€77,642)
Working Capital Movement for Year	(€179,725)	(€190,572)
Capital Repayments - All Loans	(€16,284)	(€24,443)

Capital Expenditure (net of Grants Rec'd)

(€3,967)

(€12,383)

Closing Consolidated Bank Current A/cs

€528,527

€865,711

### Consolidated Balance Sheets

Fixed Assets	€2,346,512	€2,468,888
Net Current Assets/ (Liabilities)	(€217,455)	(€61,058)
Bank of Ireland Term Loan	(€69,341)	(€85,625)
Long-term Deferred Capital Grants	(€226,612)	(€301,070)
Net Assets / (Liabilities)	€1,833,104	€2,021,135

### Represented by

Capital and Reserves

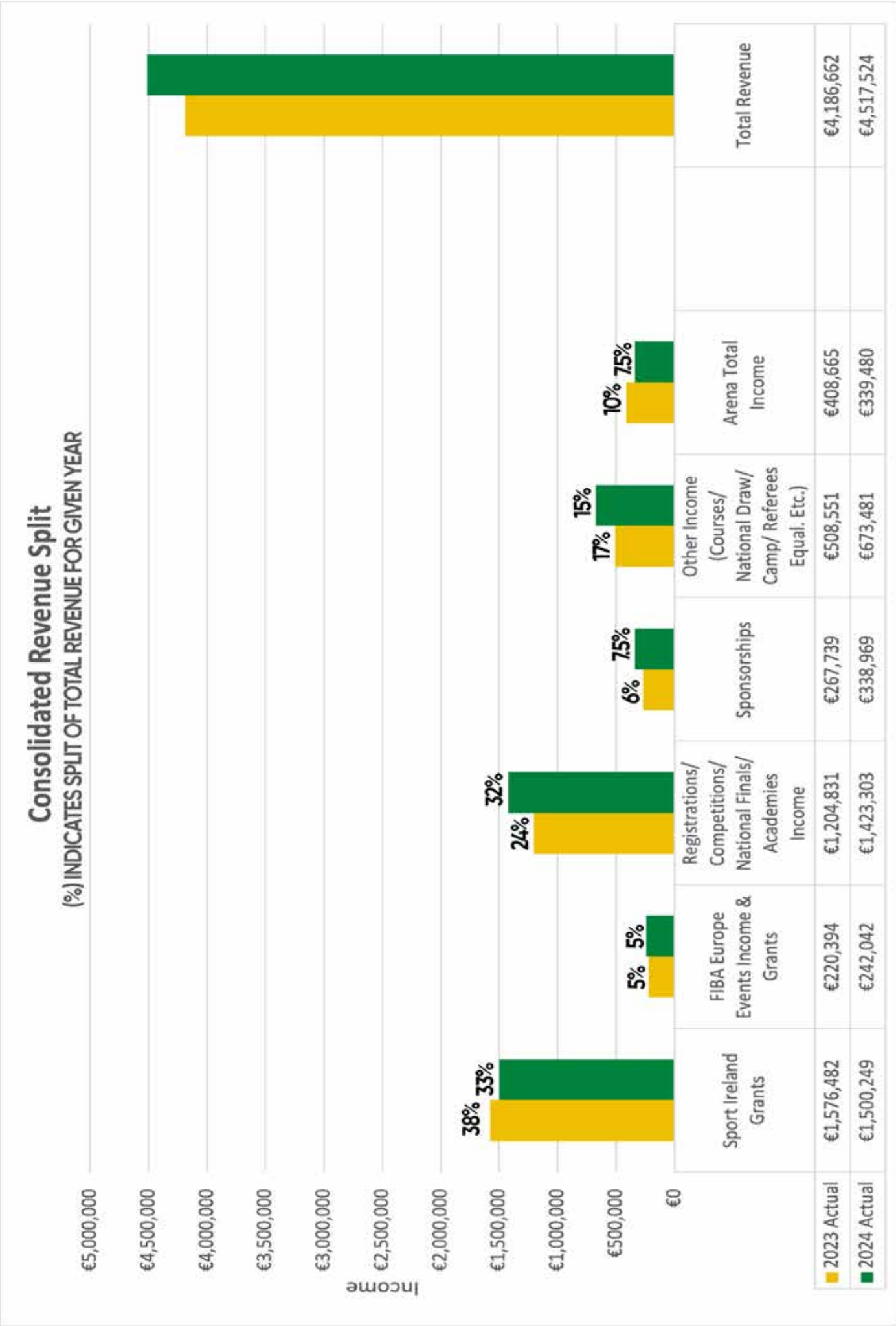
2024 Actual  
Audited

2023 Actual  
Audited

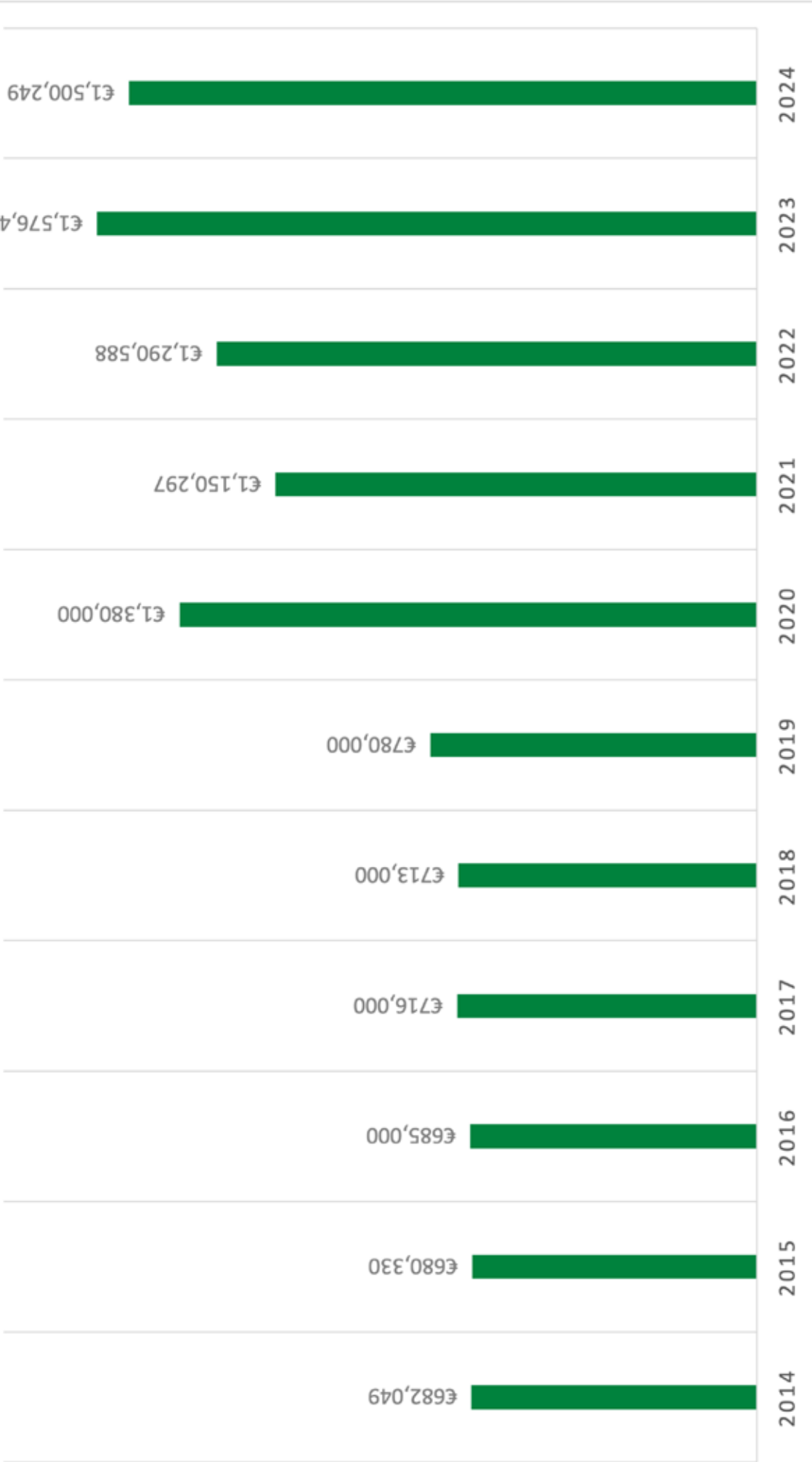
€1,833,104	€2,021,135
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€1,833,104

