

# GAA International

Report 2015





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## Foreword by Joe McHugh T.D.

It is my pleasure as Minister for the Diaspora and International Development to acknowledge the role of the GAA as our largest diaspora organisation abroad. Going back to my own days as a young Irish emigrant in the Middle East and my involvement with the GAA locally, I am well aware of the significance of the GAA to the global Irish family. The GAA provides a strong community and social network and helps to sustain a strong sense of heritage among our overseas communities. The support provided to the GAA by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, through the Emigrant Support Programme, aims to foster this key role provided by the GAA.

This report documents the collaboration between the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the GAA and the impact this is having in Irish communities across the globe. Strengthening connections with Irish communities abroad and promoting links with Irish people and people of Irish ancestry is a key objective of the Emigrant Support Programme. The ever increasing level of GAA activity abroad is testament to the work being done by the GAA locally with the support of our Embassy network.

In this our centenary year as we reflect on our country's journey over the last 100 years, it is right to recognise the critical role the GAA has played in that journey. This year's GAA World Games in Croke Park will be a fitting celebration of this journey and we look forward to many of our global Irish family joining us for the event.

Ba mhaith liom mo chomhghairdeas a gabháil chuig an C.L.G. agus a fhoireann uilig timpeall an domhain, agus fosta aitheantas a gabháil i dtreo an ceangail nádúrtha idir muintir na h-Éireann sa bhaile agus thar lear.

**Joe McHugh T.D.**

*Minister for the Diaspora and International Development*

# Reflecting on 2015 by Pat Daly, GAA

As generations of Irish people at home and abroad celebrate the centenary of the 1916 Rising, there has been a renewed interest and discourse around the movement of the Gaelic Revival, which played a significant role in inspiring the leaders of 1916 to declare armed insurrection on the streets of Dublin during Easter week. The establishment of the Gaelic Athletic Association - founded in 1884 at Hayes' Hotel in Thurles - is regarded as one of the key forces behind the Gaelic Revival along with the literary movement and revival of the Irish language.

Established amid a fear that the national sports of Hurling and Gaelic Football were under threat from 'such foreign and fantastic sports as lawn tennis, polo, croquet and cricket', one cannot but surmise that the members who attended that founding meeting would be awestruck at the growth of the GAA over 130 years later. Due to the steps they took and the efforts of many generations since, the fear that 'imported' sports would replace and obliterate our national pastimes has subsided and, in fact, Hurling and Gaelic Football have become two of Ireland's most recognisable exports.

2015 witnessed the continued delivery of high quality, impact-led activities through the various Games Development projects internationally. From a personal perspective, there were a number of stand-out projects and events that highlighted the continued value and impact of supporting these activities including the World Games, the accelerated growth of GAA in Europe and the success of the New York Girls U.14 team in Féile.

In March 2015, I had the sincere honour of attending the inaugural GAA World Games in Abu Dhabi, from 5th - 7th March 2015. There I witnessed the best footballers and hurlers from Canada, the USA, Asia, the Middle East, South Africa, Australasia, South America and Continental Europe competing for the honour of winning the title of International GAA World Champions.

The weekend commenced on Thursday 5th March with a World Business Forum. Keynote speakers at the Forum represented the world of business and GAA including Aogán Ó Fearghail (Uachtarán CLG) and Paul Kehoe TD (Government Chief Whip & Minister of State). Run in conjunction with the Department of Foreign Affairs, Enterprise Ireland, Invest Northern Ireland and the Irish Embassies and Business Networks in the Region, the Forum provided a focus for potential business opportunities in the region - in particular industries such as Food and Agribusiness, ICT, Real Estate, Medical and Financial Sectors.

The Games commenced in earnest on the 6th March. In total, the tournament featured international teams from eight different international units playing Gaelic Football and Ladies Football. On Day 1 the teams were broken into groups where they undertook qualifiers and play-offs with the victorious teams proceeding to the Finals of the World Games on Day 2. Simultaneously a local Middle Eastern Tournament – embracing all playing codes – was held. Furthermore, on the final day there was also a Youth Gaelic Football competition. This demonstrated the ever-growing popularity of Gaelic Football in schools across the Gulf Region. This celebration of Irish sporting culture was also accompanied by displays of Irish music, song and dance on both evenings of the tournament. Finally, the closing ceremony with the presentation of the World Cups took place on Saturday 7th of March and also included the selection of the first ever GAA World All Stars Teams.

With over 400 Clubs worldwide outside of Ireland, the World Games was a unique opportunity for the cream of the crop in each International Unit to represent their Country or Region on a global stage. In addition to providing a networking platform for the Irish and international business community, it also brought the Irish Diaspora together and was an opportunity to share our culture and heritage on a global stage with many nationalities around the world. Furthermore, it was an occasion for recognising those who volunteer to develop our National Games internationally. In particular the efforts of the organising team in the Middle East Board must be acknowledged in this context. As the newest County Board in the GAA family, the Middle East Board and it's Officers displayed an incredible level of commitment, innovation and vision by bringing the International Units together from the four corners of the world for the first time in the GAA's history.

The continued growth of GAA in Europe was another success story of 2015. Since its establishment in 1999, the European Board has worked tirelessly to support the establishment of new clubs across continental Europe. 2015 was no exception to this and in total 11 new clubs were established as follows: Celtic Tres Cantos (Spain); Darmstadt GAA (Germany); Dorna GAA (Spain); Earls of Leuven GAA (Belgium); Gaelic Football Provence (France); Gaélicos do Gran Sol (Catalonia, Spain); Granada Gaels; Herdeiros de Dhais F.G. (Galicia, Spain); Madrid Harps Youth (Spain); Sitges Eagles (Spain); Tregor-Plougragan Gaels (France). What is particularly striking about this growth is the fact that the Executive Committees in 7 of these clubs are comprised of individuals indigenous to the area. This emphasises the appeal of Gaelic Games and the Irish culture to an international audience. The work of the European Board in supporting developed and newly established clubs is

to be applauded - particularly when one has regard for the fact that the distance between clubs is 4,935km from North to South (Oulu, Finland to Gibraltar) - and 4,381km from East to West (Moscow, Russia to Pontivedra, Spain).

There are phenomenal efforts underway all around the world to introduce Gaelic games to a new generation of children of Irish and non-Irish descent. Many volunteers in the more recently established International Units look to the Association's older Units for guidance, advice and inspiration i.e. Britain, New York, North America. In this context, 2015 provided yet another source of inspiration and ambition for the GAA's global volunteers through the success of New York's U.14 Ladies Gaelic football team at Féile Peile na nÓg. Féile na nÓg is a Club festival for Gaelic football and Ladies Gaelic football at U.14 level, involving teams from across the Association in Ireland and beyond. On foot of their 2014 success in Division 3, in 2015 the New York U.14 Ladies Gaelic football team were promoted to Division 2 and travelled to Wicklow to participate. After playing 5 games the New York girls made it to the Final against Mungret St. Paul's of Limerick where they won in a tight game. This guaranteed New York promotion to Division 1 for 2016. This is a testament to the efforts that have been on-going for the past number of years through the introduction and organisation of the Gaelic4Girls programme in New York. This success also serves to show other International Units and Clubs that the perseverance and hard-work of volunteers can pay off and that children from any birthplace can compete and win against their Irish peers.

Finally, it is often in times of real sorrow that we witness the true strength and importance of the GAA community. At GAA International Congress in February 2015, we were shocked to hear of the untimely death of Lisa Orsi, a 22 year old Derry woman, who suffered fatal effects of altitude sickness. A well-loved member of the Singapore Gaelic Lions, the Club rallied around to assist her family and



*Lisa Orsi celebrating a score for the Singapore Gaelic Lions*

friends in her time of need. Tributes poured in to Lisa with a moving speech about her delivered at the World Games by Paul Carpenter, founder of the South Africa Gaels and coach of the Singapore Gaelic Lion's Ladies team. Subsequently, at the Asian Gaelic Games in Shanghai, the Ladies Senior Cup was renamed the Lisa Orsi Cup in her honour. The impact and importance of the GAA to the international community in such a time of tragedy was encapsulated in the establishment of a movement called 'Take Lisa With You', whereby hundreds of young people pledged to continue Lisa's travels by wearing the Lisa Orsi GAA jersey as they travel across the world while at the same time raising awareness around organ donation.

Chris Hennessy, from Listowel in Kerry, was single-minded in his efforts to found the first ever GAA club in Berlin. Through his tremendous efforts and energy he managed to oversee the official establishment of Berlin GAA in November 2014. However, just two months later, in January 2015, Chris tragically passed away from cancer. However, his enthusiasm, passion and grá for the games proved to be the greatest motivation for his club-mates to work to ensure the growth of Berlin GAA in its first year. In fact, Berlin GAA has not just grown but has in fact flourished. 2015 witnessed them journey a total of 8,000km playing 27 men's Gaelic football matches, 12 Hurling and 6 Ladies football games. The community spirit that Chris encapsulated has gone from strength to strength and his initial efforts and enthusiasm will not be forgotten by those he inspired.

The Berkeley tragedy in June 2015 was a heart-breaking disaster that resonated with all Irish people both at home and abroad. However, the incident demonstrated the unparalleled significance of the GAA to communities overseas. Almost immediately after the tragedy occurred we were struck by images of hundreds of young Irish J1 students paying respects at the scene while wearing their various GAA jerseys – a symbol of unity and togetherness. At the same time the GAA community rallied to support the family and friends of those involved by holding fundraising events and organising candelight vigils from Berkeley to Dalkey. It is this fundamental expression of Irishness, which the GAA captures and reflects – the importance of this cannot ever be overstated.

Ultimately, all of the activities are delivered by people who are passionate about the continued growth of Gaelic games and support for the Irish Diaspora. In this regard, I would like to extend my gratitude to all of those involved – ní neart go cur le chéile.

**Pat Daly,**

*GAA Director of Games Development & Research*

April 2016





GAA

O'NEILLS

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Galway Army  
TORONTO



# Introduction

# Introduction

Over the past decade, the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) has worked in a close partnership with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to grow and support Irish communities internationally under the auspices of the Emigrant Support Programme (ESP).

The Emigrant Support Programme focuses on strengthening connections with Irish Communities abroad and promoting links with Irish people and people of Irish ancestry. These communities are made up of Irish emigrants, their descendants and those living abroad who share and celebrate an Irish heritage identity. The support provided by the Department aims to foster the key role provided by the GAA in providing a strong community and social network and, probably more than any other single organisation, sustaining a strong sense of community and heritage among our overseas communities. While the programme is administered by the Irish Abroad Unit in the Department in Dublin, in all cases it is built on a strong partnership with the Embassies and Consulates abroad, who often have strong engagement with clubs on the ground.

The Association's defining aim in this context is to provide the opportunity for lifelong participation and engagement in Gaelic games to as many people as possible with a view to ensuring that they 'Play to Stay with the GAA' – regardless of where they call home. However, our national sports have become a vehicle for much broader goals. For every generation of Irish and non-Irish people overseas, Gaelic games provide a community they can call their own, an unrivalled network that provides them with support and assistance, a source of social capital that is inextricably linked with Irish culture.

While the joint funding provided by the GAA and the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade is a significant assistance, it is important to remember that the genesis of all this activity lies firmly with the people on the ground who tirelessly work to grow and enhance the GAA community worldwide. For these individuals, who work quietly behind the scenes with very little recognition, it is about providing hundreds and thousands of people worldwide with invaluable memories – the friendships made at international tournaments, the sense of community at weekly training sessions, the thrill of playing hurling for the first time or indeed the warm familiarity of pucking a ball while thousands of miles from home. It is all of these experiences that remain with a person for life and explains why more and more people are motivated to spread Gaelic games to all four corners of the globe.



This report attempts to capture a snapshot of the 2015 activities that received funding from the GAA and the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade. The report contains a number of sections, each of which focuses on Games Development projects funded in a particular International Unit or affiliated region. While the summaries included in the report provide a flavour of the action, energy, enthusiasm and impact of the various projects it is hard to do full justice to the incredible work that is on-going both on and off the field of play.