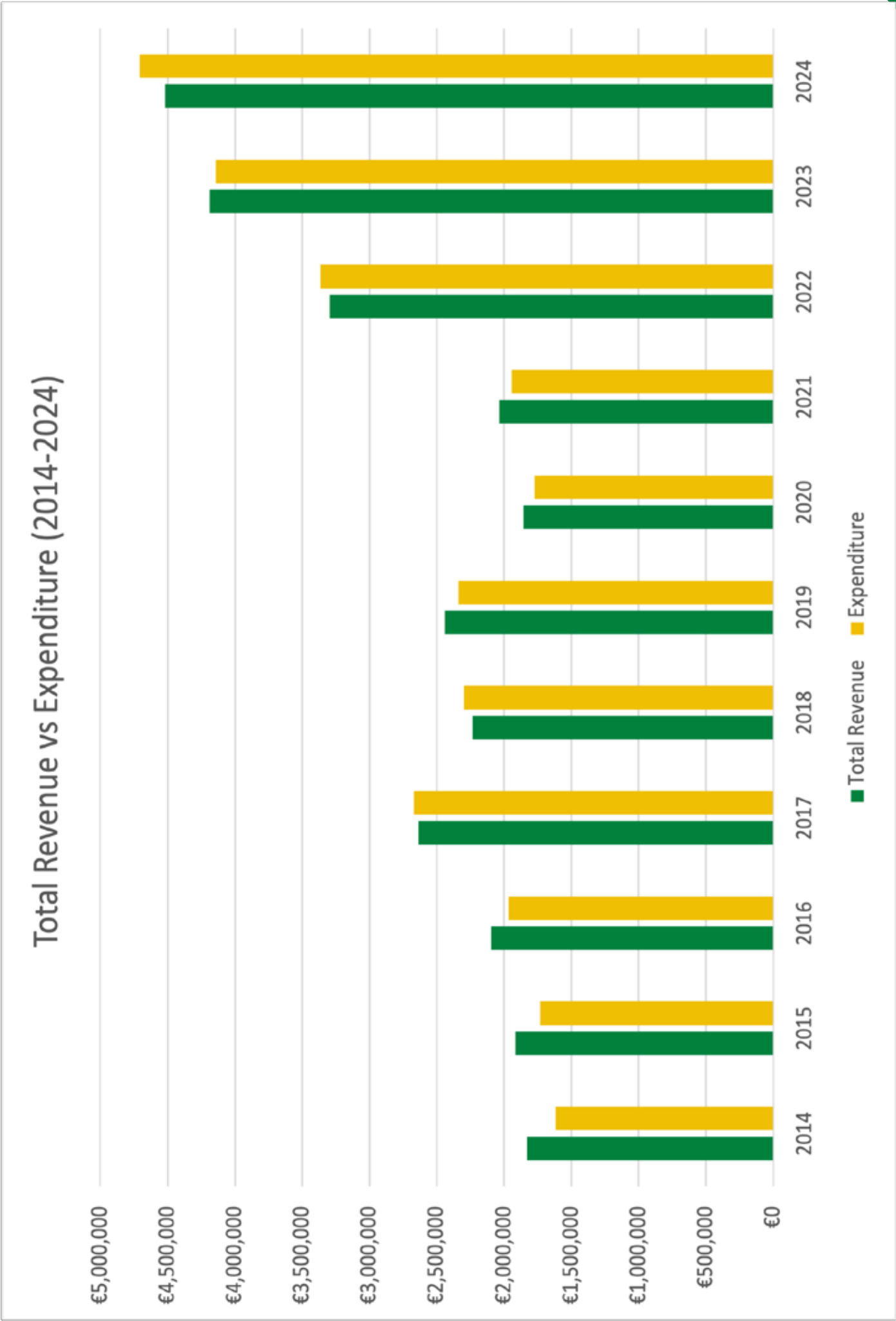
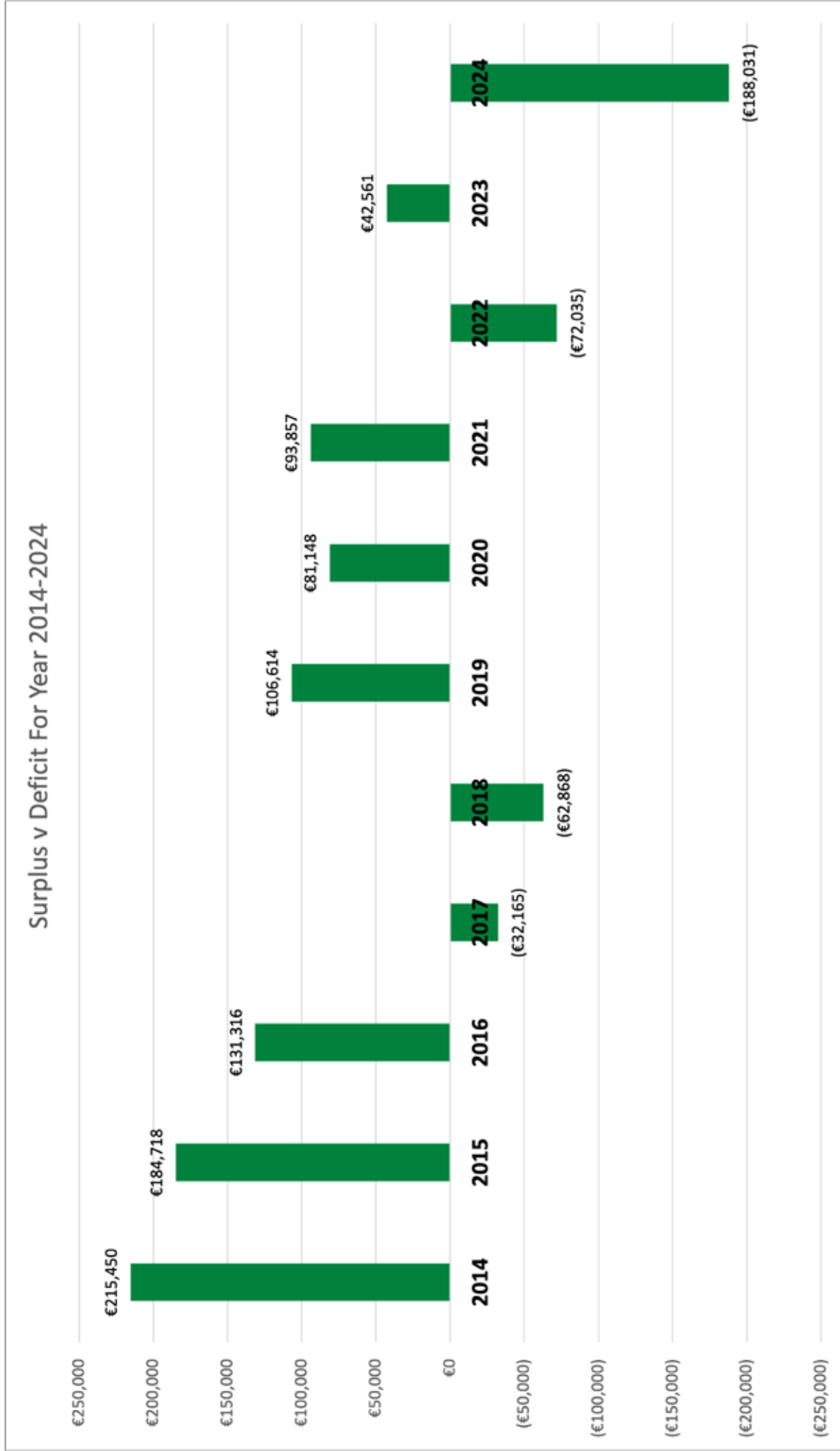
€2,021,135



GOVERNMENT SUPPORT CHART 2014-2024

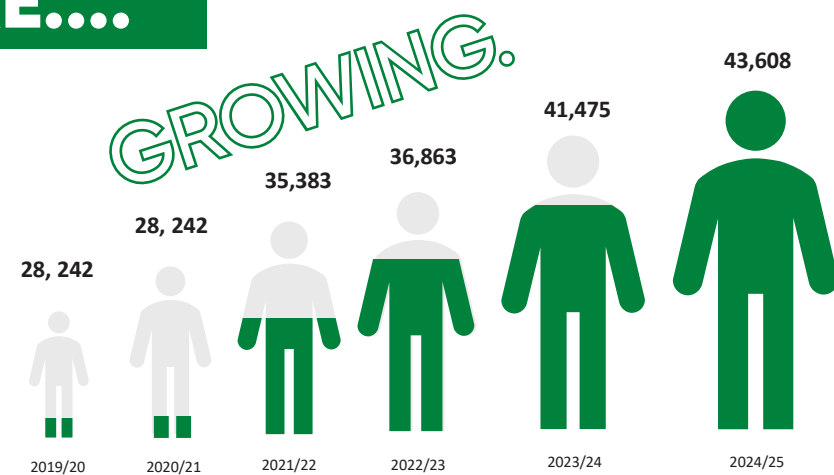




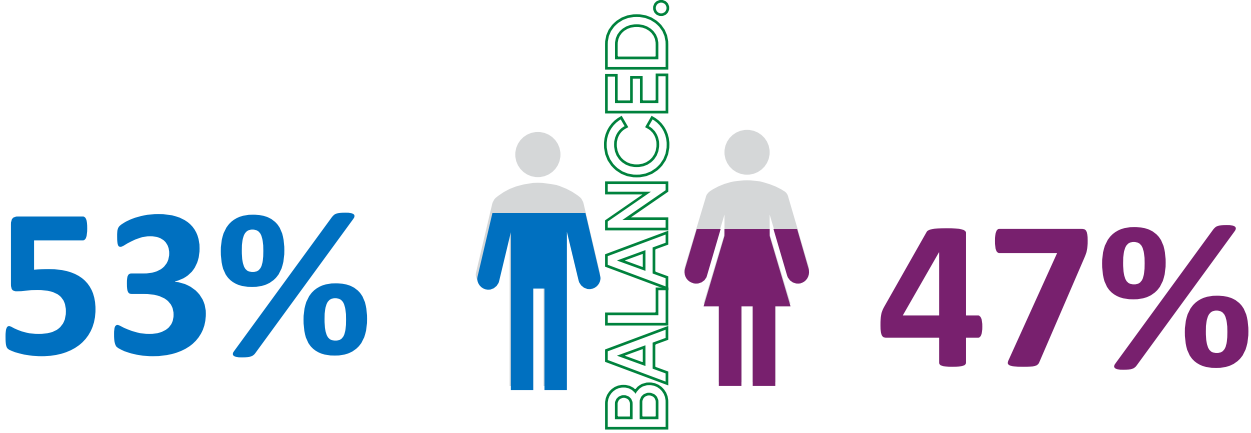




WE ARE....



Basketball Ireland's Membership has grown by 54% in the last four years at an average of 13% each year.



Our membership is multi-cultural, including an almost equal gender split.



Basketball Ireland's membership is youthful. More than 6 in 10 of our members are under the age of 18.

Membership  
Daryl Lambe

The total Membership numbers are inclusive of players and registered technical members.

Basketball Ireland has seen its membership numbers grow by 18,879 between the 2017/18 season and the 2024/25 season.

Basketball enjoys a close to equal split in membership numbers based on gender across all categories with 47% of our members being female.

The total number of registered members with Basketball Ireland for the 2024/25 season is 43,608.

Having varied membership types and programmes such as SOCIA-Ball, inclusive membership and Masters has helped contribute to this continued growth along with the hard work of our Development Officers.

Basketball Ireland's clubs, volunteers and Area Boards continue to make a positive impact at the grassroots levels of the game with their extremely dedicated work and passion for the sport of basketball.

I look forward to working closely with you all once again next season and to continue seeing our sport grow and prosper.







# Media & Communications

Nathaniel Cope

Media & Communications

**V**isibility and engagement through a variety of means is vital for basketball, this has been achieved through strong growth in numbers on Basketball Ireland's social channels, BITV, Swish All Hoops, as well as a robust broadcast partnership with TG4 and increased coverage in mainstream media.

The 2024/25 season saw basketballireland.tv rebranded to BITV, the platform continues to be a crucial outlet to showcase the sport at all levels, from Domino's Men's and Women's Super League and Domino's Men's and Women's Division One, National Cup, to schools, Masters, colleges and international games, with over 650 games streamed. BITV launched in September 2022 and during the 2024/25 season there were over 94,000 unique viewers to the platform, a 37% increase. In addition there was a 7% increase in video plays to 387,584, while there were 83,000 hours of content consumed. 69% of people watching consumed live games, while 31% availed of on-demand video.

Terrestrial TV plays a vital role in the visibility of our sport and TG4 continues to provide excellent coverage, both domestically and internationally, as we embarked on our first-ever FIBA Basketball World Cup 2027 Pre-Qualifying campaign and our women's team competed in the FIBA Women's EuroBasket 2025 Qualifiers. Our Domino's Super League finals were broadcast on the station for the third season in 2024/25, while TG4 showcased our National Cup finals once more in January 2025, with a 164,000 reach for the Pat Duffy National Cup and 215,000 for the Paudie O'Connor Cup final.

Aligned with this broadcasting of basketball, our external media coverage continues to strengthen, with Virgin Media's Ireland AM broadcasting live from the National Basketball Arena for 3 hours ahead of the National Cup finals, while our 3x3 court was at Virgin Media Studios ahead of the Domino's Men's and Women's Super League finals. RTE Six One News has covered our marquee domestic and international games, along with major news events thanks to Video News Releases distributed by Basketball Ireland. National radio stations such as RTE Radio 1, 2fm and OfftheBall have increased their coverage of basketball too. Print and online is a key outlet, with the Irish Independent, Irish Examiner, Irish Daily Star and the Echo among those prominent in covering basketball.



+18%



+18%



+6%



Basketball Ireland's social media channels also provide a crucial showcase for the sport and all of our channels have displayed vibrant growth, illustrated by TikTok (18.2%), Instagram (18.3%) and Facebook (6.2%), with over 26 million views of the three channels alone in the last year, while X and YouTube also have made incremental gains. The content offered on Basketball Ireland social platforms continues to improve and I'd like to thank Robbie Fahy, Digital Media Manager, and Luke Faughnan, Media and Communications Assistant, for their hard work and endeavours in delivering this.

Swish All-Hoops continues to be a vital asset for Irish basketball fans, there were 20,000 active users on the platform in the last year, following live scores and play-by-play game updates and stats. There were 500,000 sessions on the app, equating to an annual rise of 28%. We've had the successful rollout at AIG All-Ireland Club Championships and there are increasing numbers of Area Boards using the digital score-sheet and work continues to expand this further, to maximise the engagement opportunities with the grassroots game.