# 1. Argentina

OFFICIAL AFFILIATION IN 2015

1 Project Global Games Development Fund 2015

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ArGAA Sports and Cultural Unit

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# Global Games Development Fund 2015 – **Argentina**

ArGAA Sports and Cultural Unit,  
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Over the past number of years the Hurling Club of Buenos Aires has been working to develop local leagues to promote Hurling and Gaelic football. 2015 was no exception with approximately 60 local players participating in both Hurling and Gaelic football leagues.

In 2013, the hurlers in Buenos Aires were granted the opportunity to travel to Galway and to participate in The Gathering – an event celebrating the popularity of Hurling worldwide. Similarly in 2015, players in the Gaelic football league were provided with a unique opportunity to showcase how they have successfully developed Gaelic games in Buenos Aires by travelling to participate in the World Games in Abu Dhabi in March 2015.

At the World Games the team participated against rivals from South Africa, the Middle East, Galicia and Brittany – with no Irish-born players in the International Division. During the course of proceedings the team also managed to adopt Pat Spillane as their manager. After a number of closely fought games the Argentinian team held strong to win the Final against Galicia – winning after extra time on a score line of 1-4 to 0-4.

The impact that events such as The Gathering and the World Games have at local level in Buenos Aires is phenomenal and has led to a surge of interest in Gaelic games with plans in 2016 to extend the league to include two schools in Cordoba.



GAA World Games @GAAworldgames

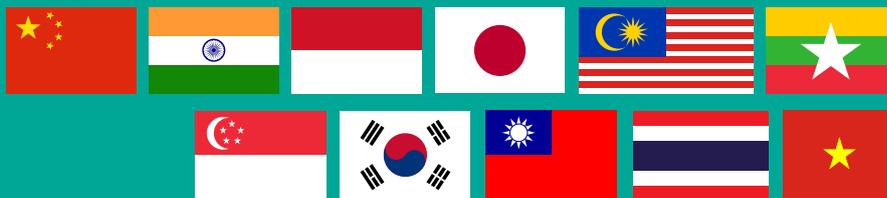
@GAAOO Pat Spillane has just managed Argentina to their first World Cup win since 1986. @officialgaa  
@GAAmiddleEast @AbuDhabiPaddy

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# 07







# 2. Asia

ASIAN COUNTY BOARD

ESTABLISHED 2006

22 CLUBS IN 11 COUNTRIES

- |                  |                    |                 |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| <b>CHINA</b>     | <b>MALAYSIA</b>    | <b>TAIWAN</b>   |
| <b>INDIA</b>     | <b>MYANMAR</b>     | <b>THAILAND</b> |
| <b>INDONESIA</b> | <b>SINGAPORE</b>   | <b>VIETNAM</b>  |
| <b>JAPAN</b>     | <b>SOUTH KOREA</b> |                 |

7 Projects Global Games Development Fund 2015

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The Continuation and Expansion of Laochra **Busan** GAA / The **Dalian** Wolfhounds Gaelic Football Club / **Suzhou** GAA Development Project / Underage Gaelic Football Program in **Seoul**, Seoul Gaels / China Youth Games 2015, **Shanghai** GAA / Development of Youth and Senior Gaelic Football in **Vietnam**, Viet Celts / South China Gaelic Games Development Plan, **Hong Kong** GAA

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# Asia

## The Continuation and Expansion of Laochra Busan

The 2015 season was very exciting and successful for Laochra Busan as members witnessed the Club grow and expand thanks to the Global Games Development Fund. After investing in the production of a team jersey to enhance the sense of identity amongst the community and club, Laochra Busan also purchased playing equipment for use at training sessions and tournaments.

In spring 2015, the Club hosted the first round of the Korean Gaelic Games at Busan National University on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2015 with 1 men's team and 2 ladies' teams. On the day, Laochra Busan hosted and played against Daegu Fianna and Seoul Gaels in Gaelic Football while also organising an exhibition game of Hurling. The Club then fielded teams in the second and third rounds of the Korean Gaelic Games during summer 2015.

Subsequently, the Club entered 1 men's and 1 ladies' team into the North Asia Gaelic Games and another highlight of the year for Laochra Busan was the participation of some of their ladies players in the Asian Gaelic Games. The Club nominated 6 of their ladies players to participate on a combined team with other players from Seoul, Malaysia and Singapore. For 5 of the players it was their first season playing GAA. The support received through the Global Games Development Fund made a significant impact in terms of attracting these players to the Club in the first instance as well as supporting them in their sporting endeavours when they travelled to Shanghai.

## The Dalian Wolfhounds Gaelic Football Club

The project was aimed at trying to strengthen the long-term viability of the club in China through ensuring the availability of a quality training venue on a consistent basis as well as supporting participation in regional tournaments and promotion of the game in local universities.

One of the interesting initiatives undertaken by the Club was the organisation of a poster competition in a local design university aimed at promoting the Dalian Wolfhounds and encouraging greater participation from the local university students. The prize-winning posters were printed and displayed across the University and attracted a number of fresh faces including a number of African students.



With an average of 30 players at the weekly training sessions, the Club participated in the 2015 Asian Gaelic Games in Shanghai. For 14 of the players it was the first time experiencing a tournament and of the panel all but three were international players including three local Chinese players. The team went on to win the Men's Junior Cup at the Asian Gaelic Games.

## Suzhou GAA Development Project

The Suzhou GAA Development Project witnessed significant progress in 2015, with notable successes in the normalisation of regular trainings and matches as well as broad recruitment and the popularisation of Gaelic Football in Suzhou.

During the year the Club acquired reliable, adequate training facilities to meet its needs, at which regular training sessions were held twice a week - led on a rotation basis by several of the Club's experienced Irish players, including Suzhou's GAA qualified Coach, David McMahon. These training sessions worked to cultivate the core skills of the game, as well as developing distinct strategies focused on ball control, short-passing and team work to push the competitive potential of the club. Regular matches were also held between the Suzhou GAA and Shanghai GAA. Furthermore, Suzhou GAA fielded teams in the All China Games and Asian Gaelic Games.

In addition to improving the quality of play, Suzhou GAA's efforts to grow club membership were a real success. In the 2015 season, Suzhou GAA recruited no less than 20 new members, a fairly impressive feat considering the size of the potential player pool. Among the new recruits were 6 Irish players, 7 Chinese locals and 6 female players. The recruits ranged from former county players to complete beginners as well as members of the local rugby union club, with whom the Club has a positive relationship.

To help continue to grow the Club and to be an active part of the local community, Suzhou GAA began efforts to develop links with local international schools. To date, Suzhou GAA has established a youth programme with Dulwich College and are in negotiation to host sessions with Eton House and Suzhou-Singapore International School (SSIS). These programmes include training clinics, which are hosted by experienced Irish club members and supported by the club, and the clinics will help to promote an appreciation of Gaelic Football among prospective young members.

## Underage Gaelic Football Programme in Seoul, Seoul Gaels

The overall aim of the Underage Gaelic Football Programme organised by Seoul Gaels in 2015 was to introduce Gaelic Football to as many schools and students as possible by establishing Gaelic Football as a sport on the PE curriculum and supplementing this with after-school and weekend programmes.

The project was very successful in promoting Irish sport and culture throughout Korea. The Club had 100% success in introducing the sport to the schools targeted as part of the plan - including the top 3 international schools in Korea: Seoul Foreign School; Dulwich College; Korea International School. The impact of the programme is evident when one considers that in Korea International School (KIS) Gaelic football is now the number one attended after-school programme and a regular PE sport. KIS even travelled to Shanghai to compete in the juvenile Asian Gaelic Games which they won! To complement this Seoul Gaels organised a competition in Seoul in which 85 kids and 8 teams took part. The Irish Ambassador to Korea awarded the medals and it proved to be a great experience for everyone involved.

## China Youth Games 2015, Shanghai GAA

The project aimed to arrange for coaches from Ireland to be based in Shanghai for three months to promote Gaelic games in schools and form school teams to play in a tournament toward the end of the project i.e. the China Youth Games, which was run in conjunction with the Asian Gaelic Games. In total, 8 Schools participated in the Programme and received a weekly visit from the coaches. 4 of the Schools subsequently submitted teams to participate in the China Youth Games where they played against two visiting teams from Seoul.

As well as maximising participation levels and performance standards of the students the Club also provided training in best practice coaching methods for volunteers and parents - mostly Irish emigrants. In so



doing, the Club was able to bring the Irish community in Shanghai closer together by creating a platform for the children, adult players and parents to get to know each other and interact.

## Development of Youth and Senior Gaelic Football in Vietnam, Viet Celts

The grant to the Viet Celts was used to develop youth training programmes in 3 International Schools as well as in a charitable foundation for disadvantaged children in Hanoi. Irish nationals worked as Gaelic football coaches, event facilitators and project managers, developing valuable transferable skills. Their efforts were reflected in the organisation of three main youth tournaments during 2015 i.e. the All Vietnam Schools Cup 2015 (March); the VAS Gaelic Cup 2015 (November); the Hanoi Youth Cup 2015 (December). At these tournaments a number Schools teams participated from U.11 age grade right up to U.18 including:

- Blue Dragon Children's Foundation: U.11 Boys, U.13 Boys, U.15 Boys, U.18 Boys
- VAS Hanoi: U.13 Boys, U.15 Boys, U.18 Boys, U.18 Girls
- Hanoi International School(HIS): U.15 Boys, U.18 Boys, U.18 Girls
- SIS Ciputra: U.11 Boys (2 teams),
- SIS Gamuda: U.13 Boys

Of significant interest at Adult level was the establishment of the very first All Vietnam Senior Men's and Ladies Championships between the Viet Celts and Saigon Gaels in March 2015, which were contested in neutral territory in Danang in Central Vietnam. The honours were evenly split with the Viet Celts taking the Men's title and Saigon Gaels taking the Ladies title. The Viet Celts also sent Men's and Ladies teams to the South Asian Games (Bangkok) and Asian Games Games (Shanghai) whilst the Saigon Gaels sent a Ladies team to the South Asian Games.

## South China Gaelic Games Development Plan, Hong Kong GAA

Hong Kong GAA has been a trailblazer in terms of using the International School system to introduce Gaelic games to a new audience. In 2015, the Club slightly changed focus from providing PE support to running after-school club programmes instead. Hong Kong ran a hugely successful school's tournament with over 150 children taking part. Furthermore, in 2015 Hong Kong registered a girls' team - drawn from Post Primary level - to compete in the China Games.



서울게일스

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# 3. Australia and New Zealand

GAELIC FOOTBALL AND HURLING ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALASIA  
ESTABLISHED 1974  
63 CLUBS IN 2 COUNTRIES (9 REGIONS)

AUSTRALIA	SOUTH AUSTRALIA	NEW ZEALAND
CANBERRA	QUEENSLAND	WELLINGTON
NEW SOUTH WALES	VICTORIA	HUTT VALLEY
NORTHERN TERRITORY	TASMANIA	CANTERBURY
WESTERN AUSTRALIA		

4 Projects Global Games Development Fund 2015

**Darwin** Dry Season Developmental League/Development of Underage and Family Gaelic Football, Hurling and Camogie in **Victoria**/**Wellington Hutt Valley** GAA Social Nines Leagues/**Western Australia** – Junior Academy

# Global Games Development Fund 2015 – **Australia and New Zealand**

## Darwin Dry Season Developmental Leagues

The distance between Darwin Shamrocks and other GAA Clubs in Australia has proved to be a hindrance in the past. However, this project aimed to run internal Leagues for Darwin Shamrocks' players, which would provide them with an opportunity to meet, play and socialise as well as to serve as a platform to attract new players.

The Club achieved a milestone in 2015 through securing its own permanent and full-sized GAA pitch at Fannie Bay Oval with the assistance of Darwin City Council. The pitch was the location for the majority of the one-day Development Leagues held during the year with players from across Australia and New Zealand attending. The Development Leagues proved to be a major success not just for the players but also for the wider community as the Club organised face-painting, bouncing castles and family entertainment on the days. The most successful Development League saw 16 teams enter the competition with 10 players on each team. Furthermore, in October the Club hosted a Hurling match against Sarsfield's GAA, Perth as the season finale, which was attended by over 200 people from the local community in Darwin. The Club plans to continue its growth and progress and recently entered three teams – male and female – into the Melbourne 7's in February 2016.

## Development of Underage and Family Gaelic Football, Hurling and Camogie in Victoria

In 2015, Victoria GAA aimed to grow participation in Gaelic games in the region by hosting coaching clinics in a number of schools, which were subsequently supplemented by the establishment of juvenile leagues.

The project team identified six schools within the region that were eager to participate in a coaching clinic. The clinic was held over the course of a day in a school with up to 6 or 7 classes of pupils - aged between 11 and 17 years old - participating in a 40 minute session each. During the clinic the students were coached the basic skills of Gaelic football and a Hurling demo was also provided. The teachers also attended the clinics and were given resources and materials to assist them to coach GAA as part of their PE classes. The clinics were a real success and three of the schools invited Victoria GAA back to host a second coaching clinic.

Further to the clinics, the project team initiated juvenile leagues after school. Pupils who had participated in the clinics were invited to engage in after-school activity with each session ending in a game against other schools. During the months of September and October the project team were able to acquire Council playing fields, which enabled them to run a dedicated competition in the evenings with St. Monica's School in Epping winning the league. This was the first schools' Gaelic Football competition held for students in the area and proved to be a real success with over 70 players taking part. It also provided a good focal point for the community and after every round of the competition a BBQ was held in the evening, which was hosted and attended by parents, friends and families of the players.

## Wellington Hutt Valley GAA Social Nines Leagues

2015 was a significant year for Wellington Hutt Valley GAA as they hosted both the New Zealand Championships in March 2015 (200 competitors) and the Australasian Championships in October 2015 (500 competitors). In addition to this the Club continued to grow their annual social nine-a-side leagues, which take place twice a year over a period of two and half months each time. In 2015, 4 ladies squads (approx. 48 players) took part in the single-sex 9-a-side league. Furthermore during the mixed-sex league 5 teams participated in the hurling league. The Club performed competitively at the New Zealand Championships but more improvement was required for the Australasian Games.

The level of activity and buzz the games generated throughout the year was a massive boost to the Club. In 2015, there were 200 players participating weekly – approximately 70% of these were Irish – furthermore, 80 non-playing members agreed to volunteer during the year, a statistic that reveals how the Club has become an integral part of the community.

# 19





## Western Australia – Junior Academy

In 2015, Western Australia launched its 4<sup>th</sup> season of the Gaelic Games Junior Academy and undertook an ambitious project to grow its membership. The aim of the project was to increase the promotion of and participation in Gaelic games by children in the Perth region. The Board set out to achieve this by focusing on local schools and providing an introduction to GAA through delivering coaching in the schools. The addition of a new website supplemented this.

During the course of the project Gaelic football coaching programmes were delivered in 5 primary schools and 1 post-primary school. In total 600 children aged 8 to 11 years old and 40 young people aged 12 to 14 years old got an opportunity to learn the basic skills of Gaelic football and play games. While coaching sessions were the primary activity undertaken, the project team also organised a blitz day on April 6<sup>th</sup>. On the day, 9 teams of nine-a-side participated in a number of blitzes from 10am to 2.30pm. In total, 81 pupils from three of the schools that participated in the Programme attended the blitz day.

Coach Education for teachers was a critical piece of the project and a number of seminars were held during the year. In total 6 PE teachers were up-skilled to Foundation level. Other than the teachers, a total of 8 Club coaches completed a Level 1 Coach Education Course as part of the project.

The blitz day proved to be a huge success and was received positively by children, teachers and parents alike. It is intended to grow this further in 2016 and to create more links between the schools programme and the Junior Academy by holding blitzes between the participants.





W.O.C  
UNLIMITED

Masita

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LGFA  
LADIES GAAFC FOOTBALL



ROPKICK  
WOMEN'S  
FOOTBALL

Masita



# 4. Britain

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF BRITAIN  
ESTABLISHED 1927

**83** CLUBS IN **7** COUNTY BOARDS

GLOUCESTERSHIRE  
HERTFORDSHIRE  
LANCASHIRE  
LONDON

SCOTLAND  
WARWICKSHIRE  
YORKSHIRE

Games Development Project Britain 2015

# Games Development Britain 2015

The matched funding provided by the GAA/DFAT is used for the deployment of Games Development personnel.

The Community Development Administrators (CDAs) are employed in each of the 7 County Boards of the Provincial Council of Britain and are tasked with the delivery of the various components of the Grassroots to National Programme (GNP) including:

- Games Opportunities (Club; School; Community)
- Skill Development (Club; School; Community)
- Camps - Easter; Summer (Cúl Camps); Halloween
- Talent Academies
- Coach Education
- Referee Education

During 2015 – at various stages – 8 individuals were deployed as CDAs in Britain:

UNIT	EMPLOYEE/ROLE	PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT
Gloucestershire Co. Board	<b>Liam Britton-Jeal</b> CDA	01.06 – 31.12.2015
Hertfordshire Co. Board	<b>Stephen Lavery</b> CDA	01.01 – 31.12.2015
Lancashire Co. Board	<b>Andrew Kane</b> CDA	01.01 – 31.12.2015
London Co. Board	<b>Mark Gottsche</b> Senior Games Development & Logistics Manager	01.01 – 31.12.2015
London Co. Board	<b>Lloyd Colfer</b> CDA	01.01 – 31.12.2015
Scotland Co. Board	<b>Niall Considine</b> CDA & National Universities Coordinator	01.01 – 31.12.2015
Warwickshire Co. Board	<b>Stephen Ormsby</b> CDA	01.01 – 30.06.2015
Yorkshire Co. Board	<b>Jason Rooney</b> CDA	01.01 – 31.12.2015

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF  
**BRITAIN**  
AT A GLANCE

**GO GAMES  
BLITZES**

**5,233** PARTICIPANTS  
**77** CLUB BLITZES  
**20** CLUB BLITZES



**55%** INCREASE  
ON 2014  
PARTICIPATION

**SCHOOLS  
COACHING**

**9,329** PARTICIPANTS  
**93** PRIMARY SCHOOLS  
**793** PARTICIPANTS  
**27** POST PRIMARY  
SCHOOLS

**SUPER  
GAMES  
BLITZES**

**1,187** PARTICIPANTS  
**93** CLUB/  
SCHOOL BLITZES



**34%** INCREASE  
ON 2014  
PARTICIPATION

**37**  
**RECREATIONAL  
ADULT BLITZES**  
**705** PARTICIPANTS

**TALENT  
ACADEMY  
SQUADS**  
**BOY & GIRLS**

**21**  
SQUADS

**520**  
PLAYERS



**CÚL CAMPS**

**472** PARTICIPANTS  
**9** CAMPS



**20%** INCREASE  
ON 2014  
PARTICIPATION

## Gloucestershire

In 2015 Gloucestershire made great strides at Youth level with the U.14 county panel participating in two blitz competitions in Birmingham and Coventry in June before travelling back to Ireland to compete in Féile Peile na nÓg in Wicklow where the team reached the semi-finals of their Division. This was not only a huge achievement but also an important milestone that will hopefully lead to the regeneration of an U.16 county panel in 2016.

Gloucestershire as a region is geographically the same size as a Province in Ireland – a reality that poses a lot of logistical challenges. However, through targeting coaching in schools in Bristol, which is in the centre of the county, it was intended to create a central location to planned inter-school blitz competitions. During the first phase of this plan, the GAA successfully managed to introduce coaching to one Primary and two Post-Primary schools in Bristol. Furthermore, Gloucestershire County Board has renewed efforts at creating a sustainable volunteer base, which will hopefully counter the geographical challenges in a county so large. The Gloucestershire CDA, Liam Britton-Jeal, completed his training as a Coach Education Tutor in 2015, which means that he is now qualified to deliver courses and increase the number of qualified volunteer coaches in schools and clubs within the region.

Finally, in 2015, St. Colmcille's Ladies Gaelic team ran a six week 'Gaelic4Girls' programme for the first time during May and June. The programme targeted girls aged 8 – 12 years old and it ran every Saturday from 11am to 12 noon. The players received certificates and t-shirts for their involvement and the overall objective was to ensure integration into the Club and existing teams. As a model for increasing participation amongst second generation Irish overseas it proved to be very successful.

## Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire GAA boasts 8 senior men's clubs (7 Football/1 Hurling), 6 of these football clubs have juvenile teams. There are also 3 Ladies teams within the County playing under the recently formed Gloucestershire/Hertfordshire County Board (Glo-Herts LGFA).

In 2015, 6 teams – including the newly established juvenile team in Cambridge Parnell's – took part in up to 15 blitzes each under the auspices of the U.8-U.12 Go Games structure. At youth level there were 5 juvenile teams within the county at U.14 and U.16 level, which resulted in a very

successful U.14 and U.16 League and Championship. One of the key achievements in 2015 was the ground work for the establishment of a brand new juvenile team in Éire Óg, Oxford. This team, which will play at Go Games level, will serve to increase the number of games opportunities between clubs into the future.

The Hertfordshire GAA schools coaching programme is an extremely important aspect of development within the region. The CDA worked closely with clubs to strengthen the school/club links and provide coaching/games opportunities to increase the exposure of Gaelic games in new and established areas. Hertfordshire's Primary School coaching programme ran during the spring/summer terms, while the Post-Primary schools coaching programme ran during the autumn/winter terms in conjunction with GCSE curriculum support coaching. In 2015, the Primary School blitz programme had 10 teams take part with 156 children participating, 4 of these teams went on to take part at the ABC schools competition. The Post-Primary School blitz programmes had 9 teams take part with a total of 132 participants. This level of activity is a testament to the strong relationships being cultivated through Hertfordshire's schools coaching programme. Both competitions were extremely well attended by County and Club Officers, who met teachers, spoke with potential new players and gave out information on their club activities.

2015 also witnessed the growth of the Cúl Camps in Hertfordshire. There were 6 Cúl Camps during the summer as well as 2 Halloween Camps - in total 206 children participated in the camps. Hertfordshire GAA regard the Cúl Camps as a unique opportunity to attract and recruit new players and their families to GAA. The clubs in the region work well to promote their camps and expand them each year in duration and numbers. In addition to this, the calibre of the young club coaches gaining valuable leadership/coaching experience at the Cúl Camps is notable and it is a key element for their Duke of Edinburgh Awards, which increases the exposure for GAA within schools.

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## Lancashire

Part of the role of a CDA is to assist with the development of Gaelic games in Universities throughout Britain. Apart from attending University Competitions in a support capacity, the CDAs are often given responsibility for the organisation of local University Tournaments. In 2015, Lancashire GAA organised a 7's competition for male and female players, which was open to both University and Club teams. The event, which was held on the 17<sup>th</sup> October in Manchester, witnessed 5 men's and 5 ladies' teams take part with Naomh Pádraig (men's) and Hope University (ladies) reigning victorious. Competitions like this serve to create a greater link between the transient student population and the resident Irish community in the region leading to a strengthened sense of community.

During the course of 2015 a number of Coach Education events were held in Lancashire. In spring 2015 a Foundation Course was held while in October 2015 a Level 1 Child Course was organised with 28 participants in total. The importance of ensuring sustainability through upskilling volunteers is a key aim of Lancashire GAA and it was particularly pleasing to see that many of the participants on the courses were young members who were keen to get involved in their local clubs to ensure that the clubs continue to develop at Youth level. In addition to the GAA courses, the Ladies Gaelic Football Association delivered a coaching workshop in April 2015, which aided the promotion of Gaelic games among young female players in Lancashire.

The Lancashire GAA Youth Committee organise a regular schedule of games for club teams in the region and 2015 was no exception to this with the publication of a regular schedule of games for all teams from U.8 up to U.14. In October 2015 Lancashire GAA also welcomed visiting teams from Scotland and Ireland that took part in Lancashire's end of year tournament – creating a great buzz and energy in the process. In addition to this, two of the clubs in the region established girls' teams in 2015, which reflects the level of interest and demand among parents and children alike.

## London

Coach Education in the capital city continued to go from strength to strength in 2015 as London GAA ran another 4 courses - on top of the 10 courses held in 2013/2014 - including 3 Foundation Level Football courses and the first ever Level 2 Gaelic Football Coaching course in Britain. Through these efforts, London GAA, have now produced nearly 200 qualified coaches in the last three years, which will hopefully increase the standard of coaching within the county. In December 2015, London held one of the biggest ever Foundation courses the GAA has ever seen as they ran two Courses simultaneously in the same venue (Ruislip) with 39 coaches, 6 Tutors and 2 Master Tutors in attendance on the day. To supplement the courses further, they organised a wonderful Coaching Seminar with John Tobin and Damien Coleman (Connacht GAA) in May and a fantastic Coaching Workshop with Gary Mallon and Shane McCann (Ulster GAA) in October. In addition to this, three new Tutors qualified to deliver courses for London GAA. The courses provided an invaluable opportunity for volunteers to upskill themselves but also provided a forum for networking and developing relationships amongst the community.