We launched our consumer database 'Court-side' in summer 2024. It has been well received and continues to grow, basketball fans have been able to avail of exclusive content, early access to tickets and much more.

From a communications vantage point, there were challenges, notably the international fixtures against Israel, however messaging was robust and clear and Basketball Ireland as an organisation emerged with credibility, while the players and staff handled the situation admirably. There was plenty of good news delivered in the last year too, with the announcements of partnerships with Nike, AIG and Domino's and the granting of planning permission for the redevelopment of the National Basketball Arena, all of which received a lot of positive attention from media and the general public.

The year ahead offers a lot of promise and we look forward to building on the sport's positive momentum.

**Nathaniel Cope,**  
Head of Communications, Media and Digital





## Commercial & Brand

### Gus Lewis

**A**head of the 2024/25 season, we undertook a realignment of our sponsorship strategy that has paved the way for several exciting new partnerships. This proactive approach has resulted in landmark agreements with globally recognised brands in Nike, AIG, and Domino's Pizza, significantly boosting Basketball Ireland's commercial portfolio and profile.

In August 2024, we unveiled Nike as Basketball Ireland's new official kit partner, through a six-year partnership with KitKing. The partnership sees our Senior and Underage international teams don the iconic Nike swoosh, making them the only Irish national sides to currently do so. This partnership also included the launch of a new range of Nike teamwear and leisure apparel, designed with KitKing, inspired by the timeless Dara Knot, and worn for the first time by our Men and Women during the November international window. The new on-court kit and off-court gear is available exclusively through our retail partner Intersport Elverys, who continue to support us in offering Basketball Ireland product to players and fans, both in store and online.

Another major commercial development was the launch of our new Club and Community partnership with insurance leader AIG. This partnership was unveiled through a powerful campaign video titled "What makes Irish basketball?" – an ode to the sport narrated by legendary commentator, and Hall of Fame member, Timmy McCarthy. As Basketball Ireland's official insurance partner, AIG is developing several initiatives to aid our 250 clubs across the country, helping to showcase the deep, community focused nature of the partnership. AIG also became title sponsor of the AIG All-Ireland Club Championships, and it was fantastic to see their presence across all four weekends of the tournament.

In early 2025, we welcomed Domino's Pizza as the new title sponsor of the Men's and Women's Super League and Division One for the remainder of the season and beyond. This game-changing partnership with the nation's favourite pizza brand is injecting fresh energy, bigger promotions, and extra support into the top tiers of Irish basketball. Under the agreement, our flagship leagues have been rebranded as the Domino's Men's and Women's Super League and Division One and will also see Domino's take on the National Cups for the upcoming season.

As we continue to engage the market for our International Teams and Education platforms, the alignment with strong brands has created powerful positive momentum for Basketball Ireland, vividly demonstrating the strength and growth

of our brand. We continue to receive tremendous support from our partners Molten, Intersport Elverys, and Gotham Dry Wall. We are proud that such esteemed partners have chosen to invest in Irish basketball, and together we have laid a solid foundation for sustained growth in the years ahead. Beyond partnerships, we focused on continuing to strengthen Basketball Ireland's brand identity and marketing reach. A key project was the rollout of a refreshed visual identity and an innovative look-and-feel for the National League. This refreshed visual identity has been executed consistently across marketing materials and social media channels. The response from clubs and fans has been positive, with the updated branding allowing for our premier domestic competitions to become more recognisable and attractive to fans, media, and potential sponsors alike. By keeping our brand presentation fresh and professional, we continue to enhance the visibility of Irish basketball and align it with the dynamism of the sport.

In addition, we have actively sought to raise the atmosphere at the National Basketball Arena and create new, lifelong fans of our international teams. Notably, we launched our Clubs & Schools Ticketing Scheme in late 2024 to give the next generation of fans the opportunity to come and watch our international teams. Through this scheme, schoolchildren and junior club members are offered discounted tickets to cheer on Ireland's senior international teams, and the impact was immediate. Our home games in the FIBA Men's World Cup 2027 Pre-Qualifiers and FIBA Women's EuroBasket 2025 Qualifiers were played in front of sold-out crowds, bolstered by enthusiastic groups of young fans in the stands, with many experiencing the electric atmosphere of the National Basketball Arena for the very first time. The energy and passion from these younger spectators have been palpable, creating an inspiring atmosphere for our players and seeding a deeper connection between the international teams and the next generation.

In summary, the past year's commercial activity has significantly advanced Basketball Ireland's mission. By securing high-calibre partnerships, continuing to develop our brand presence, and progressing community-level initiatives, we have created a strong, positive trajectory for the sport. With our partners and members, we will continue to build on this success and ensure that basketball in Ireland keeps rising to new heights.

**Gus Lewis**  
Head of Commercial & Brand



Players from Moy Tolka Rovers, Killester, Limerick Celtics, EJ Sligo All-Stars, FloMAX Liffey Celtics and Utility Trust St. Paul's at the launch of Domino's sponsorship of the Men's and Women's Super League and Division One.

Domino's



AIG



Top left: Paul Dick signs autographs for fans following Ireland's FIBA Basketball World Cup Qualifier at the National Basketball Arena.

Above: Jordan Blount, Kate Hickey, Edel Thornton and Aidan Igiehon at the launch of Basketball Ireland's new home jersey with Nike.

Middle: Members of Oblates Basketball Club in Dublin during the filming of the "What makes Irish basketball?" campaign.





# National League

John Walsh

**A**head of the 2024/25 season, there was a few structural and regulation changes, which it was hoped would be effective in developing Irish players playing in our domestic competitions and would also result in an exciting end to the season with all National League winners being decided on the last weekend of the season.

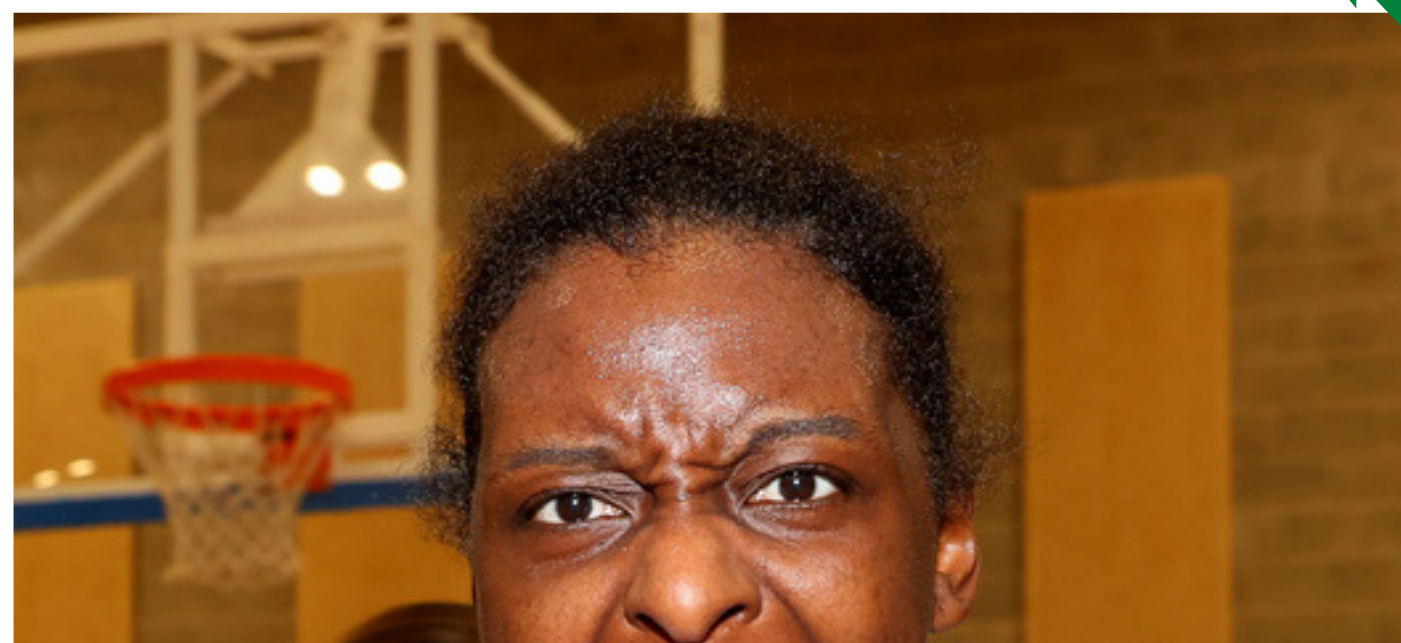
The main changes were in Domino's Men's Super League (MSL), a team must have a Category 1 Irish player on court at all times. In Domino's Women's Super League (WSL), Domino's Men's Division One (MD1) and Domino's Women's Division One (WD1), teams must have two Category 1 Irish players on court at all times. This had a positive effect on the number of Irish players getting increased court time. The NLC will discuss with the clubs at the end of season conference as to whether there will be further changes to these categories.

The other main change implemented was that the Domino's Women's Super League and Domino's Women's Division One league champions would be decided by play-offs, bringing it in line with the men's leagues. These play-off finals would replace the Champions Trophy which had been played in previous seasons. It was envisaged that this would result in an exciting end of season play-off series.

The 2024/25 season was challenging for teams due to a number of international breaks, which resulted in more double header weekends. The fact that league champions would be decided by play-offs allowed teams a bit more flexibility in resting players and being more tactical in securing play-off spots.

The National Cup weekends proved to be as popular and competitive as ever. In the Women's Division One National

Cup Final, unbeaten McEvoy's Cavan Eagles had an excellent victory over iSecure Swords Thunder. In the Presidents' National Cup final, the top two teams in the league Limerick Celtics and ND Audit Portlaoise Panthers faced off with Limerick Celtics coming out on top. In the Pat Duffy National Cup, Killester were triumphant over UCC Demons, while the weekend finished with Liffey Celtics coming out on top over Killester in the Paudie O'Connor National Cup.



In the Domino's Women's Super League, 8th seeded Utility Trust St Paul's Killarney produced a mighty shock by defeating regular season winners SETU Waterford Wildcats in the quarter-finals. They then overcame Trinity Meteors in a close semi-final to progress to the final to take on defending champions Killester.

In the Domino's Men's Super League, it was the top two teams of the regular season Killester and UCC Demons who made it to the final to set up a repeat of the Pat Duffy National Cup Final in a highly anticipated game, following three closely contested and highly entertaining games earlier in the season. The National League Finals weekend once again proved to be a great success with increasing crowds attending the National Basketball Arena.

The weekend began with the Basketball Ireland Development League (BIDL) finals. These competitions were setup to help clubs who aspire to enter National League over the next few seasons and for current National League clubs to help develop their younger players to progress to their National League teams. Meteors of Dublin overcame St Mary's Castleisland in the Women's BIDL final and Limerick Celtics beat defending champions Tralee Warriors in the Men's Final.

The U20 National League in its 4th season has grown year upon year and had 29 teams competing. The final came down to defending champions Tralee Warriors, who were going for a three-in-a-row against a strong Titans side from Galway. Titans put their U20 Men's National Cup disappointment behind them as they put in a superb performance with a convincing win and put a new name on the trophy.