In July 2015, London GAA hosted the 4th annual All Britain Championship (ABC), which was a real highpoint of the year. The Competition has grown year on year and in 2015 it extended to 3 days with children and youths from every corner of Britain in attendance over the weekend. There was a massive turnout during the 3 days, with over 1800 young people from 145 teams (74 teams from London) playing in 350 matches of Hurling, Camogie, Gaelic Football and Ladies Gaelic Football. One of the big positives in 2015 was the growth of the Primary Schools Competition, which almost trebled in size, as well as the introduction of a Post-Primary Schools Competition. Overall, it was a fabulous occasion for the GAA in Britain as it provided a great opportunity to showcase the hard work that is going on at grassroots level and to display the fantastic talent that exists across the entire Province.

2015 saw the introduction of a London GAA 'Hurling Super Games Centre' in September. London GAA are making a concerted effort to promote the game of Hurling with the overall objective of increasing playing numbers by bringing it to a whole new audience at Youth level. In May 2015, the hugely experienced Damien Coleman from Connacht GAA attended London GAA's annual 'Hurling Day' in Ruislip. The Hurling Super Games Centre commenced in September, which proved to be a hugely successful initiative with over 100 children aged 6 - 16 trying out Hurling for the first time. With 243 attendees at the Super Games Centre the average was 50 players per week. It is now hoped to replicate this again in 2016,



hopefully making it an annual part of the GAA calendar in London and looking forward to seeing more young people playing Hurling for their local GAA Clubs in the future.

Another wonderful highlight in 2015 was the implementation of the new Development Squad structures in London GAA. Following on from the Féile success in 2013, the London GAA Coaching and Games Committee looked to further promote Gaelic Football amongst the young players in London and hoped to take them to the next level in terms of their development by creating a link between Youth and Adult players for the London Clubs and the London Senior Footballers. Once again, the London squads performed very well at Feile Peile na nÓg, with the North London Squad reaching the Semi-Final of Division 4 and the South London Squad reaching the Semi-Final of Division 3. The U.16 Development Squad participated in the Dermot Earley Tournament in the Connacht Centre of Excellence in September producing some credible results, including victories over Sligo and Leitrim. A very young U.18 Development Squad won the British Provincial Championship with nearly the whole squad eligible again in 2016. It is a huge honour and privilege for these young men to be afforded the opportunity to play for their County at their respective age groups and their success hasn't gone unnoticed with some of them already playing with the London Senior Footballers.

## Scotland

The last number of years have seen significant progress in relation to the growth of GAA at Child and Youth level in Scotland. The work that has been on-going at Go Games level (U.8 - U.12) is reaping rewards as 2015 witnessed the introduction of Scotland's first U.14 Championship. The U.14 Championship was played on a 'home' and 'away' league basis between Dunedin Óg, Coatbridge, Tir Chonaill Harps and Glasgow Gaels. During the course of the games there were 4 quarters of 15 minutes rather than two halves of 30 minutes. The second quarter was non-competitive, which meant that no matter how close the game was all players got at least 15 minutes of every game. The Championship provided players with a minimum of 7 games and when added to blitzes it meant that young players in Scotland now play a minimum of 10 games annually - double the figure from 2013.

For the first time ever Scotland GAA ran weekly training sessions for the Féile teams over the course of 6 weeks. It was the first time that all four juvenile clubs contributed players to the squad and the weekly sessions



and a weekend away in Birmingham helped develop friendships and a much greater sense of 'team'. This was an important first step in developing greater bonds to the GAA for these players and maximising their ability.

In 2015 the number of Primary Schools receiving coaching in Glasgow increased from 4 to 8 schools and now both juvenile clubs based in Glasgow cater for 4 'feeder' schools. In addition to the increase in schools, Scotland GAA also ran its first girls-only tournament in November 2015. While numbers participating were small it was a very important development as it encourages more young girls to stay playing GAA through to teenage years. In 2016 it is hoped to have more girls-only events and, in time, a girls U.14 Championship.

## Warwickshire

More schools than ever participated in Warwickshire GAA's school coaching programme in 2015. A number of Primary schools received Gaelic football taster sessions or a 6 week block of coaching sessions. At the end of these coaching blocks/taster sessions, all schools were invited to take part in a Blitz Day. The Blitz Day was attended by 3 Primary schools with 225 players present. Furthermore, a total of 88 pupils from 4 Post-Primary schools participated in a similar programme of taster sessions. The sessions met with a very positive response from all and it is hoped to increase the number of participating schools in 2016.

In addition to activity in schools, over 25 club-based blitzes were held throughout 2015. On a weekly basis an average of 100 players received an opportunity to play games and were coached in the basic skills of GAA. Coaching beginners while also catering for more experienced children proved to be challenging, but as the season progressed everyone excelled. Using a league format, a grand total of 58 games were played with 205 participants aged U.8 – U12.

2015 witnessed a revival of Gaelic games at University level in Warwickshire with 5 teams competing in Division 3 of the British Universities Championship. For the first time, the University of Birmingham entered 2 men's teams into the tournament. The increase of interest was predominantly due to the amount of work being done by students within the universities who are highly involved at club level.

## Yorkshire

Approximately 1,200 Primary School children have been introduced to Gaelic football in Yorkshire via the highly successful and popular taster sessions designed by the CDA – known as ‘G4P’ i.e. Gaelic for Primary. The taster sessions consist of schools coaching in the morning, whereby the CDA and a volunteer coach deliver sessions to three classes back to back, amounting to about 90 children per day. After the taster sessions, one of the classes is selected and are given a six weeks coaching programme. The six weeks coaching programme has now developed further by concentrating on Year 4 classes in as many schools as possible effectively creating a maximised population base at one particular age. The aim is to maintain this model to increase the number of children joining clubs at a younger age.

2015 saw Yorkshire GAA become a recognised partner with Leeds Active Schools. This enabled inclusion at their high profile conference in September at which a Yorkshire GAA stall was provided and manned by the CDA. This led to 8 new primary schools registering for the G4P program for 2016. Becoming a recognised partner has enabled Yorkshire GAA to develop links with Leeds Beckett University. Sports Science students at this University are offered work experience coaching alongside with the CDA in Primary schools. Since the links were established in October 2015, a student has assisted the CDA in a six week coaching program in November/December and more will follow in 2016. The aim of this is to increase the number of volunteers and part-time coaches to assist at school blitzes.

Yorkshire Television’s Calendar news featured Gaelic football coaching in Leeds primary schools on their 6pm show. The CDA, school sports co-ordinator and children were interviewed and footage of children playing football was also shown<sup>1</sup>. This provided excellent publicity and a boost for the community in the area.

1. <https://www.facebook.com/1416429475320710/videos/vb.1416429475320710/1455631444733846/?type=2&theater>





# 5. CANADA

CANADIAN COUNTY BOARD  
ESTABLISHED 1959  
20 CLUBS IN 3 DIVISIONS

EASTERN CANADA  
WESTERN CANADA  
TORONTO DIVISION

## 4 Projects Global Games Development Fund 2015

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Youth through Adult Games Development Project, **Montreal** Shamrocks/2015 GAA Summer Training Camp and Coach/Development Sessions, **Newfoundland** and **Labrador** GAA/Youth and Camogie Development Programme, **Vancouver** ISSC/**Edmonton** Cúl Camp/Development of Hurling and Introduction of Iomáin in **Ottawa**, Éire Óg Ottawa/Youth to the Max, **Ottawa** Gaels  
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# Global Games Development Fund – Canada

## Youth through Adult Games Development Project, Montreal Shamrocks

The project aimed to establish the first University GAA Club in Canada in Concordia University with a view to creating a link with the Adult section of Montreal Shamrocks, thereby providing more players and more teams in the region. In recognition of the mutual objective of promoting Irish heritage and culture, the volunteers linked in with faculty at the School of Irish-Canadian Studies from the outset of the project. Working closely with Concordia University staff, Montreal Shamrocks were able to establish a regular training schedule with a total of 55 individuals attending at various stages of the year. As part of the Club activities, members travelled to Albany, New York to play a fledgling team in the area. Subsequently, the team also travelled to Boston to watch the Super 11s game between Dublin and Galway held in Fenway Park.

The project, which was supported by Montreal Shamrocks, exceeded all expectations and now the Concordia Warriors GAA is a recognised sports club in Concordia University and a recognised GAA Unit with a fully functioning and elected Executive Committee. Within a short space of time since their establishment there is now 25 registered members of the Club and more who play regularly. Furthermore, as part of their job description, the Irish Language scholar in Concordia University has been assigned responsibility for supporting the running and organisation of the GAA Club. This highlights the potential for growth and networking through Third Level Institutions worldwide.

## 2015 GAA Summer Training Camp and Coach Development Sessions in Newfoundland and Labrador GAA

In recent years, both Hurling and Gaelic football have grown in popularity in Newfoundland and Labrador, with a growing playing population consisting of both Irish emigrants and Canadians. To further build on this growth Newfoundland and Labrador GAA hosted Training Camps in St. John's Newfoundland in the summer of 2015, which ran over the course of a month and culminated in a series of Exhibition matches. The event was for both senior and juvenile players. The objective was to provide players with increased activity in order to sustain the growth achieved so far.

The Camps proved to be successful, particularly at juvenile level with 35 players – many of them new to the games – in attendance weekly. 15 players attended the senior Training Camp regularly – while this figure was less than anticipated originally, it was reflective of the fact that the improvement in economic circumstances in Ireland had meant there was a decrease in new emigrants in the region in 2015. Newfoundland and Labrador GAA intend to grow the project going forward with a particular focus on the juvenile Training Camps.

## Youth and Camogie Development Programme, Vancouver ISSC

The 2015 Vancouver ISSC project focused on increasing the development of Gaelic games at Youth level as well as increasing recruitment of Camogie players through organising a series of promotional and educational events.

Targeting children and teenagers, particularly those from Irish backgrounds, the ISSC promoted GAA at two separate events, namely Vancouver’s “CelticFest- St Patricks Day Parade” and the Victoria “Highland Games”. At each event demos were organised to highlight the skills of the game and to encourage attendance at subsequent one day Cúl Camps. 6 one day Camps were held during May 2015 with attendance of between 12 and 20 children at each workshop. In addition to this, the ISSC arranged to present demos of Gaelic football and beginners’ coaching sessions at 7 different schools in Vancouver on 15 separate occasions during 2015. Three presentations were also made directly to PE teachers in the region and a total of 50 PE teachers had the opportunity to learn more about GAA and pick up the basic skills of Gaelic football.

Another key objective in 2015 was to improve the Camogie structure within the region through the provision of a pre-planned schedule of training and games, which was supplemented by the purchase of equipment for players. The season commenced with an Open Day for beginners and newcomers in April 2015 and, subsequent to this, training was held twice a week from April to September. The Camogie contingent travelled to participate in a Camogie Tournament in Seattle during

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June 2015 prior to taking part in the Vancouver Gaelic Games Tournament in July 2015. Subsequently, the team participated in and won the Camogie Section of the North American Championships in September 2015. This was incredible progress over the course of a very short period of time and has created a great platform for further growth in 2016.

## Edmonton Wolfe Tones Cúl Camp

2015 was the second year for Edmonton Wolfe Tones to host a Cúl Camp for children aged 4 – 13 years old. The Club maintained high numbers in 2015 with a total of 46 children participating in the Camp, which ran over the course of two weekends during the summer and included practical coaching sessions as well as blitzes, an awards ceremony and culminated in a family BBQ on the final day. 2015 saw a growth in the number of adults volunteering as coaches and in total 14 coaches – a combination of adult club players and parents – underwent vetting and training beforehand.

90% of the children attending the camp were of Irish descent and the involvement and support of their families was noticeable. It was further augmented by the involvement of the Edmonton Irish Club in funding the project, which added to the community spirit at the Camp.