Next up was the Domino's Women's Division One final which would decide who was league champions and who would be promoted to the Domino's Women's Super League next season. McEvoy's Cavan Eagles came into the final with an unbeaten season to date and a fantastic National Cup final triumph. They came up against Limerick Celtics who finished the regular season in 3rd place.

National League





# Roll of Honour 2024/25

**Domino's Men's Super League - UCC Demons**

**Domino's Women's Super League - Killester**

**Domino's Men's Division One - Limerick Celtics**

**Domino's Women's Division One - McEvoy's Cavan Eagles**

**U20 Men's National League - Titans BC**

**BIDL Men's Final - Limerick Celtics**

**BIDL Women's Final - Meteors BC**

**Pat Duffy National Cup - Killester**

**Paudie O'Connor National Cup - FloMAX Liffey Celtics**

**Presidents' National Cup - Limerick Celtics**

**Women's Division One National Cup - McEvoy's Cavan Eagles**

Roll of Honour 2024/25



The pressure was on the Cavan side to complete an unbeaten season and they put in a great performance to take the win 67-58. They now move to Domino's Women's Super League for next season, as they go from strength-to-strength. In the Domino's Men's Division One final, it was a repeat of the Presidents' National Cup Final between Limerick Celtics and ND Audit Portlaoise Panthers, which Limerick Celtics won. Celtics had a fantastic season suffering only one loss along the way. Despite Panthers getting off to a great start in the final, Celtics came back strongly and took the title on an 81-70 scoreline. Limerick Celtics will now take their place for the first time in their history in Domino's Men's Super League next season.

On Sunday, we had the two Domino's Super League finals, which were once again televised by TG4. The session was sold-out, with an excited crowd packed into the National Basketball Arena. In the Domino's Women's Super League final, defending champions Killester faced off against surprise package Utility Trust St Paul's from Killarney who were in their first national final. The experience of the Killester side proved too strong for St Paul's, with Killester retaining their title with a 20-point win 83-63.

The season finale was the highly anticipated rematch of Killester and UCC Demons. The previous games between these two sides during the season were tight, feisty affairs. Both teams had finished the regular season with identical records, so there was really nothing to choose between them. In what was possibly the best televised game of the last number of years, it was a tight game with the lead changing hands numerous times, keeping the capacity crowd on the edge of their seats. With only six seconds left on the clock, UCC Demons led by two-points with Killester inbound the ball. Unfortunately for Killester, they could not find a much needed score to save the game. UCC Demons emerged victorious on a 94-92 scoreline and were crowned Domino's Men's Super League champions for 2025.

Ahead of the 205/26 season there will be a full review of regulations, player categories, competition formats with a few small changes anticipated to further develop these growing competitions.

**John Walsh,**  
National League Manager





# International

Matthew Hall

**O**n the international front our men's team picked up three wins in their FIBA Basketball World Cup 2027 Pre-Qualifiers, the first time that Ireland have competed at that level.

At the conclusion of the campaign, a review process took place, following which Mark Keenan stepped down as Ireland men's head coach after a meeting with the Elite Performance Committee (EPC).

I'd like to reiterate my thanks to Mark and his staff - Adrian Fulton, Lawrence Summers Mike Hickey, Andrew Lane, Igor Markiewicz and Paul Daly - for their dedication over the last six years and the tremendous achievements in that time, including victory in the 2021 FIBA European Championship for Small Countries and guiding us as Ireland returned to FIBA EuroBasket level.

Our women's team picked up an impressive friendly win over the Netherlands last summer and came agonisingly close against Latvia in February as they finished off their FIBA Women's EuroBasket 2025 Qualifiers campaign.

Claire Melia became the first Irish female to play in a FIBA European club final, earning a silver in the FIBA EuroCup Women. Ireland also competed in the FIBA 3x3 Women's World Series for the first time in summer 2024 and will do so again in 2025, as Basketball Ireland target future Olympic qualification through this format of the game.

Our ranking at 3x3 level saw our U18 women's team qualify for the this July's European Youth Olympic Festival.

## FIBA Youth EuroBasket 2025

### U20 Women

Our U20 women's team just missed

out on a semi-final spot and a chance of a top four finish after finishing 2nd in their group. Karl Kilbride's team picked up wins against Slovakia and Switzerland in the group stages and ended the competition with two great wins against the Ukraine and Croatia to finish in an excellent 5th place.

### U20 Men

Thomas Walsh coached the U20 men and they got off to a tough start with a loss to Great Britain but bounced back to get two group stage wins against Azerbaijan and the Netherlands. After losing out on 3rd place in the group on head-to-head, Ireland finished the competition in 14th place out of the 20 teams with a win against Kosovo in the classification round.

### U18 Women

Ireland's U18 women finished 3rd in a very tough group after two wins against Norway and North Macedonia. Unfortunately for Tommy O'Mahony's talented team, this meant they missed out on quarter-final spot and potential top 8 finish, but they did not let the disappointment end their tournament on a negative. The team bounced back beating everything in their path in the classification group, defeating the Netherlands, Denmark and finally the Ukraine to finish a creditable 9th.

### U18 Men

A very talented Ireland U18 men's team finished in 3rd place in their group after wins against Cyprus, Ukraine and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the play-off round, Niall Berry's team beat Georgia before going down to Hungary in a game that the team never really got started in. They finished the tournament with a dominant performance to beat Iceland and claim 11th

spot in the 22 team tournament.

### U16 Women

Ireland's U16 women under head coach Paul O'Brien finished their group stages with a 2-2 record, after beating the Ukraine and Kosovo. In the classification stages Ireland suffered a heartbreaking two-point loss to Bulgaria before bouncing back to beat Norway comprehensively. Ireland ended the tournament finishing in 10th place after a loss to Portugal in their last game.

### U16 Men

Ireland's U16 men under head coach Paul Kelleher started the championships with a pulsating win over Great Britain, but after some close losses, finished their group in a three-way tie for 3rd place. Unfortunately, finishing 5th in the group on count back but they took confidence from some very good performances to finish the competition with a win over Bosnia and Herzegovina to finish in a creditable 17th spot of the 24 teams.

Pictured: Players from the Ireland senior women's team gather for a huddle during their FIBA Women's EuroBasket qualifier against France in Chalon Sur Saone.





# Academy Report

**T**he Basketball Ireland Regional and Provincial Academy structure is the foundation of a pathway for the development of players and coaches with an ambition and potential to play at the highest levels of our sport.

It opens a development and performance pathway for more players across Ireland, in a time when there are more National League opportunities presenting themselves to players, as well as being the pathway to international teams.

There are more talented athletes playing basketball than ever before and this programme is producing a much larger group of high-performance players, increasing competition and standard dramatically across Ireland.

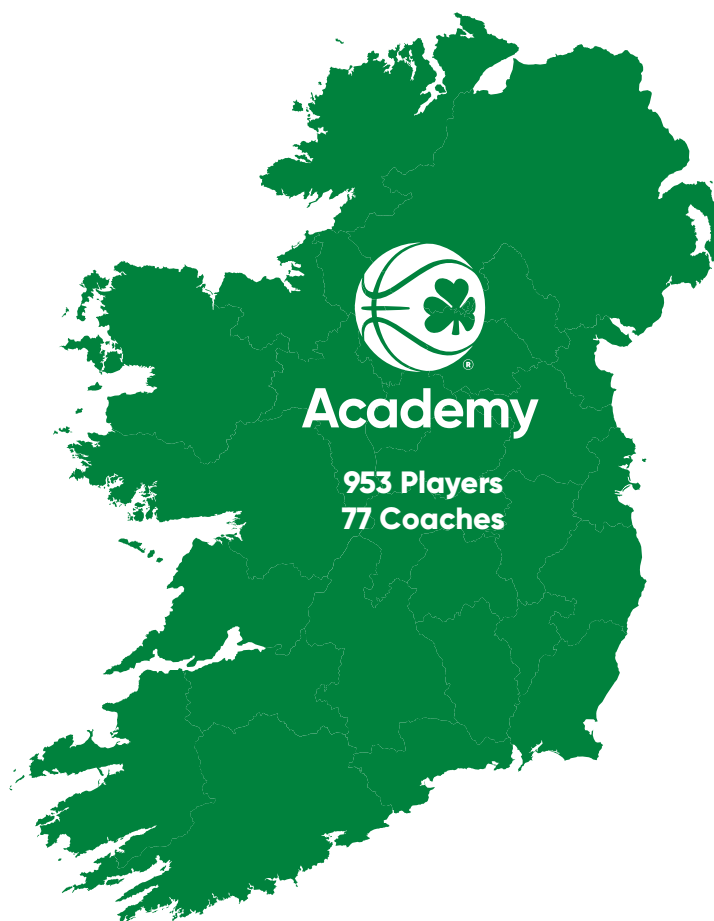
Ireland has already shown that we can compete at all levels, but strength-in-depth has been an issue. Introducing international-standard concepts and skills to a wider group, at an earlier age, over a longer period will yield a stronger pool of players over time.

This season for the first time the Academy ran a pilot U13 programme for boys and girls across the island. Every club was invited to send three male players and three female players to the three skills sessions that took place over the season.

Clubs were always invited to send club coaches who were awarded CPD points for attending, so they could help deliver the sessions that were run by our present and former international coaches. The pilot was very successful, with over 1,400 players taking part in the three sessions and 132 club coaches.

For the first time in 2025, Basketball Ireland's Academy will take part in the Four Nations tournaments at U14, U15 and U17.

Our U15's will travel to Manchester for two days from May 31st, followed by our U14's and U17's to Cardiff and Glasgow respectively in June.



**The U14 Regional Academies are for players U14 years of Age at Midnight on December 31st of the current season.**

**The U15 Provincial Academies are for players U15 years of Age at Midnight on December 31st of the current season.**

**The U17 National Academies are for players U17 years of Age at Midnight on December 31st of the current season.**

## U14 Regional Academies:

The nine U14 academies are divided regionally as below:

- **South:** Cork, South Tipperary, Waterford
- **North:** Antrim, Armagh, Derry, Down, Fermanagh, Tyrone, Meath, Louth, Cavan, Monaghan
- **Southwest:** Kerry, Limerick
- **Southeast:** Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow, Wexford, South Tipperary
- **Northwest:** Donegal, North Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim, North Roscommon
- **Midlands:** Laois, Offaly, Westmeath, Longford, North Tipperary, South Kildare
- **West:** Clare, Galway, South Mayo, South Roscommon
- **East North:** Dublin North, Louth
- **East South:** Dublin South, Wicklow





# Women In Sport

Louise O'Loughlin

**A**s part of our long-term commitment to increasing engagement of women into our sport, we are continuing to pursue the goals outlined in our Women in Basketball Strategic Plan 2023-2027.

## SOCIA-Ball & Her Moves – Strategic action area “Playing the Game”

SOCIA-Ball has been one of our most successful Women in Sport programmes, and it continues to grow and reach all corners of Ireland. The programme initially started in October 2021 and has grown to 84 active venues and 991 registered players, but continues to grow.

SOCIA-Ball is a key programme for our Women in Basketball Strategic Plan 2023-2027, under the playing the game pillar. It is a recreational programme for females aged over 18, of all abilities, where the emphasis is on fun and meeting new people. It is a safe space for women to keep fit and have some fun. Our marquee event took place in the National Basketball Arena in November 2024 with 14 teams participating on the day and over 160 players involved. Regional events also took place, run by clubs and also in conjunction with Local Sports Partnerships.

## Her Moves – Strategic action area “Playing the Game”

Our Her Moves programme was borne out of the success of SOCIA-Ball. Her Moves is a recreational programme for teenage girls aged 13-17. The aim of the programme is to provide a place for the girls to take part in fun, inclusive sessions weekly. We provide clubs with 15 balls, 15 hoodies and an audio speaker. The idea of the speaker is for the girls to play their music throughout the session.

The programme is about empowering all young women, building confidence and providing motivation to find something that gets them moving. In 2024/2025, we provided seven club grants, and we have allocated 10 grants for the 2025/2026 season.

Many of the groups have continued social basketball for teenage girls in their clubs and this recreational pathway is continuing to grow. We hope this initiative continues to grow, just like our main SOCIA-Ball programme, and we encourage clubs to get involved in this fantastic initiative.

## FIBA Programme Her World Her Rules – Strategic action area “Playing the Game”

Basketball Ireland once again delivered the Her World Her Rules programme through our Development Officers. School and club sessions were delivered through our Development Officers reaching over 1500 girls aged 6-15.

## Dream Programme – Strategic action area “Coaching and Officiating”

As part of the coaching and officiating pillar of the action plan, Basketball Ireland successfully delivered the 2024/25 DREAM Programme, a nine-month mentorship initiative, designed to empower aspiring female coaches and referees.



The programme aimed to increase female representation and leadership in basketball, by providing structured learning, development, and real-world experience under the guidance of experienced mentors.

12 female coaches were selected to take part in the coaching strand of the programme, receiving support from four experienced female mentors. Over the course of the programme, participants engaged in continuous learning focused on technical development, leadership, and game strategy. Meanwhile, 25 aspiring female referees were mentored by five senior female officials.

As part of their practical experience, the referees were assigned to officiate at the U16 Boys AIG All-Ireland Club Championships (AICCs), gaining valuable on-court exposure at a national level.

Both cohorts – coaches and referees attended the National Cup Finals as observers, allowing them to learn from high-level competition in a professional setting. The DREAM Programme concluded after nine months of ongoing development, workshops, and practical learning opportunities, contributing significantly to the growth of female participation and leadership within Irish basketball.

## Women in Leadership Programme – Strategic Action area “Leadership”

Basketball Ireland, in collaboration with the Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA), has successfully completed its fourth Women in Sport Leadership Programme (WISL), which ran from January to March 2025. This initiative aimed to provide training, guidance, and expertise to support women in thriving within leadership positions across all levels of sport.

The WISL programme was delivered over a span of six weeks, commencing on January 28th, 2025. It included five weekly online sessions conducted, culminating in a final in-person session held in Dublin on Saturday, March 8th. This blended learning approach facilitated both theoretical instruction and practical engagement. The programme was inclusive, welcoming applications from female coaches, officials, athletes, volunteers, and staff within the basketball community, all over the age of 18.

Half of the participants were drawn from the basketball community, while the other half represented the IWA, reflecting a commitment to diversity and cross-sport collaboration. The programme was led by Lisa Clancy and Sarah O'Shea, who have been delivering the award-winning Women in Sport Leadership programme in Ireland since 2020. Their extensive experience in senior professional and voluntary sports positions, both domestically and internationally, enriched the learning experience. To date, over 500 participants from more than 50 different sporting organisations across Ireland and Europe have completed the course, underscoring its widespread impact and success.

The 3rd Women in Coaching Conference is took place in May 2024 at the National Basketball Arena. The conference is aimed at current and aspiring female players and coaches, with an all-female speaking line-up and three coaching clinics delivered.

## Women in Sport Week – Strategic Action area “Visibility & Promotion”

Basketball Ireland is committed to ensuring women's basketball receives equal coverage on Basketball Ireland platforms. During Women in Sport Week, social media content was focused on females, with a reach of over 201,000 on Instagram, X and Facebook.





# Claire Melia History Maker

Find out how she became one of one  
in Irish basketball.



Did you know Rebel Wheelers became the first Irish  
club to compete in IWBF (International Wheelchair  
Basketball Federation) Euro Cup qualifiers this season?

Read how they won their 6th IWA Na-  
tional Cup title in a row in January







# Schools Report

Christine Connolly



## Participation

Girls - 489 Schools

A Grade	B Grade	C Grade	D Grade
76	77	156	180

Boys - 476 Schools

A Grade	B Grade	C Grade	D Grade
85	87	172	132

The 2024/25 season has been another growth year for Post-Primary Schools basketball. There were 48,387 players participating in schools competitions compared to 47,131 the previous year, representing an increase of 2.6%.

The number of basketball playing schools increased from 936 to 965, a rise of 3%. The breakdown of those schools is as follows:

**Girls:** 489 schools (478 in 2024) with 24,077 players, of whom 5,125 also play club basketball.

**Boys:** 476 schools (458 in 2024) with 24,310 players of whom 5,448 also play club basketball.

The figures above show grades in which schools have entered the competitions. It is worth noting that these numbers do not include 2nd or 3rd teams a school may enter at a lower grade.

The finals of All-Ireland Schools League and All-Ireland Schools Cup competitions were held once again at the National Basketball Arena in front of capacity crowds.

This amount of support adds to the exciting and colourful atmosphere of these finals and help create a very special event to be remembered by players and supporters alike.

Special mention this year should go to Castleisland Community College who, as well as being U16A Boys All-Ireland Schools Cup runners-up and League Winners, have three teams in U14A (Boy and Girls) and U15A (Boys) All-Ireland finals and two teams in the All Ireland Junior A finals (Boys and Girls).

The work of the Post Primary Schools Committee is greatly appreciated. They are reaching almost 85% of schools in Ireland in both genders.

There has been a 16% increase in the number of girls schools and a 22% increase in the number of boys schools competing in our competitions over the past five years.



# Roll of Honour 2025

- U14 Girls All-Ireland Schools Cup - Castleisland Community College
- U14 Boys All-Ireland Schools Cup- Castleisland Community College
- U15 Girls All-Ireland Schools Cup - Presentation Kilkenny
- U15 Boys All-Ireland Schools Cup - Castleisland Community College
- U16A Boys All-Ireland Schools League - Castleisland Community College
- U16B Boys All-Ireland Schools League - Coláiste na hInse
- U16C Boys All-Ireland Schools League - Hartstown CS
- U16A Girls All-Ireland Schools League - Crescent College
- U16B Girls All-Ireland Schools League - Laurel Hill
- U16C Girls All-Ireland Schools League - St. Flannan's College
- U19A Boys All-Ireland Schools League - Coláiste Éanna
- U19B Boys All-Ireland Schools League - Coláiste Chu Chulainn
- U19C Boys All-Ireland Schools League -St Clare's Ballyjamesduff
- U19A Girls All-Ireland Schools League - Mungret Community College
- U19B Girls All-Ireland Schools League - St. Louis Monaghan
- U19C Girls All-Ireland Schools League - St. Joseph's Spanish Point SS
- U16A Boys All-Ireland Schools Cup - Coláiste Éanna
- U16B Boys All-Ireland Schools Cup - Salesians Pallaskenry
- U16A Girls All-Ireland Schools Cup - Malahide CS
- U16B Girls All-Ireland Schools Cup - Coláiste Na Carraige
- U19A Boys All-Ireland Schools Cup - St. Mary's CBS Portlaoise
- U19B Boys All-Ireland Schools Cup - Ballymakenny College
- U19C Boys All-Ireland Schools Cup - O'Carolan College
- U19A Girls All-Ireland Schools Cup - Calasanz College
- U19B Girls All-Ireland Schools Cup - Mercy College Sligo
- U19C Girls All-Ireland Schools Cup - St. Flannan's College
- Minor A Boys All-Ireland Schools League - TBC
- Minor B Boys All-Ireland Schools League - St. Patrician High School, Monaghan
- Minor C Boys All-Ireland Schools League - Abbey Community College, Roscommon
- Minor A Girls All-Ireland Schools League - TBC
- Minor B Girls All-Ireland Schools League - St. Leo's, Carlow
- Minor C Girls All-Ireland Schools League - St. Flannan's College
- Junior A Boys All-Ireland Schools League - St. Brendan's
- Junior B Boys All-Ireland Schools League - Ballymakenny College
- Junior C Boys All-Ireland Schools League - Portmarnock
- Junior A Girls All-Ireland Schools League - Castleisland Community College
- Junior B Girls All-Ireland Schools League - Mercy College Sligo
- Junior C Girls All-Ireland Schools League - Abbey Community College



# NBRA Report

Paul Dempsey



**T**his season has leveraged the new structures put in place to enhance the recruitment, retention and development of officials across the game of basketball. Using technology and knowledge within our community has enabled us to reach more individuals than ever before.

2024/25 season objectives were introduced for all Area Associations to transition 10% of their members from Trainees to Grade 3 status. This objective has been universally met and exceeded, seeing record numbers of officials receive assessments, grades and progression.

**Introductory Courses:** Fifteen Introductory Courses were held throughout Ireland. There is a clear demand to become a member of the officiating community. Courses are held predominantly at the start of the season, helping to bolster Area Association membership for the upcoming season.

**Refereeing for All:** NBRA launched a new officiating qualification this season - Affiliate Member - to break down any barriers to refereeing and increase the availability of qualified individuals for key competitions, such as underage leagues and the post-primary schools. Hosted exclusively online via Helpside, it provides the essential information to support the fundamentals of refereeing. The course also provides a clear pathway to advance and engage via the Introductory Official Course.

## Grassroots Development

A few initiatives were built upon across the season specifically targeted at offering development to members of Area Associations. We had record numbers participating with positive feedback, which we will use to help expand and embed these programmes into our annual development plans.

### These included:

**Continuous Personal Development (CPD):** Officials receiving points for participation of in-person development activity along with completion of online training material.

**Monthly Seminars:** An average of over 100 people participating in these seminars, facilitated by our members specifically targeting topics that impact Area Associations.

**Advanced Referees Course:** Strong levels of development locally have led to continued calls for advancement of grades. To support this, we will be holding another Advanced Referees Course during the off-season. The officials will be supported on the programme across the next two seasons.

Grassroots development continues to be a key strategic priority for NBRA. Strong Area Associations are key to being able to implement our development programmes and

reach officials across the country.

This year we hope to improve and expand the communication between NBRA and the Area Associations to improve transparency and support collective objectives.

In addition, we plan to expand the use of Helpside with a larger knowledge library and even more questions available for members to test their knowledge.

This along with continued funding from Basketball Ireland and Sport Ireland will enable us to continue delivering valuable programmes to our members.



## National League

The 2024/25 Season saw the largest fundamental change to the National Structures in over 50 years. This has resulted in a stronger more dynamic body of officials who referee exclusively in our Domino's Men's and Women's Super Leagues. Furthermore, we have seen increased levels of ambition and desire from other officials to drive themselves forward and become members of the High-Performance Group (HPG).

We had a stated ambition to protect the integrity of our top leagues and encourage our officials to better invest time in their games and with their crews. We saw day-to-day benefits of this throughout the season, with more accountability, transparency and honesty between officials, leading to improved performances.

## Grade 1 Programme

There has been almost a 200% increase in the numbers of officials who now hold the Grade 1 Licence across the last two seasons. We continue to have several members participate on the two-year programme and will look to support their journey.

National League will continue to provide clear pathways to officials and look to improve standards to meet our current and future elite competition needs.

### These include:

**National Referee Pathway:** As part of the broader Referee Pathway, there is a clear pathway of development for National Competitions via the BI Development League (BIDL) and National Referees Panel through to HPG.

**HPG Meetings:** Several calibration meetings took place across the season for this group, aimed at getting uniformity in their officiating and to address key areas of focus.