## Development of Hurling and Introduction of Iomáin in Ottawa, Éire Óg Ottawa

In 2015, Éire Óg Ottawa rolled out an action plan with the aim of continuing the development of Hurling and the introduction of Iomáin for players of all ages in the city of Ottawa and surrounding areas.

During the year the Club worked to introduce Hurling to schools of the Ottawa Catholic School Board through the organisation and delivery of schools' clinics, which consisted of demonstrations and coaching sessions for beginners. This ability to deliver on the clinics was further bolstered by the fact that 8 members of the Club – including 4 parents – undertook a Foundation level course and were subsequently qualified to run varied, fun and quality training sessions and games. To date, a total of 1,200 children have received the chance to learn and play Hurling in primary schools within Ottawa. The Club also decided to focus efforts on teachers and on several occasions held a workshop evening with PE teachers, with approximately 20 teachers in attendance at each workshop. These proved to be an ideal opportunity to present the game and its origins while also demonstrating the various technical skills involved before giving them a chance to play the game themselves.

In addition to this, Éire Óg Ottawa continued to build networks across the community. The Club continued their work with both hockey and lacrosse clubs in 2015 and saw new members join from both sports. Furthermore, the Club used the coaching sessions and games at Child and Youth level as an opportunity to involve the parents and wider families by encouraging them to become involved as coaches, fundraisers or committee members. The organisation of a BBQ or social gathering after each training session proved to be key to creating a great community spirit.

The plan has been a success so far with 43 juvenile members, 8 qualified coaches and 24 adult players. In fact, such progress has been made that the Club has established a second coaching venue in Ottawa and now has a base in both Kanata and Ottawa South.

## Youth to the Max, Ottawa Gaels

The 'Youth to the Max' Programme organised by Ottawa Gaels GAA Club has been a real success story since it commenced in 2013. The Club has repeatedly expanded their ambitions further by focusing particularly on the U.8 - U.12 age grade and also by introducing Gaelic football to 65 schools in the Ottawa area. In 2015, once again, the Club proved its ability to deliver high quality inputs.

During the course of 2015 the Club continued to steadily increase player involvement by offering a range of training options throughout the city. Approximately 30 - 50 children (U.8 - U.12) regularly trained and played games at four different regions within Ottawa. By having a clearly structured coaching plan with Go Games as the central tenet the children reached new levels of ability while all receiving an opportunity to play every game.

In addition to regular coaching and games at training sessions, the Club also sought other games opportunities. The Club was able to plan and offer 4 local tournaments to their players, which included inviting teams from other clubs most notably the Montreal Shamrocks in July 2015. Furthermore, despite the significant distance, the Club sent 13 players to San Francisco to participate in the Continental Youth Championships (CYC). Furthermore, Ottawa Gaels held a week-long summer camp with 25 children participating.

Through the partnerships with School Boards in the Ottawa region, Ottawa Gaels had two qualified GAA coaches administer Gaelic football demonstrations and coaching in 30 area schools. Almost 7,500 children participated in these sessions with each coach carrying out an average of 30 sessions per week. This led to an average 50% increase in participation in existing areas and to the establishment of a new region in the area 'Ottawa West-Nepean' meaning that the club now has 5 juvenile feeder regions within the Ottawa area.







# 6. EUROPE

EUROPEAN BOARD  
ESTABLISHED 1999

85 CLUBS IN 19 COUNTRIES + CHANNEL ISLANDS

- |                       |                    |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>AUSTRIA</b>        | <b>GERMANY</b>     | <b>RUSSIA</b>      |
| <b>BELGIUM</b>        | <b>HUNGARY</b>     | <b>SLOVAKIA</b>    |
| <b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b> | <b>ITALY</b>       | <b>SPAIN</b>       |
| <b>DENMARK</b>        | <b>LUXEMBOURG</b>  | <b>SWEDEN</b>      |
| <b>ESTONIA</b>        | <b>NETHERLANDS</b> | <b>SWITZERLAND</b> |
| <b>FINLAND</b>        | <b>NORWAY</b>      | + THE              |
| <b>FRANCE</b>         | <b>POLAND</b>      | CHANNEL ISLANDS    |

13 Projects Global Games Development Fund 2015

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**Amsterdam** GAA Hurling Project/**Berlin** GAA/Integration of Gaelic Football in **Bordeaux** University/GAA Youth Expansion in **Den Haag** and **Rotterdam**/Through Recreation to Competition: Developing Gaelic Games in **Finland**/**Slovak** Shamrocks Logistical Programme 2015/The implementation of a Schools and University Gaelic Games Programme in **Galicia, Spain**/Creation of Sustainable Juvenile Gaelic Football in **Spain - Madrid** Harps/Continuing the establishment of the **Moscow** Shamrocks GAA Club/Year two of the **Munich** Colmcilles GAA e.V 3 Year Strategic Plan/Children's Development Camps and League - **Prague** Hibernians/Hosting, Promoting and Developing Gaelic Football in **Rome**/**Vienna** Gaels Coaching/Training Weekend

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# Global Games Development Fund – Europe

## Amsterdam GAA Hurling/Camogie Project

Amsterdam GAA Club has grown rapidly in recent years and now includes a men's Hurling team with a number of Camogie players also involved in the Club. The aim at the commencement of the project was to resource the Hurling team, so that it could host and participate in tournaments in 2015. Phase 1 focused upon the provision of proper equipment to grow Hurling amongst existing and new members.

Further to receiving the grant and the purchase of suitable equipment, the Club put forward a very good bid to host one of the rounds of the European Hurling Championship. Amsterdam GAA were unfortunately unsuccessful in their application due to the high number of bids. However, they were in a position to send teams to tournaments in The Hague, Copenhagen and Berlin during the course of 2015. In total an additional 10 players have registered as members of the Club in the last 12 months and further individuals are regularly attending training and Club events. The availability of equipment has minimised the difficulties of waiting for individual equipment orders to arrive and has definitely encouraged new players to become involved.

## Berlin GAA

Until the final months of 2014, Berlin was one of the few European Capitals without a GAA Club. However, it was due to the perseverance of Kerry native Chris Hennessy that a fledgling Club was officially established in November 2014 and made a successful application for funding. Chris, who tragically passed away from cancer in January 2015 at the early age of 40, would undoubtedly be incredibly proud of the progress his teammates have made since. Berlin GAA received a grant for the purchase of equipment to support their growth. In the 12 months since receiving the grant the Club has surpassed all expectations with it now being able to field teams in men's Gaelic football, Ladies football and Hurling.

Berlin GAA competed in the South/East Regional Football league, finishing third overall. The Club then proceeded to take part in the Dresden round of the European Hurling league – this was an important step toward establishing Hurling structures within the Club. With subsequent trips to play Gaelic football in Padova, Italy as well as to Munich, momentum increased within the Club. In August 2015, the Club

organised and hosted the very first GAA Tournament in Berlin competing against a combined Bavarian/Dresden team in both Hurling and Gaelic Football. This tournament was also the first outing for the Berlin Ladies football team. Then, in autumn 2015, the Berliners travelled to the Pan European Gaelic football Finals in Vienna. With over 500 players taking part it was a significant achievement for Berlin to finish third in their group.

The 2015 playing season concluded on a very special note. In October 2015 the Hurling team travelled back to Dresden to play for the Chris Hennessy Cup - a tournament hosted by Dresden GAA and named in honour of Berlin's founding member. Berlin fought off strong competition from Dresden, Darmstadt and Hamburg to win the tournament - a fitting testament to Chris and his efforts. In 2016 the Club intends to go from strength to strength and has plans to add Camogie to the list of teams.

## Integration of Gaelic football in Bordeaux University

The primary objective of the project involved the integration of the Bordeaux University with the Gaelic Football Club in Bordeaux - Burdigala. In addition to this, the project team aimed to develop the coaching network in Bordeaux and France as a whole by offering a coaching course to all teams, through French. Furthermore, Bordeaux GAA set out ambitious plans to visit local schools and hold GAA demos as part of PE classes.

The project was a resounding success in terms of all three objectives. Over the course of the year 14 training sessions were held at the university training pitches in Pessac. On St. Patrick's Day the club also ran a 'Sports Discovery Day' in the university. As a result of both the training sessions and the one day promotional event over 40 university students received the opportunity to play Gaelic football and the membership of the club increased by 10 as a number of the students became fully fledged members.

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In September 2015, the Club organised and hosted a two day GAA Coach Education course. In total, 19 people from all over France attended. The course was delivered by four French Tutors through French – a clear example of how the efforts to create self-sustainable structures within Europe is reaping rewards.

Gaelic Football and Hurling demos were held in five schools in Bordeaux during 2015 with over 100 students receiving an opportunity to experience the games first-hand. The feedback was very positive from the students and the Club has been welcomed back to attend the schools in 2016.

One of the highlights for the Club in 2015 arose when the town council in Blanqueforte – a suburb of Bordeaux - agreed to provide the Club with a permanent, full-size GAA pitch for their use. On foot of this offer and further to approval from the GAA and DFAT, it was agreed to alter the use of funding to allow for the purchase of GAA goalposts for installation at the pitch. The pitch is the first fully dedicated GAA pitch in France and has already become the home of Bordeaux GAA with the club hosting a tournament there in late 2015. It is hoped to host many more such events into the future.

## GAA Youth Expansion in Den Haag and Rotterdam

Den Haag GAA is one of the four GAA Clubs in the Netherlands and caters for members in The Hague but also from Leiden, Gouda, Delft and Rotterdam. The Club aimed to maximise its presence in The Hague and Rotterdam through a wide-ranging plan to increase participation by players at Child level.

As part of the project, the Club – with the assistance of interns from Carlow IT - held extensive introductory sessions in 6 schools during June 2015 including:

- British School of the Netherlands, Vlaskamp, Den Haag: 500 kids.
- VNS Oostduinlaan, Den Haag: 400 kids
- NSL, Nassaulaan, Den Haag: 180 kids
- De Ring van Putten, Spijkenisse: 150 kids
- Rotterdam International School: 150 kids
- Wolfert Tweetalig, Rotterdam: 30 kids

In advance of this, the Club held weekly training sessions for their younger players from April to July and subsequent bi-weekly sessions were held in September and October. In Rotterdam the Club held evening Cúl Camps over the course of 5 evenings in June - with over 50 children



in attendance - meanwhile, in Den Haag the Club hosted a Cúl Camp for approximately 40 children. These Camps proved to be a great social attraction - not just for the children but also for their parents with around 20 parents volunteering at the Camps and also assisting at a Family Sports Day, which was held in July and a Family Rounders Tournament, which took place in September.

A lot of activity took place in 2015, however, the project team discovered that retention of players at U.12 proved quite difficult and have decided to refocus efforts on this age grade for 2016 and it is hoped to get and keep more children involved!

## Through Recreation to Competition: Developing Gaelic Games in Finland

The three existing Finnish Clubs joined forces in 2015 to work together to grow GAA in Helsinki, Oulu and Jyväskylä. Underpinned by a strategy for coach development, the project also included coaching sessions in schools, a Cúl Camp and the organisation of Recreational Hurling for adult players.

The opportunity to upskill volunteers as coaches was cleverly integrated into the Jyväskylä leg of the Finnish championship. The first part of the day comprised of the management from the three teams providing a master class session for all players from the 3 clubs and the games were played in the afternoon. In addition to this, coaches from Helsinki and Oulu attended a Foundation level GAA course in May 2015 in Stockholm.

The Cúl Camp model was implemented in Helsinki albeit in an adapted format. The Helsinki Harps delivered the Camp in conjunction with the English School of Helsinki and Espoo International School by providing coaching and games once a week over a series of weeks. As the culmination of this, the English School agreed to host a GAA Day instead of a regular Sports Day. All children took part in coaching and games. Certificates of completion were provided and Cúl Camp jerseys and footballs were also given as prizes.

Recreational Hurling proved to be a huge hit with the Finnish Clubs in 2015 and was particular suitable given the often challenging weather conditions facing players. The provision of safe fibre-glass hurleys and soft sliotars meant that the games could be played indoors during the spring. The game also proved to be a success in introducing new players to Hurling during the summer of 2015.