**NLOP Meetings:** Weekly development sessions were held for 15 members of this group, looking to advance their knowledge and understanding of Individual Officiation Techniques and support their advancement to the HPG.

**Coach Engagement:** Regular engagement sessions took place with individual coaches across the leagues to break down barriers and provide clarity on philosophies and implements of FIBA IOT's. We hope to expand on this in the coming season to include collective meetings with all National League coaches to have a clearer understanding of the objectives of both stakeholders.

**Mentoring:** Circa 45% of all HPG or National League Officials are an active Mentor or Mentee. This provides one-to-one development opportunities and continued engagement to help improve overall officiating. We hope to continue if not expand this approach.





General Referee Activity

Our FIBA officials continue to represent Ireland in League/Cup and Tournament games across Europe. Emma Perry (FIBA) was appointed to a record number of games this season, with 13 in various competitions.

FIBA 27/29 Programme: This programme for potential future FIBA's officials as part of the 2027-29 cycle has already begun in conjunction with FIBA. Several members of the HPG are included on the programme and will have specific development objectives to help them towards this goal.

Referee Educators Development: Increasing the numbers of trained and qualified referee educators is key to pro-

viding grassroots development. We will continue to recruit new educators, while enhancing existing training in place. It is our ambition to have a strong body of qualified educators to support our current and future refereeing needs, as well as to show a clear pathway from refereeing, into referee education for those members who wish to do so.

3PO Clinics: Following the success and high-level demand for 3PO Officiating we will be holding a number of clinics around annual tournaments to showcase the required mechanics and Individual Officiating Techniques needed. These clinics support both local and national league competitions.

Varsities: We saw the introduction of development opportunities at this season's Varsity tournament. Presentations were delivered as part of the referee involvement, delivering up-to-date information, with both grassroots and NLOP members involved.

Sport Ireland - Staying in the Game: Sport Ireland have established a

network among NGB's to provide a platform for us to connect, collaborate and share knowledge on the training and supports of officials in sport. The Network will help develop a new Technical Officials Plan with Sport Ireland.



DREAM Programme

This programme is a Women In Sport Initiative to encourage and support Female Referees on their refereeing journey and help them reach their full potential.

The programme consists of several elements including zoom meetings, video analysis, in-person assessments, rules seminars and tournament refereeing experience

The programme includes five tutors and 25 female participants.

Participants are grouped according to experience and expertise, with each setting individual targets.

The female-only Dream Programme will commence its second season in 2025/26.

An alternative programme will commence in September 2025 for the remainder of the membership.



Looking Ahead to 2025/26

The focus for the season ahead will be to establish better synergies with the local Area Associations. They are the foundation for all refereeing activity.

We want to work with our area associations to break down and remove barriers for recruitment of new members, encourage strong retention rates and embed the culture of continued development for all.

A high-level summary of our objectives is as below:

Continued targeted uplifts in grades, particularly for Trainee to Grade 3 Licences

Ensure every Area Association has targeted development plans, based on the national development plan, but specific to support their local needs.

Enhancement of CPD activities and better availability of events across the community. National League: We will continue to build and expand on the successes of the programmes introduced in recent seasons, while also seeking to protect the integrity of the leagues we officiate in.

Having seen the success possible through engagement with coaches within the National League, we hope to introduce structured forums to help develop better communication channels and improve transparency.

Retention: Ensuring we retain our qualified officials is critical to the sustainability of a robust qualified panel to meet the needs of basketball at all levels. We hope to begin as series of engagements with individuals that will better enable us to understand the needs of members and help alleviate their barriers to ongoing participation in grassroots officiating.





## Niall McDermott

**H**elpside serves as Basketball Ireland's dedicated online learning platform, designed to support the ongoing development of all technical members.

The system offers a diverse suite of functionalities, including Interactive eLearning modules, event management for booking and hosting both in-person and blended learning coaching events, resource libraries, forums, continuing professional development (CPD) tracking, Coach licensing management and safeguarding course delivery.

Over the past year, Helpside has experienced significant growth, with registered users increasing to over 4,000.

Demonstrating its impact on coach education, 22 coaching CPD clinics were successfully hosted and evaluated through the platform, engaging over 600 coaches in their professional development. This is in addition to over 30 new coaching resources being added to the platform this year to provide coaches with more opportunities for self-directed learning.

A significant development in September 2024 saw the launch of our dedicated Mini-Basketball Portal on Helpside. This valuable resource is accessible to all primary school coaches, providing essential information and a wealth of

specific coaching materials to facilitate the successful implementation and growth of mini-basketball within schools.

2024 marked the successful return of the Basketball Ireland Coaching Conference. This two-day event, held at the National Basketball Arena in August, welcomed 126 coaches who benefited from the insights of leading European coaches. Feedback received was overwhelmingly positive, and we anticipate another successful conference in August 2025. This event complemented our annual Women In Sport Coaching Conference, which was also held at the National Basketball Arena in May.

Further enhancing our coach development initiatives, August saw Basketball Ireland welcome Don Showalter, Director of Coach Development for USA Basketball. Mr. Showalter conducted seven coaching clinics across the country, providing invaluable learning opportunities for our local coaches.

Recognising the broader needs of our technical community, Helpside has also witnessed the growth of our dedicated Referee's Portal. Accessible to all registered Basketball Ireland referees, this platform is considered a crucial tool for referee development, offering an expanding array of resources to support their ongoing education and skill enhancement.



Scan to go directly to Helpside



Pictured: Irish international Neal Quinn shoots the basketball at the National Basketball Arena during Ireland's FIBA Basketball World Cup Qualifier against Kosovo in November.







67

Total Events

3,351

Total Players

16

New Organisers

55

Official Events

+27%

Men

+24%

Women

Compared to 2024

824

Teams Participating

## 3x3 Report

Patrick O'Neill

### 3x3 Basketball

Age Categories: U11 to Senior Men and Women

# Basketball Ireland 3x3 2025

## FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

- Four online club support sessions ran, including sessions with the university outreach department for the use of 3x3 in school outreach programmes in Galway.
- 3x3 delivered to sports studies students in third level institutes in Cork and Belfast as part of their curriculum.
- 3x3 workshops run as part of the level 2 coaching certification for the first time.
- First ever 3x3 international camp held in Belfast with GB, Team NI and Ireland senior teams.
- Competed in the FIBA Nations League (U23's) for the second year. Significant results with wins over Lithuania, Ukraine and Romania building on previous year's results.

46

Development Officer  
Organised Events

13

Host Counties

Cork, Limerick, Kerry, Louth,  
Derry, Donegal, Antrim,  
Tyrone, Galway, Sligo, Meath,  
Monaghan and Dublin.

115

Players at 3x3 National Camp



Pictured: Top Left: Aine O'Connor shoots over her French opponent at the FIBA Women's 3x3 World Series in Clermont Ferrand. Middle: Players compete in Basketball Ireland's 3x3 domestic tour at Malahide Castle. Bottom right: Ireland get ready to defend the inbounds during the FIBA 3x3 Women's World Series.



# NABC Report

**N**ational Area Boards Committee (NABC) is the committee responsible for club basketball within Basketball Ireland.

The NABC consists of one representative from each of the Area Boards across the island of Ireland and five additional Executive Officers. NABC meetings this season have been a combination of in-person and virtual which has allowed meetings to be called over Zoom at short notice when required and allowed us to meet in Dublin for a limited number of meetings reducing, the travel for all NABC Reps.

The first events of the season were the first rounds of the U20 Cup and the first round NICC which took place in October. At the start of November, the qualifying tournaments for the U18 National Cups, which were hosted by clubs around the country. We had 38 teams in the U18 Men's Cup and 27 teams in the Women's Cup this season which was great to see. Unfortunately, due to a few appeals which had to go to Sports Disputes Solutions Ireland we were unable to facilitate the U18 and U20 Women's National Cup semi-finals and finals in the normal designated Cup weekends in January.

All other grades saw everyone else travel to Cork for the semi-finals of all the Cups with three venues on the go, it was a great weekend to display what basketball has to offer, and it didn't disappoint. A special thanks to the host clubs Neptune, Brunell and Ballincollig for everything they did over the weekend.

The first of our National Cup Finals was the NICC Women's Final which saw Ongar Chasers overcoming two-time defending champions Liffey Celtics to win their first National Cup in the club's history on a scoreline of 52-46. The first game Sat-

urday morning saw Éanna take on Titans in the U18 Men's Billy Coffey National Cup with Éanna coming out victorious in a game that remained tight until the last quarter when Éanna outscored Titans 29-14 in the fourth to win 92-72.

The first game on Sunday saw one of the most dramatic endings to a National Cup Final in years when St. Brendan's played Barrow Rovers in the NICC Men's Final. Barrow led 60-58 with just 0.8 seconds left on the game clock, Barrow Rovers called a time out with St. Brendan's having possession. St. Brendan's inbounded the ball and managed to get a three-point shot off to see them win by the narrowest of margins 61-60. The second game on Sunday didn't disappoint either, with Limerick Celtics looking to go back-to-back U20 Men's National Cup winners, but Dundalk Ravens had something else in mind. In a game that saw the lead change 15 times, and the game tied 12 times it was a fitting end to see the game go to overtime, with Dundalk Ravens running out 71-63 winners.

Focus then moved to the AIG All-Ireland Club Championships, which took place over four weekends starting on the last weekend of March in Gormanston.

Each weekend saw 24-25 teams competing at U14 and U16 boys and girls for the top spots in the A, B and C divisions. The first weekend saw Dublin Lions winning the U14 girls A division, Maree lifting the B and Limerick Sports Huskies taking the C title.

The following weekend had the U14 boys with Éanna winning the A division, B honours went to St. Mary's Castleisland, while Limerick Lions took the C.

The third weekend saw the U16 girls,

with Limerick Celtics winning the A division, Meteors winning the B and Athlone winning the C. The final weekend we had the U16 boys with Limerick Lions winning the A division, St. Brendan's winning the B and Castlebar Comets winning the C.

The May Bank Holiday saw the two remaining National Cup Finals take place in the National Basketball Arena with the U18 Women's National Cup Final up first which saw an all-Dublin affair with Meteors taking on Templeogue.

Meteors eventually proved to be too strong for Templeogue with a final scoreline of Meteors 77 Templeogue 50. The last game in the National Cup Finals this season saw the inaugural U20 Women's Ken Clarke National Cup Final between Tralee Magic and East Cavan Eagles.

The NABC were privileged to name the U20 Women's National Cup after a true servant of our sport Ken Clarke who, sadly passed away in September. Ken gave decades of his life to our sport in various roles and it's a fitting tribute to him and his family for him to be remembered in this way. The game started tight, but during the second quarter it looked as if East Cavan Eagles were just too strong for Tralee Magic to deal with but, then Tralee Magic found a different gear and fought themselves back into the game, with them eventually winning the game 61-53 to see our last National Cup game for the season finally complete.

The NABC would like to thank all our Area Boards for their hard work and wish all our clubs the best for the 2025/26 season. We look forward to working together with other entities in our sport over the next season and more to keep improving the sport of basketball in Ireland.



Pictured: Meteors Basketball Club players and coaches celebrate winning the U18 Women's National Cup at the National Basketball Arena on Bank Holiday Monday in May.



Pictured: Irish international Mimi Clarke with the newly renamed U20 Women's Ken Clarke National Cup.



# CTOC Report

Gerry Kelly



The 2024/25 season under review was again unique and challenging. Highly successful meetings took place both before and during the season with John Feehan, Basketball Ireland CEO, NBRA and the NLC to further develop improved collaboration and communication between all three committees. These meetings will continue into the 2025/26 season.

CTOC published its Strategic Plan for the 2024–25 Season which was circulated to the BI CEO, NBRA and the NLC.

The Table Officials development pathway structure continued as planned during the season under review. Working closely with Mark Patton and Jorge Ramos a range of new and existing Table Officials development initiatives were introduced by CTOC during the season.

## These included:

- Five Introductory Courses, which included a module on the NBN23 system were delivered by Mark Patton and Jorge Ramos for close on 500 new Table Officials during the season.
- The new Advanced FIBA Table Officials Course was again delivered during the season with close on 30 table officials attending.
- Advanced and Introductory Courses will continue during the 2025/26 season.
- The new Transition Year Table Officials Course developed with the support of Mark Patton and FIBA was successfully piloted in schools during the current and academic year.
- This course will be further provided by CTOC during the 2025/26 academic school year.
- All CTOC Courses will continue to include a development module on the NBN23 platform.
- CTOC is delighted to confirm the continued FIBA Licensing of our two FIBA Commissioners Declan Murray and Paula Cleary.
- An updating of skills evening was provided to all table officials representing National League clubs in September in advance of the commencement of the new season. Unfortunately, the attendance at this course continues as in previous seasons to be poorly supported by clubs.
- To further improve the service provided by CTOC to the NLC, Super and National Leagues a review meeting was held in late October for all Commissioners and Super League Table Officials to discuss and review issues identified early in the season. This proved to be highly successful and will be repeated for the 2025/26 season.
- BI FIBA Licensed Officials officiated at all Dublin-based European games during the season.
- There are currently 13 Table Officials nationwide on the Development Panel which will be further extended for the 2025/26 season.
- Our FIBA Commissioners Declan Murray and Paula Cleary were regularly active on European games during the 2024/25 season
- CTOC had 31 active Commissioners nationwide during the current season.
- CTOC will continue to work to increase its gender balance of female Commissioners, which at the end of the season reached 30%.



## 2024/25 saw the FIBA Licensing of Basketball Ireland's highest number ever of 20 Table Officials:

Sarah McCann	Deirdre O'Mahony	Norma Thompson	Zara Long	Brendan Corrigan
Adrianne Prendergast	Alex Kiernan	Amy Rooney	Aoife Quinn	Carmel Kilmartin
Daniel Sealy	Deborah McArdle	Fiona Quinn	Gareth O'Reilly	Ger O'Leary
Orlaith Boylan	Paula Ryan Kavanagh	Colm O'Connor	Deirdre Hammill	Amy Quirke

CTOC wishes to acknowledge the ongoing support it received from John Feehan, Basketball Ireland CEO, the Basketball Ireland team and Local Development Officers.



# Development Officers

Ciaran O'Sullivan

**G**rowth of the game is at the heart of the Development Officer role and the current team have shown once more than they can deliver in this regard.

This summer will see the team expand to nine development officers across the island with the addition of a new Development Officer Cork.

Programmes operated by Development Officers, including Urban Hoops, SO-CIA-Ball and 'Basketball For All', have brought successful events to all four provinces and I am confident that these positives will continue in 2025 and beyond. In the first four months of 2025, Development Officer led programmes have reached over 13,000 participants, with 72 % of these being children.

Basketball Ireland is very grateful for the support given by all contributing stakeholders (South Dublin County Council, Cork City Council, Fingal County Council, Dublin City Council, Trinity College Dublin, Technological University of the Shannon, University of Galway, Atlantic Techno-

logical University and Ulster University Jordanstown) The development officers operate under a strategic plan of three key pillar- Increasing participation; Training and Education and Visibility/Awareness

Our 3x3 Summer programme continued to flourish, as we brought total events run in Ireland to 53. 3x3 is a major priority for Basketball Ireland and its Development Officers, so it was excellent to see the uptake this year. The number of official events was 45. 31 were run by Development Officers. They also assisted the remainder with direct support or training of the organisers in how to run an event through the official platform, FIBA Event Maker.

## Jr. NBA

The partnership between Basketball Ireland and the Jr. NBA continues to thrive, now involving around 20,000 primary school children since its inception.

11 clubs are participating this year, including a joint application from Kerry.

Each participating school receives an official NBA basketball and full playing kit. Approximately 2,000 children will participate in cluster events during April and May.

The main Festival of Fun will be held on May 22nd at the National Basketball Arena, featuring a former NBA star and some of Ireland's top basketball players. The programme has expanded to Northern Ireland for the second consecutive year, with 30 schools partnering with NBA teams. A Festival of Fun took place at the University of Ulster on April 21, 2025

This programme provides a wonderful introduction to basketball for primary school children, while creating a pathway to join local clubs. It's great to see such a successful grassroots initiative that connects young Irish players to the excitement of the NBA while promoting physical activity.

## Helpside

Basketball Ireland's "Helpside" LMS has grown to over 4,000 registered users,

demonstrating strong coaching community engagement. Key 2024 highlights include: The Mini-Basketball Portal provides essential resources for implementing youth basketball programs in schools, while the Coaches Conference featured leading European coaches and received excellent feedback, with another planned for August 2025.

Development Officers



# Masters Basketball

Mike Murray

After a very successful trials programme where over 250 athletes tried out for teams, the final selections were made for FIMBA European Championships in Pesaro, Italy in June 2024, including numerous ex-international players. This increase in interest saw an expansion of our international programme from 3 to 7 teams. Over 250 teams in total competed in 16 different age categories. Ireland was represented in men's 40, 50, 60 & 65 and women's 40, 50 and 60 categories.

Our teams represented Basketball Ireland in the competition extremely well and finished in the following positions overall.



**F40 9<sup>th</sup>**



**F50 4<sup>th</sup>**



**F60 4<sup>th</sup>**



**M40 11<sup>th</sup>**



**M50 6<sup>th</sup>**



**M60 15<sup>th</sup>**



**M65 6<sup>th</sup>**

## FIMBA World Maxibasketball Championship Ticino Switzerland June 27 – July 6th 2025

The next international competition where our international teams will compete will be the FIMBA World Maxibasketball Championship in Ticino, Switzerland where we will have teams entered in M40, M50, M65, F40 & F45 categories. Teams and management are already in place and training has commenced after another open trials process. These championships will see over 420 teams from all over the world competing across 16 categories.

# STAY ACTIVE-JOIN THE MOVEMENT



## Masters National Cup

This year the Masters National Cup ran in just one category, M40. We had 13 teams competing, with BC Leixlip Zalgiris and Brothers Near and Far, Dublin reaching the final at the National Basketball Arena on May 8th.



## Basketball Ireland Affiliated Tournaments

Basketball Ireland affiliated tournaments grew from 3 to 5 last year and added the Cork Masters and Malahide masters Tournaments. The Galway Masters (Nov), Kilkenny Masters (March), Dublin Masters (May), Malahide Masters (August) & Cork Masters (September) attracted teams from around the world. Over 190 teams participated in all tournaments over 13 age categories and equally mixed between male and female teams. These tournaments attract vital tourism to the areas where they take place and are being supported by local city councils and sports bodies as events which promote healthy lifestyles for mature athletes and family friendly events.



# Jr. NBA

Jason Killeen

**B**asketball Ireland has enjoyed a fruitful relationship with the Jr. NBA in recent years. Up to 20,000 primary school children have participated in the Jr NBA programme since the partnership began.

In 2025 we continued to see for the 2nd year running a Jr NBA programme being rolled out in Northern Ireland. Basketball Northern Ireland will follow the same format as previous leagues with 30 schools being selected to partner with an NBA team. Has culminated with the Festival of Fun in the Ulster University on 21st April. The relationship between Basketball Ireland and the Jr. NBA is a testament to all of the previous clubs and schools that have taken part, which has allowed us to grow.

This year we will have 11 clubs taking part with a joint club application from Kerry. A total of 30 schools will take part which are linked with one of thirty NBA teams. Each school received a full playing kit and official NBA basketball. The goal of the Jr. NBA programme is to give primary aged school children a fun introduction to basketball and a pathway to joining their local club. The 10 clubs selected for this year's programme are Atlantic Coast Eagles, North Kildare, Glanmire, Oblates, Éanna, Malahide, Limerick Celtics, Portlaoise, Titans, and Kenmare Kestrels. All clubs have done fantastic work promoting their club in the local community and providing long-lasting memories for all participants. During the months of April and May approximately 3,000 children will take part in the cluster events.

On May 22nd, all 30 participating schools will converge on the National Basketball Arena for the Jr. NBA Festival of Fun. All schools will proudly wear their official NBA gear and will even be joined by a special guest and former NBA star. On the day participants will get to try various skills and drills, compete in games. The Festival of Fun will also be attended by some of Ireland's best known basketball stars. The future is bright for basketball in Ireland and with the support of the NBA and DeCare dental the sky is the limit.



**5,000 children took part in the Jr. NBA programme last year.**





# Diversity & Inclusion

Paul Carr



**B**asketball Ireland's Urban Hoops programme is a grassroots initiative designed to introduce basketball to children in disadvantaged areas across the country.

Delivered by experienced Development Officers in local schools, the programme provides young people with free, high-quality coaching and a fun, inclusive introduction to the sport.

Each year, over 3,000 children take part, many of whom are then linked with local basketball clubs to continue their development and stay engaged in the game long-term.

Urban Hoops plays a vital role in creating opportunities for participation, breaking down barriers to entry, and fostering a love of sport in communities that need it most.

**B**asketball Ireland continues to run hugely successful Basketball for All campaign which led to the foundation of twelve new Basketball for All teams in Basketball Ireland mainstream clubs and one hundred and fifty new members due to the programme.

There are currently 20 registered Basketball for All clubs and over 250 members throughout the country. Basketball Ireland encourages all clubs to explore starting a Basketball for All programme within their club.

If you wish to learn more about inclusion or how to be more inclusive, please contact our Grants and Participation Manager Paul Carr by emailing [inclusion@ireland.basketball](mailto:inclusion@ireland.basketball)

**B**asketball Ireland formed a Diversity and Inclusion Committee in 2024 to advise the organization on how to become more inclusive of the wide variety of people within our organization.

Marianna Troy has been elected as the first Chairperson of the newly formed committee. Adrian Donaghue, Suzanne Maguire, Adam Wickham, Darko Bucan, Teresa Tarrant, and Elaine Mahon are the first committee members.

The committee is currently working in conjunction with Basketball Ireland to implement a new complaints procedure for incidents of discrimination.

The committee will advise the Basketball Ireland board, staff, and committees on best practices to ensure our sport is inclusive to all communities. If you wish to contact the committee, you can email Paul Carr at [pcarr@ireland.basketball](mailto:pcarr@ireland.basketball)



# Promise Project

Paul Carr

**T**he aim of the PROMISE Project is to promote greater inclusion and participation of girls and women in basketball at all levels of responsibility through the design, implementation, and evaluation of a holistic intervention program. Basketball Ireland was a partner alongside, the Catalan, Portugal, Bulgaria, Kosovo federations as well as University Ramon LLULL and Nouvelle-Aquitaine basketball league.

This project works with federations and clubs, which have to assume a key role as transforming agents of gender models and relationships. In short, it is necessary to promote effective equality and create a space of opportunities where the perception of basketball is not limited to men's sports practice but also establishes a strong and independent identity for women's basketball.