The three Clubs maximised the opportunity to promote the games and to meet up by focusing in particular on the Oulu Irish Festival as well as the Helsinki Irish Festival. At the Festival in Oulu coaching and demos took place followed by a mini-tournament. In addition to this, the Helsinki Harps played a large role in the Helsinki Irish Festival holding a Family Day open to all Helsinki residents. The activities organised at the event included a poc fada contest, a workshop on Gaelic football and Hurling skills (kindly delivered by a former Kilkenny Senior Hurler) as well as the integration of Irish language activities with the coaching and games on the day.



Irish Embassy Finland @IrishEmbFinland

Ambassador Colm O Floinn presents cup to winning. @HelsinkiHarps ladies' and men's teams @irishfestoulu @OuluGAA

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## Slovak Shamrocks 2015

One of the major challenges facing the growth of the Slovak Shamrocks was the distance and cost of travel required to attend tournaments and competitive matches. The grant received in 2015 served to counter some of these issues and enabled a men's and ladies team from Slovak Shamrocks to travel and participate in all regional tournaments and one of the Pan-European tournaments. In addition to this, the Club hosted the Slovak Shamrocks Invitational in June 2015, which was attended by Vienna Gaels men's and ladies teams as well as teams from Padova, Finland and Kuwait Harps.

The provision of competitive games proved to be a real lure in terms of recruitment allowing the Club to develop closer links between the Irish and Slovak communities within Bratislava, while also bridging contact with a number of Irish students living 400km away in the Slovak city Kosice. The Club was able to support three of these Irish students to travel and play with the Club at the various tournaments.

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## The implementation of a Schools and University Gaelic Games programme in Galicia

The progress made in Galicia over the course of 2015 has been nothing short of astounding especially when one considers that since the roll out of the project in early 2015 the number of teams in the region has increased by five teams with an additional 105 players. This has been a massive boost to the 8 clubs in the region.

A major objective was to promote Gaelic games at juvenile levels within the area. During the year a total of 20 schools in Galicia were visited and through coaching sessions and blitzes the children received an introduction to GAA. The feedback from the schools has been overwhelmingly positive and has led to discussions with the Galician authorities to add Gaelic football to the PE curriculum in the region, which will allow for inter-school blitzes.

A second strand of the project was to target Universities in the region and to generate interest in Gaelic football through a combination of Open Days and internal blitzes. By the end of 2015 there were teams established in three Universities including A Coruna, Vigo and Ourense with a total of 60 players participating. The interest at university level was so great that sports students in A Coruna subsequently established the Seanie MacEvoy Gaelic Football Course – named after Wexford native Séanie (71), who is also the coach of A Coruna. 26 students attended to learn and master the technical skills of the game. The project was not successful in delivering coaching and games in Santiago University, however, further to the experiences in other institutions Santiago University are now expressing an interest in welcoming coaches and volunteers to their campus.

The project also played a significant role in supporting and bolstering the Irish community in Galicia. This is highlighted by the increase of Irish participation – in 2014 only 3 Irish players were involved in the Galician League whereas by the end of 2015 a total of 14 Irish players were members of the GAA clubs in Galicia. Many Irish cultural events were held during the year including St. Patrick's Day Festivals, Celtic gatherings and a major success in this regard was the organisation of an Ireland v Galicia match, which was attended by over 200 spectators and received coverage on Galician coverage. Plans are in place to organise more Irish cultural events in 2016.

It has been very encouraging to see the phenomenal growth that has occurred over a very short space of time – growing from 225 active players at the end of 2014 to 415 active players at the start of 2016.

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## Creation of Sustainable Juvenile Gaelic Football in Spain – Madrid Harps

Madrid Harps took the lead in a project that aimed to further strengthen existing links and networks between Clubs in Spain. Prior to the project, Madrid Harps had hosted a juvenile tournament in October 2014, at which 140 children from 3 Irish Clubs plus players from Brussels, Valencia and Madrid participated. The Club used this experience as the cornerstone of growing the project in 2015 with ambitions to host a Pan-European juvenile tournament but also to double juvenile membership numbers through the creation of a GAA Juvenile League.



Madrid Harps played a key role in organising the first ever ‘Ireland Day’ – a family friendly celebration of St. Patrick’s Day. Working with sponsors and the Irish Embassy, Gaelic football and Hurling for all ages were a central component of day, which was attended by

over 1,500 people. The event, which also included demonstrations of Irish music, dancing and storytelling provided the Club with great organisational insights and experience that proved invaluable in the organisation of subsequent juvenile tournaments.

In July the juvenile team travelled to Dublin to play against Kilmacud Crokes before getting the incredible opportunity to play in Croke Park – the trip proved to be a great experience for all and good preparation for the Pan-European GAA Juvenile Tournament. The tournament – hosted by Madrid Harps – was held on October 10<sup>th</sup> with a smaller follow-up event on October 24<sup>th</sup>. The tournament was attended by U.10 teams from Scotland, England, Belgium, Spain and three Irish Clubs. The teams were picked up at their hotels for a ‘Meet and Greet’ session before the games commenced. The games were 6 and 7-a-side with all children participating in a series of blitz games. The tournament concluded with a medal ceremony – with all players receiving a medal. The days proved to be a resounding success with 250 children playing and many parents and relatives travelling to cheer them on.



The creation of a Juvenile League commenced toward the latter stages of 2015 involving 250 players from 5 schools in Madrid: Los Peñascales, El Virgen de Mirasierra, Montserrat de Orcasitas, Calasancio, Runnymede. Further to coaching inputs, intra and inter-school blitzes were organised including trial inter-city matches on November 28<sup>th</sup> against teams from Seville. The Juvenile League season culminated in an inter-schools final at the 2016 Ireland Day Celebration (13<sup>th</sup> March).

The positive outcome of all these efforts is evident in the increase in juvenile playing numbers. While the Club initially aimed to double membership from 30 players to 60 players, they actually managed to surpass this figure and now have 100 players registered at juvenile level – quite the achievement in the space of 12 months.

## Year Two of the Munich Colmcilles GAA e.V 3 Year Strategic Plan

2015 was the second year of funding for Munich Colmcille’s Project and once again a lot of progress was made. As part of Year 2 the Club identified a number of key actions for implementation with the overall focus on creating self-sustainability within Munich and Bavaria but also in Germany in general as well as in neighbouring countries Austria and Italy.

One of the key objectives in 2015 was to establish a Youth Development Programme building upon the base of children already playing Hurling. Some of the activities during the year included the very first official juvenile Hurling game against a team in Berchtesgarden in the Bavarian Alps. This was supplemented by the Summer Tournament for juveniles, which gave them the chance to play in a number of mini-blitzes.

Further progression was made toward achieving the long-term aim of having a self-sufficient league in South Germany. Munich Colmcilles continued to regularly meet, train and play against Rómhánaigh



Augsburg Óg GAA and this experience stood to Augsburg as they won their first ever tournament at the Pan-European Championship in Vienna. The fledgling group of GAA players in Nuremberg also received assistance from Munich Colmcilles and were offered the opportunity to play on the Bavarian representative team that played in the first All-German GAA Tournament in Berlin during June 2015.

Apart from providing opportunities for games, members of Munich Colmcilles have effectively taken on an advisory or mentoring role for others in newly established Clubs in German-speaking regions. Having spent time developing a German-language Club Constitution in 2014, Munich Colmcille's provided their expertise to other emerging Clubs in 2015 including: Augsburg, Hamburg and Darmstadt. It is this practical support and advice upon which the GAA network thrives for the benefit of all.

## Children's Development Camps and League – Prague Hibernians

This project, which was led by members of Prague Hibernians, was conducted during the spring and autumn of 2015. With the overall objective of developing and promoting Gaelic football in the city and region, Prague Hibernians proposed to develop a series of children's camps and competitions as a pre-cursor to the long-term goal of establishing a sustainable league in the city.

The Prague Hibernians focused on three schools and tapped into the existing Irish network in the city to recruit children to attend 8 weekend camps during 2015 – 5 camps in the spring and 3 camps in the autumn. After recruiting children using word-of-mouth through teammates, speaking at local schools and posting flyers and advertisements in various locations, the turn-out at each camp averaged at 20 – 28 players. In general, the coaches were adult players in the Club who thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to share their love of Gaelic football and Ireland with a new crop of players.

The project opened the doors of Ireland to many Czech children who did not know much about the culture or heritage of the country. The camps also benefitted many Irish children living in the community who do not have daily contact with Irish people or the sport of Gaelic football. All members of the Prague Hibernians, whether Irish or not, greatly benefitted from the project and it created a great camaraderie in the Club – as one volunteer coach noted that *'to attend the camps and see the excitement in each child as they mastered a new skill or scored a goal made the whole project worth it...'*. Prague Hibernians continue to build

toward the longer term goal while safe in the knowledge that there is a real interest in Gaelic games among children and families in the city.

## Hosting, Promoting and Developing Gaelic Football in Rome

For a relatively new Club such as Lazio Rome GAA a key priority is participating in as many games and tournaments as possible in order to recruit and retain players. After many of its members participated in the first ever international match – France v Italy – in November 2014, the Club decided that a key objective for 2015 was to host a series of games in Rome and participate in a Pan-European Tournament.



TheGAA @officialgaa

Great to see @LazioRomeGAA representing the #GAA yesterday & giving @Pontifex a Gaelic Football! #BeThereAllTheWay

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The project commenced with a visit in Rome from Castlederg GAA Club (Tyrone) in February 2015. Despite an imbalanced scoreline, Lazio Rome were not deterred and organised a subsequent visit from London Éire Óg in March. The Club also organised a ladies match against Naomh Pádraig GAA, Leicester in October of 2015. The largest challenge the Club faced – both physically and organisationally – was to compete in three rounds of the South/East Regional Championship prior to participating in the Pan-European Tournament in Vienna on October 17<sup>th</sup>. After coming 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> in the South/East men's and ladies championships respectively, Lazio were well prepared for Vienna and put in a good performance. Through having regular games throughout the year the Club was able to grow the promotion of Gaelic football in Rome as well as linking in with the Irish Embassy and most notably with the Pope when they received the opportunity to meet the Pope and to present him with a Gaelic football in May of 2015. Hopefully his blessing will ensure the continued success of Lazio Rome into the future.

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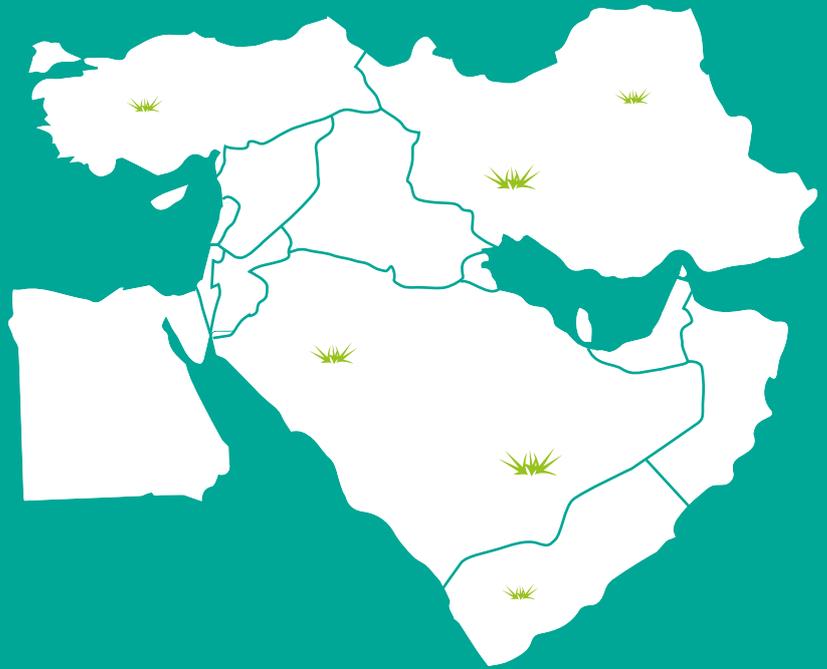
## Vienna Gaels Coaching/Training Weekend

As part of their project Vienna Gaels decided to host a coaching and training weekend for interested Club members as well as coaches and players from other GAA clubs in the region. Originally planned as a two day affair – the cost of transport and accommodation meant that the project team decided to host activities on a Saturday only. The Club linked in with their twinning partners – Leinster GAA – to bring two qualified and experienced Tutor Trainers to Vienna for the course – Colm Clear and Alan Mulhall, current Offaly Gaelic Football captain. With 15 players and coaches from Vienna Gaels and the neighbouring Slovak Shamrocks in attendance, the coaching course proved to be very beneficial for all – a fact that was apparent on the field with both Vienna and Slovak Shamrock ladies’ teams finishing in their best positions to date in the Regional Championship while the Vienna men’s team took the Intermediate A title at the Pan-European Football finals.

The project team also noted the impact of the course in terms of increasing interaction with other clubs in the region – in particular Slovak Shamrocks. On foot of relationships built at the course both Clubs decided to run the hugely successful Winter League in late 2015/early 2016. The course also served to enhance the organisational and structural side of the Club and subsequently Vienna Gaels established a GAA Handball team, sending 6 players to the GAA European Handball Championships in Italy in November 2015. Furthermore, the Club is now focused on setting up a Hurling team in 2016.







# 7. MIDDLEEAST

MIDDLE EAST BOARD  
ESTABLISHED 2013

14 CLUBS IN 6 COUNTRIES/4 EMIRATES

**BAHRAIN**  
**KUWAIT**  
**OMAN**  
**QATAR**  
**SAUDI ARABIA**

**UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**  
ABU DHABI  
DUBAI  
RAS AL KHAIMAH  
SHARJAH

2 Projects Global Games Development Fund 2015

.....  
GAA World Games 2015/  
Expansion of the Middle East League and Championship  
.....

# Global Games Development Fund – Middle East

## Expansion of the Middle East League & Championship

In 2010 there were 9 adult teams playing in the Middle East League. By 2014 that number had increased to 38. Anticipating a further increase in 2015, the Middle East Board sought a grant to support the expansion of the League through introducing Camogie to the League as well as maximising promotion of the games through the schools' network via juvenile development programmes.

The project was divided into two phases. Phase 1, focused on funding the expansion of the Middle East League from January to April 2015. Subsequently phase 2 was implemented from September to December 2015. The funding was used to offset the costs of pitch hire etc. for training and tournaments throughout the season. It was also used to support the roll-out of coaching and games programmes in an additional 10 schools within the region.

The project was a resounding success. The number of teams participating in the League almost doubled in size from 38 teams in 2014 to 72 teams in 2015. During the year the Middle East Board coordinated the introduction of Men's and Ladies Junior Gaelic football competitions as well as the establishment of a Camogie League and Championship. With the introduction of these competitions and further expansion of the Hurling League, 3 new clubs were set up within the region: Jumeriah Gaels, Ruwais GAA and Ras Al Khaimah. Furthermore, an additional 500 players received the opportunity to participate in the 2015 Leagues and Championship.

The expansion of these competitions brought the games to a much wider audience. Additionally, the increase in teams and clubs meant that the tournament weekends improved even further and have now become huge weekends celebrating everything Irish, which has been superb for the new Irish moving into the region. The addition of 10 new schools to the coaching and games programme has also generated a lot of interest in Gaelic games and the Irish culture across the Middle East particularly in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar.

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## GAA World Games 2015

The Middle East County Board undertook the mammoth task of hosting the first ever GAA World Games in Abu Dhabi in March 2015.

28 teams travelled from all over the world to participate with players from all corners of the globe including Australasia, Asia, Europe, South Africa, Argentina, New York, North America, Canada and - of course - the Middle East. Four competitions were held as part of the Games with specific divisions for men's and ladies football (primarily but not exclusively Irish-born players) as well as men's and ladies football for non-Irish players only. The spoils of victory were shared amongst the Middle East (men's and ladies) as well as Argentina (men's non-Irish) and Canada (ladies non-Irish) reigned victorious.

Coinciding with the World Games the Middle East Board hosted a tournament for the clubs in the region at which Hurling and Camogie were also played - in total 48 teams participated in all codes in the local competition. Furthermore, a juvenile event was run for both boys and girls to help further raise the profile of the games in the region and secure its future development.

Outside of the Games there was a Business Forum on Thursday 5th March that was attended by many of the big companies in the region and Irish-based companies. The forum provided a unique opportunity for networking and identifying prospects of future investment between Ireland and Countries from around the Middle East. The Business Forum sold out with a number of high profile companies participating in panels throughout the day including: Etihad, Dubai Duty Free, Intel Corporation, RCSI, Aer Rianta International, Dublin City University, Nuritas, Habtoor Leighton & Sperrin Metal Solutions.

Throughout the weekend the Games were intertwined with plenty of cultural events focusing primarily on Irish music and dance. As part of it the opening and closing ceremonies featured the best of Irish traditional music and Irish Dancing performed by Inis Oir and Celtic Soul.

In total over 3,000 people attended the different events over the course of the two days with 1,088 players participating in the Games.







# 8. New York

NEW YORK COUNTY BOARD  
ESTABLISHED 1914  
**42 CLUBS**

New York Games Development Project 2015

# Games Development New York 2015

Simon Gillespie continued in the role of full-time Games Development Manager (GDM) for New York in 2015. A number of part-time coaches were deployed to support Simon in the organisation of the NY Cúl Camps during the summer months. Furthermore, Michael O'Sullivan was appointed to the role of part-time Hurling Development Officer.

## Hurling and Camogie in New York

One of the key milestones in 2015 related to the growth and development of Hurling and Camogie in New York. In April of 2015 NYGAA appointed a part-time Hurling Development Officer, who was deployed from April to October. The appointment of a dedicated individual meant that the city's Clubs were supported throughout the summer and reached new levels of development. This was evidenced by the establishment of a Junior B Hurling Division with teams playing in the competition, which was exclusively for American-born players. Furthermore, there was a rejuvenation of Camogie in the big apple due to the founding of Hoboken Guards who went on to win the North American Senior Championships and the Junior Shield – an incredible achievement in their first year of existence. In addition to all the games played, over 60 Mentoring sessions were held with coaches of New York's juvenile Hurling and Camogie team. At the 2016 GAA World Games there will be one Irish-born team, an American-born team and a Camogie team travelling to Dublin. Such an undertaking would not have been considered possible back in 2014 – however, due to the efforts of the juvenile and adult Hurling and Camogie boards as well as a significant number of volunteers this has now become a reality.

## Talent Academies and Féile

The Talent Academies continue to be a huge success at juvenile level with the New York squads producing excellent performances in all competitions. The highlight of the year was the victory of the NY U.14 Ladies football team, which one Division II of Féile Peile na nÓg in Wicklow – thereby securing promotion to Division I for 2016. New York also sent a boys team to the Féile and their performance in Division I was incredible – losing out to the eventual winners of the competition in the Semi-Final. At the CYC New York won the Minor Football Championship defeating North America while the Girls team won the U.16 Girls Premier

# NEW YORK

## AT A GLANCE

### GO GAMES BLITZES

1,810 PARTICIPANTS  
16 CLUBS BLITZES



JUVENILE LEAGUES FOR BOYS & GIRLS WEEKLY FROM APRIL TO JULY

11% INCREASE ON 2014 PARTICIPATION

### SCHOOLS COACHING

BEDFORD RD. SCHOOL  
30 PARTICIPANTS  
7 WEEKS OF GAELIC FOOTBALL

### SUPER GAMES BLITZES

104 PARTICIPANTS  
3 CLUBS BLITZES



15% INCREASE ON 2014 PARTICIPATION

4 FOOTBALL SQUADS

### TALENT ACADEMY BOY

1 U.16 HURLING SQUADS

### TALENT ACADEMY GIRLS

SQUADS AT UNDER U.14, U.15 & U.16

WINNERS U.14 FÉILE DIVISION II

175 PLAYERS



### CÚL CAMPS

510 PARTICIPANTS  
9 CAMPS



O'NEILLS

Kelly  
Ryan's

O'NEILLS

O'NEILLS

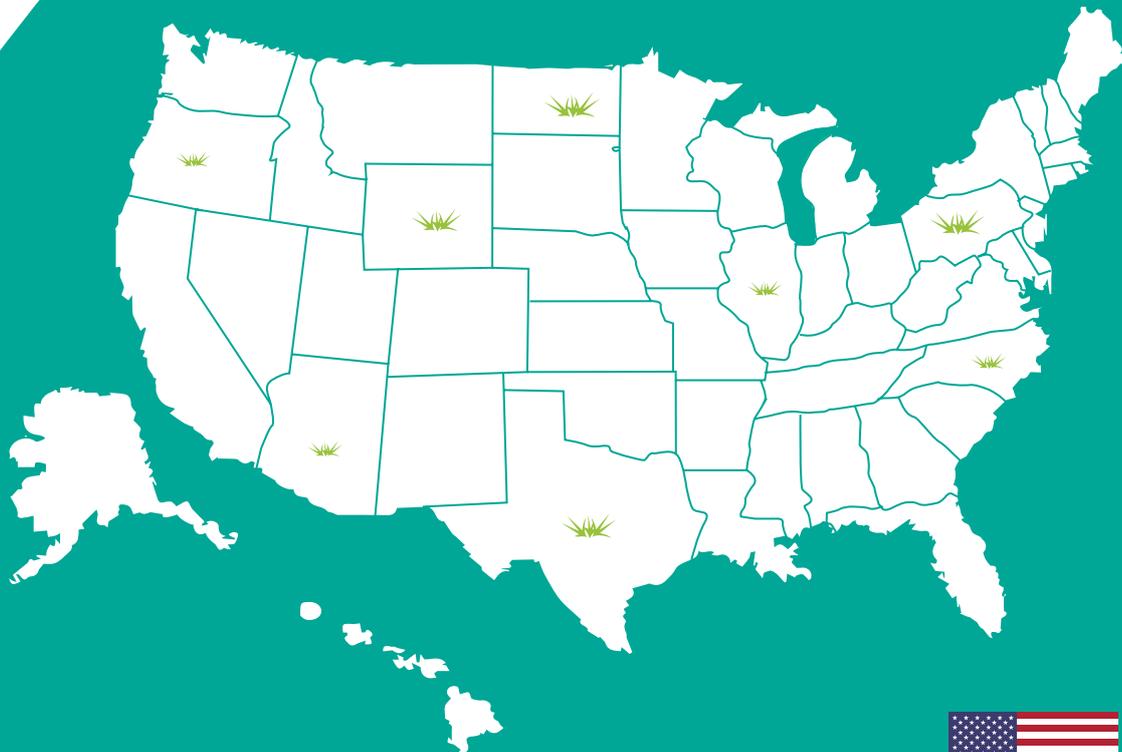
competition. Furthermore, the New York Colleges Team reached the Final of Division I in the British Universities Championship before being beaten by Liverpool John Moore’s University. The fact that New York’s juvenile teams, which are primarily comprised of American-born players, can compete with the best teams in Ireland is a testament to the work that has been put in at juvenile level for the past number of years.



## Games and Camps

New York recorded its largest ever number of games at Adult, Youth and Child level with more clubs fielding more teams in more age groups than ever before. The expansion of new divisions such as Junior B Hurling has evened the competitive playing field, thereby giving almost every player in New York enough games at their own level. The Cúl Camps in New York also recorded their largest ever year with 9 camps and 510 participants in total. The expansion of the Setanta and Shannon Gaels camps were a large success and it is hoped to build on this success in 2016.





# 9. NorthAmerica

NORTH AMERICAN COUNTY BOARD  
ESTABLISHED 1959

**97** CLUBS ACROSS **9** DIVISIONS

NORTHWEST	MID ATLANTIC
WESTERN	PHILADELPHIA
SOUTHWEST	NORTHEAST
CENTRAL	SOUTHEAST
MIDWEST	

NACB Games Development Project 2015

# Games Development **North American** County Board (NACB) 2015

The matched funding provided by the GAA/DFAT is used for the deployment of Games Development personnel.