## Project Objectives

1. Promote Inclusion and Participation – Increase the engagement of girls and women in basketball at all levels, from players to leadership roles.
2. Raise Awareness on Gender Perspective – Foster an understanding of gender equality within basketball structures.
3. Empower Women in Basketball – Implement training programs, networking events, leadership opportunities, and development initiatives for athletes, coaches, referees, executives, and federation staff.

## Projects Implemented

As part of the PROMISE Project, the following initiatives were successfully executed:

- Mentorship Program for Coaches and Referees: Providing guidance and support for female coaches and referees to develop their skills and advance their careers.
- Documentary Production: Showcasing stories and experiences of women in basketball to inspire and educate future generations.
- Comic Book Initiative: Developing an engaging and educational comic book to promote gender equality in basketball.
- Media Workshop: Training participants in media skills to enhance visibility and representation of women in basketball.
- Sustainability Workshop: Focusing on long-term strategies to ensure continued progress in gender equality in the sport.
- International Campus for Referees and Coaches in Bordeaux: Offering hands-on training and international exposure for female officials and coaches.
- Hackathon: Encouraging innovative solutions for promoting women's basketball through a collaborative problem-solving event.
- Policy Recommendations: Developing actionable strategies to influence national and European policies on gender equality in sports.

## Conclusion

The Basketball Ireland PROMISE Project, supported by Erasmus+, is committed to breaking barriers and fostering an inclusive environment for women in basketball. By promoting participation, leadership, and gender awareness, the project aims to establish a lasting legacy of equality and opportunity within Irish and European basketball structures.





# Youth Leadership

**B**asketball Ireland successfully delivered its third Youth Leadership course this year, supporting 12 participants aged 16 to 18. The program guided them through Foróige's Leadership for Life Modules 1 & 2, along with introductory courses in basketball coaching and refereeing.

Led by Foróige tutors Darren McGovern and Paul Kelleher, the course aimed to develop leadership skills, empowering participants to apply them within the basketball community. Recognizing the natural leadership potential in young people, the program provided a dynamic and supportive environment to refine their abilities.

The Leadership for Life course, evaluated by the University of Galway, has

demonstrated significant benefits for participants, both personally and in their capacity to contribute to their communities.

Graduates of previous Basketball Ireland-led courses have gone on to captain Irish underage international teams, officiate at Super League and international levels, referee at AICCs, and coach at Academy level. Many have also completed Module 3, earning a Foundation Certificate in Youth Leadership and Community Action from the University of Galway.



# Safeguarding

Rory Wall

**T**his report outlines the key safeguarding, compliance, and governance activities undertaken by the National Children's Officer (NCO) and Compliance Manager over the past year. It highlights progress in child protection, complaints handling, vetting, social media safeguarding, data protection compliance, and governance contributions within Basketball Ireland

## Safeguarding & Child Protection

Basketball Ireland remains committed to creating a safe and inclusive environment for all players, coaches, officials, and volunteers. Over the past year, significant work has been carried out in the following areas:

Continued alignment of BI's Safeguarding Policy with Sport Ireland's best practices and the Children First Act 2015.

Clear guidelines issued to clubs on playing time, coaching responsibilities, and safeguarding reporting mechanisms.

**New Code of Conduct for All (2025):** Basketball Ireland introduced a comprehensive Code of Conduct applicable to all participants, including young players, parents, coaches, officials, and committees. This policy sets out clear behavioural expectations to ensure a positive and respectful basketball environment.

**Complaints Procedure Policy (in Development):** We are currently working on an updated complaints procedure policy to provide a structured and transparent process for handling disputes and safeguarding concerns.

**Transgender & Inclusion Policy Review:** The working group assigned to this task is actively reviewing its Transgender & Inclusion Policy. We aim to publish the revised policy in the coming months.

## Safeguarding Training & Awareness

Mandatory safeguarding training continues for all coaches, referees, and volunteers working with minors.

Collaboration with Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs) to deliver Sport Ireland-approved Safeguarding Level 1, 2, and 3 training.

27 Safeguarding 1 courses were held between April 2024 and 2025, resulting in 489 people receiving certification.

During the same timeframe a further 40 people were awarded Safeguarding 2 certification on two courses.

## Collaboration with Diversity & Inclusion Group

Basketball Ireland has actively partnered with the Diversity and Inclusion Group to ensure that safeguarding policies are inclusive and representative of all members.

This collaboration will help shape safeguarding best practices that support diverse backgrounds and abilities, ensuring an equitable and safe environment for all players.

We look forward to a healthy and vibrant working relationship that will continue to strengthen inclusivity and safeguarding efforts across all levels of the game.

## Vetting & Garda Clearance

Vetting is a cornerstone of Basketball Ireland's safeguarding framework. The vetting process continues to be managed in strict accordance with the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012-2016.

The total number of vetting applications processed in the last 12 months was 1,985\* (number correct at end of March, 2025).

Approximately two thirds of vetting's are carried out between Aug. – Nov. incl. (1,345).

Vetting rejections due to non-compliance: 0

Basketball Ireland continues to audit compliance across clubs, ensuring that all individuals in regulated roles are fully vetted before engaging with children or vulnerable persons.



## Whistleblowing & Confidentiality

Basketball Ireland acknowledges the importance of whistleblower protections and ensuring confidentiality in all safeguarding and disciplinary matters.

### Whistleblowing Policy:

BI has a formal Whistleblowing Policy, which is contained in the Basketball Ireland Handbook (Section 2.1).

This policy provides clear procedures for reporting concerns confidentially and ensures that individuals raising concerns are protected from retaliation.

### Confidentiality Standards:

While BI does not require confidentiality agreements, all safeguarding and disciplinary matters are handled with strict confidentiality.

When formal appeals arise, due process must be followed, and relevant parties may need to be named to allow for procedural fairness.

## Compliance & Data Protection (GDPR)

Basketball Ireland is committed to full compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. This ensures that all personal data related to players, coaches, officials, and volunteers is handled responsibly and securely.

### GDPR Adherence:

All safeguarding records, vetting applications, and disciplinary files are stored securely in line with GDPR requirements.

Access to personal data is restricted to authorised personnel only, with clear data retention policies in place.

Individuals have the right to access, correct, or request deletion of their personal data where applicable.

### Compliance & Governance Work:

Ongoing collaboration with Basketball Ireland's Board and FinArc (Finance & Risk Committee) to strengthen governance structures.

Regular risk assessments and audits ensure BI's compliance with safeguarding, data protection, and broader governance standards.

Contributions to policy reviews, code of conduct updates, and training materials to maintain a best-practice approach across the organisation.

## Social Media & Online Safety

The online safety of young players continues to be a priority. Basketball Ireland's Social Media Policy (April 2023) and Coaches' Social Media Guidelines (2024) provide clear rules regarding social media conduct.

### Prohibited Activities:

Direct communication between coaches and minors via private messaging is not allowed.

Players, coaches, and volunteers must refrain from posting inappropriate or discriminatory content related to basketball activities.

### Education & Monitoring:

Clubs are encouraged to educate members on safe social media use. Reporting mechanisms are in place for inappropriate online behaviour or cyberbullying.

## Key Cases & Outcomes

Over the past year, several safeguarding and disciplinary cases were investigated. Basketball Ireland has taken strong action to protect players and uphold the integrity of the sport.

### Recent Disciplinary Actions:

**Coaching:** Following multiple safeguarding concerns, two coaches have been permanently banned from Basketball Ireland, and all relevant stakeholders have been informed.

**Officials:** Multiple complaints were reviewed under BI's disciplinary procedures, leading to suspensions. The individuals have accepted the sanctions imposed and will be eligible to return following completion of re-vetting and safeguarding training.

## Future Priorities

Looking ahead, Basketball Ireland will focus on the following safeguarding and compliance priorities:

**Enhanced Club Compliance Audits:** Ensure all clubs meet safeguarding, vetting, and GDPR requirements.

**Expanded Safeguarding Training:** More in-depth training sessions for coaches and club welfare officers.

**Stronger Governance & Risk Management:** Continued collaboration with BI's Board and FinArc to enhance governance structures.

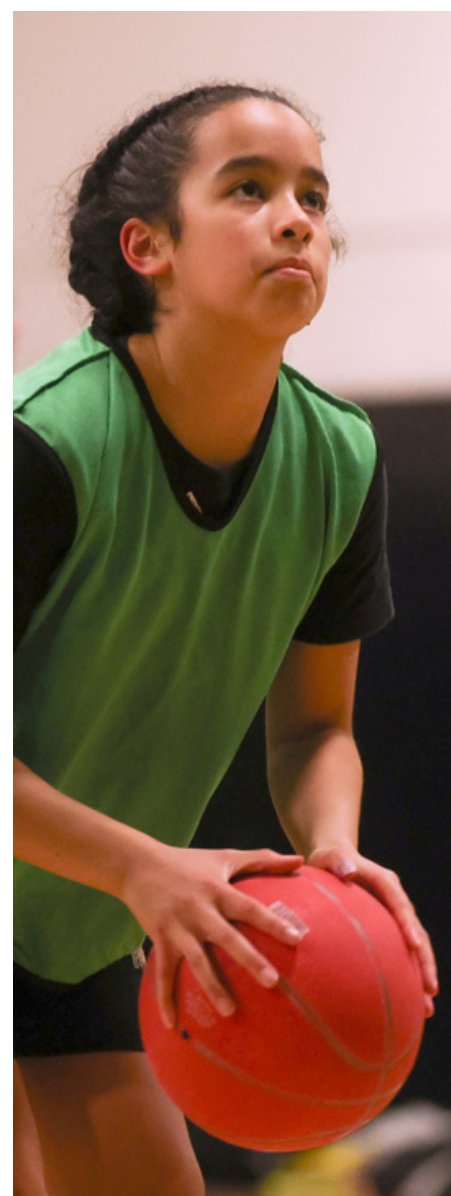
**Policy Review and Implementation:**

Continued revision and implementation of current and new policies, ensuring the organisation is aligned with national legislation, international best practices, and the evolving needs of our members.

**Stakeholder Engagement & Inclusion:** We will continue to work closely with our clubs, coaches, players, parents, and partner organisations to ensure their voices are heard and they remain actively involved in shaping Basketball Ireland's policies and initiatives.

## Conclusion

Basketball Ireland remains steadfast in its commitment to child protection, governance, and compliance. The past year has seen significant progress, with strengthened policies, increased vetting oversight, and decisive disciplinary actions where necessary. We look forward to a continued partnership with the Diversity and Inclusion Group to further strengthen our safeguarding policies and ensure that basketball remains a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for all.



# Primary Schools Mini Basketball

## Casey Tryon



**B**asketball Ireland's Primary School's Mini Basketball programme was reintroduced in 2024. Mini Basketball has been around since 1972 in several different forms but lost momentum during covid.

As one of the most popular activities of the PE curriculum in schools, basketball is a game that can be enjoyed by all students. Research shows over 600 primary schools are engaged in extra curricular basketball.

After a successful launch of the programme with the Minister of Sport in September at Queen of Angels primary schools in Sandycroft, Basketball Ireland saw several counties from all over the country register their committees. These committees included schools in Roscommon, Dublin Limerick, Waterford, and Monaghan.

These committees benefited from a grant for running new programs and access to a dedicated primary school

resource page on our learning and development platform "Helpside". 2025 promises to see growth in the program with ambitious goals of setting up committees in 8 more counties along with supporting currently registered counties.

The implementation of a new registration system will ensure the registration process is quick and easy for committees to complete.

Primary Schools





IT'S  
EVERYONE'S  
GAME