The Games Development Administrators (GDAs) are deployed in 5 of the NACB Divisions and are tasked with the delivery of the various components of the Grassroots to National Programme (GNP) including:

- Games Opportunities (Club; School; Community)
- Skill Development (Club; School; Community)
- Camps - Easter; Summer (Cúl Camps); Halloween
- Talent Academies
- Coach Education
- Referee Education

During 2015, 5 individuals were deployed as GDAs in the NACB:

UNIT	EMPLOYEE/ROLE	PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT
Boston/Northeast	<b>Kieran Cox</b>	01.01 – 31.12.2015
Chicago/Central	<b>Colm Egan</b>	01.01 – 31.12.2015
Philadelphia	<b>Ciarán Porter</b>	01.01 – 31.12.2015
San Diego	<b>Ciarán Charlton</b>	01.01 – 31.07.2015
San Francisco/ Western	<b>Kathlyn Quinn</b>	01.01 – 31.12.2015



# NORTH AMERICAN

## COUNTY BOARD AT A GLANCE

### GO GAMES BLITZES

1,540 PARTICIPANTS  
108 BLITZES



13% INCREASE  
ON 2014  
PARTICIPATION

### SCHOOLS COACHING

598 PARTICIPANTS  
15 PRIMARY SCHOOLS  
821 PARTICIPANTS  
8 POST PRIMARY  
SCHOOLS

### SUPER GAMES BLITZES

930 PARTICIPANTS  
71 CLUBS/  
SCHOOL BLITZES



11% INCREASE  
ON 2014  
PARTICIPATION

### 8 RECREATIONAL ADULT BLITZES

270 PARTICIPANTS

### TALENT ACADEMY SQUADS

BOY & GIRLS

14  
SQUADS

218  
PLAYERS



25% INCREASE  
ON 2014  
PARTICIPATION

### CÚL CAMPS

797 PARTICIPANTS  
15 CAMPS

## Boston/Northeast

One of the highlights of 2015 was the exhibition game played between Dublin and Galway at Fenway Park – home of the Redsox. The Super 11's hurling game provided organisers in the Boston/Northeast Division with an opportunity to showcase the skills of their juvenile players by hosting children's Go Games before the Super 11's game as well as during half-time. In conjunction with this, Boston/Northeast organised a 'meet and greet' so that the children could meet their stars. Furthermore, the Dublin hurlers delivered a workshop for the kids – coaching them the basic skills and playing games with them. The event was a real boost for the Clubs in the Division as it created a festival feel and also served to highlight the excellent work that is on-going at juvenile level within the Division.

Traditionally Coach Education has been delivered through organising one or two-day coaching courses in the Division. However, in 2015 it was agreed to extend the Coach Education calendar and diversify the inputs provided through the organisation of 5 coaching workshops led by guest coaches including former Kerry players. The focus of the workshops was the delivery of games-based activities integrating skill development throughout. Demand for a place on the workshops was high and they proved to be very successful in developing relationships and networks between the various clubs and coaches present.

## Chicago/Central

2015 was the first time that Chicago held an Easter Camp. It proved to be a resounding success with over 110 kids and 15 coaches taking part. The Camp operated on the basis of 5 pre-planned activity stations with all children rotating through each station during the day - playing both Hurling and Gaelic football over the course of a 3 hour session. All participants received a special designed shirt and many kids were exposed to Gaelic Games for the first time through linking in with other Irish organisations within the Division e.g. Irish Dancing and language schools, Boy Scouts Gaelic Park mailing list etc. It is planned to hold an Easter Camp again in 2016 and to also organise an indoor Winter Camp.

In 2015, Chicago/Central Division continued to grow its School Programme in the Western Spring's school district. The Western Springs school district has 3 elementary schools and Gaelic football has now been incorporated into the PE Curriculum in all 3 schools. Working in conjunction with the PE teachers, Chicago/Central's GDA coaches indoors for the winter months but in addition to this, successfully coached outside in early autumn of 2015 for all grades (ages 6 to 11).

Furthermore, in 2015, the GDA successfully organised a Gaelic football Blitz between the 3 elementary schools in the district. This Blitz was attended by the Athletic Directors for the area Middle schools and High schools and on foot of this the Athletic Director of the Middle school is committed to include Gaelic Football for spring 2016, which means that 500 children, ages 11 to 13, will have an opportunity to play GAA through the school.

Growing the games in schools is a key objective within the Division and there was a GAA booth at the Illinois Physical Education Conference 2015. Additionally, the students of Park Field school played in a demo match, which was witnessed by many of the teachers attending the Conference - this has led to an increase in enquiries and requests for coaching.

## Philadelphia

On April 11th 2015, the Philadelphia Youth Committee hosted a Games Development Conference at Germantown Academy. The Games Development Conference addressed the difference in coaching children, youths and adults through a games-based framework. The morning sessions featured a number of key-note speakers - this allowed for ample discussion ensuring the understanding of the different stages of player development. The afternoon witnessed a Coach Education forum outlining the future of coach development, followed by practical demonstrations with all the youth players in the division invited to attend.

Philadelphia City Council expanded the Philly Play Program, which provides access for families across the City to free, healthy, active play activities. In October 2015, they introduced Gaelic football to two recreation centres. Through free play programmes at recreation centres around Philadelphia, mixed with play events and skill competitions, Philly Play gives kids safe, accessible ways to play and get on the path to a healthy adulthood. Through the programme over 50 kids in Philadelphia get to take part in a Gaelic Games Programme twice a week from October to June.



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Roslyn Elementary School hosted a Gaelic Games Day in 2015. The event saw over 270 children from 3rd grade to 6th grade (7-12 years old) experience Irish culture and sports. With 35 minutes of classroom learning on the history and links between Ireland and America followed by 75 minutes practical demonstration and participation in games of Gaelic football and Hurling. With fourteen volunteers from Glenside Gaelic, Philadelphia Shamrocks and Notre Dame Ladies the event was extremely successful. It proved to be fantastic promotion of our games and created a link between all the children and their local clubs.

## San Diego

SDYGAA focused their efforts on increasing the number of female participants with a view to fielding a girl's Gaelic football team in CYC 2016. Furthermore, San Diego aimed to develop Hurling within the region with the CDA providing taster sessions and workshops at Gaelic football blitzes. This work enabled San Diego to enter its first hurling team at CYC San Francisco - with a combination of boys and girls on an U.10 team.

## San Francisco/Western

2015 was the first summer that San Francisco's Irish Football & Hurling Youth League (IFHYL) held a Cúl Camp at the Golden Gate Bridge. Targeted at beginners, over 20 children participated in the Camp, many of whom had never heard of Hurling, Camogie or Gaelic football making it a very interesting and fun experience. Players learned the rules and the skills of these new sports through games-based activities lead by the IFHYL Coaches. The camp was a huge success and will be held again in 2016.

In 2015, the IFHYL expanded to San Jose where they hosted up to 40 children for coaching sessions over a 5 week period. With a vibrant adult hurling club already located in San Jose it was decided to build on the existing platform by creating juvenile structures. The demand was incredible and the support of the adult section was pivotal with many of the club players volunteering their time to help coach. This is a new area for the IFHYL to expand - interest as well as enthusiasm is very high for 2016.





O'NEILLS

INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL

O'NEILLS

2

ESB

INTERNATIONAL

ESB

O'NEILLS

6



ESB

INTERNATIONAL

ESB

O'NEILLS

5

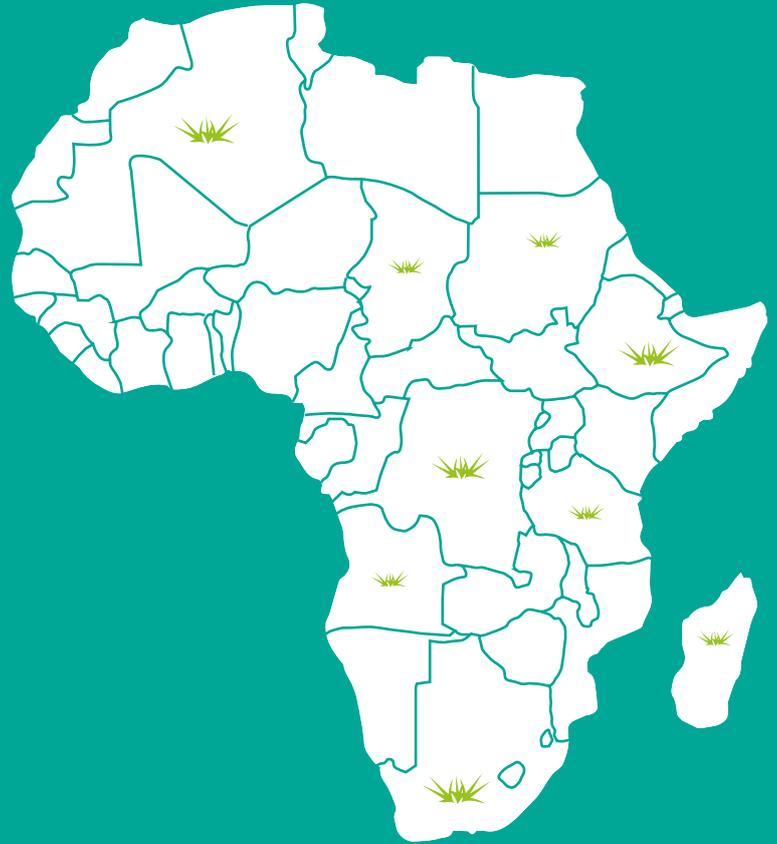


ESB

INTERNATIONAL

ESB

INTERNATIONAL



# 10. SouthAfrica

SOUTH AFRICA GAELS  
OFFICIAL AFFILIATION IN 2015

1 Global Games Development Project

.....  
**South Africa** Gaels Accelerated Grassroots Development Programme  
.....

# Global Games Development Fund 2015 – South Africa

The incredible work of the South Africa Gael continued in 2015 with the establishment of the South African Gaelic Sports Association to provide GAA training and introduction sessions in townships across South Africa.

Two Development Centres are now firmly established in Johannesburg in the Tembisa and Alexandra townships. Furthermore, a third Development Centre was started in August 2015 in Pretoria (Midrand). 3 full-time Development Officers – Scelo, Luyanda and Mervis – work to deliver activities within these areas in the schools and local communities. The Development Officers coach regularly in 15 Primary schools and 4 Post-Primary schools with an average of 50 school-children being coached at each session. The sessions are held in the afternoons from Monday to Friday. It is difficult to track the number of participants because the same children are not always present due to the fact that the children's attendance at school is dependent on the availability of the parents' funds on that particular month. However, initial estimates are that over 1000 kids have benefited from the scheme to date.

The focus of the development officers is not exclusively on children and youths. In fact two new adult teams have been established in Johannesburg while a ladies team was started in Pretoria. These teams participate in the SA Gaelic Super League with 5 teams in total and an average of 15 players per squad.

One of the focal points of the SA Gael's project is to provide previously disadvantaged players with an opportunity to participate in international tours. 2015 was no exception to this with the players travelling first to New York, then Ireland and then onwards to Abu Dhabi to participate in the GAA World Games.

SA Gaels aim to develop the playing skills but also the life-skills of their players. As a result of this a concerted effort has been made to improve the knowledge and skills-base of the coaches. Apart from providing IT as well as First Aid training to the full-time Development Officers, approximately 20 SA Gaels players and coaches attended a course hosted by the High Performance Centre in Pretoria, which focused on developing their sports coaching skills. Furthermore, the SA Gaels work tirelessly to support their players in availing of employment opportunities. In 2015 a number of players were employed by Likusasa (engineering company) as well as ESB International and QK Meats.



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# Conclusion

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We currently live in an era where success is measured by reverting to quantitative statistics and where corporate jargon - such as Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) - has drifted into the vernacular of those in non-corporate sectors. However, the only 'KPI' that the GAA is concerned with is 'Keeping People Involved'.

In determining the success of the GAA both nationally and internationally, the Association does not focus on two-dimensional statistics, but rather looks at the personal relationships and networks that are established, the values that are propagated and the social capital that is generated. By these standards the projects undertaken internationally in 2015 were truly successful. Despite the range of different circumstances in which the activities were delivered - climate, economic conditions and geographical challenges - the projects thrived. While some of the projects summarised in the report directly benefitted hundreds of people, other projects directly benefitted a smaller numbers of people. However, the GAA does not consider the smaller projects to be any less successful or any less important. This is because any project undertaken - no matter how large or how small - positively impacts upon the wider GAA community and the Irish diaspora network.

The activity evident in 2015 very clearly demonstrates the key role played by the GAA in the social and cultural life of Irish communities abroad and underpins and promotes Irish heritage and identity across the globe.

Looking forward, the future of Gaelic games internationally is brighter than ever and with the tireless efforts of volunteers overseas, as well as the continued cooperation between the GAA and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, it is not preposterous to imagine that the growth of Gaelic games internationally will rival growth within Ireland in the coming decades.



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