

## Migrants in Sport

### 2015

The *Integrated Academy for Athletics Performance (IAAP)* continued as the main programme catering for the integration of migrants into sport and physical activity programmes in 2015. 16 children participated on the flagship programme in Portarlington.

This programme is the only programme of Offaly Sports Partnership where performance is used as a key indicator of success as the future visibility of migrant communities in the sport is a key objective of the programme. After using this approach for four years, it is now possible to start showing results in this regard with new children from migrant communities coming through year on year. The challenge however will be to ensure that these children can be retained in the sport throughout their teenage years, and follow a suitable long term pathway within the sport.

Among the success stories of the IAAP are: -

- Jana (Lebanese / Lithuanian heritage) – Jana joined the IAAP in 2011, and in 2013 joined Tullamore Harriers Athletics Club as part of the jump section under the guidance of jumps coach, Igor Prvseionoj. In 2015, she set a new national record and became the National Junior Schools Jump Champion.
- Ella (Nigerian heritage) – Ella joined the IAAP in 2014, and in 2015 joined St Michael's Athletics Club, Portarlington. She was second in the Leinster u13 80m sprint (outdoor), third in the Leinster u13 60m sprint (indoor), and seventh in the national 80m sprint (indoor).
- John (Nigerian heritage) – John joined the IAAP in 2011, and in 2013 joined St Michael's Athletics Club, Portarlington. For the fourth consecutive year, he has secured gold in the National Community Games Finals in 200m sprint (2014 and 2015) and 60m sprint (2012 and 2013). In 2015, he also recorded the fastest time in an u11s 60m sprint across all clubs in Ireland.
- Patience and Naomi (Nigerian heritage) – Patience and Naomi joined the IAAP in 2013, and in 2015 joined St Michael's Athletics Club, Portarlington. IN 2015, they won the All Ireland u9s 60m pairs championship.
- Four members of the IAAP (two of African descent and two of Irish descent) won Leinster relay medals, and made the final of the All Ireland Indoor Relays in 2015

Additionally, two coaches of immigrant backgrounds (Igor Prvseionoj and Buntu Mlsena) with specific skills in the sports of track and field athletics continue to take their skills into the mainstream.

---

## 2014

In 2014, a number of programmes were delivered to support the participation of migrants in sport and physical activity as follows: -

1. The ***Integrated Academy for Athletics Performance (IAAP)*** continued as the main programme catering for the integration of migrants into sport and physical activity programmes in 2014.

The academy was delivered in two locations in 2014, Portarlington and Edenderry. 80 children participated in the academy across the two locations.

The Edenderry programme was mainstreamed within Edenderry Athletics Club during the course of 2014. Of the participants that transferred across, 50% of them qualified to represent their local school at the Offaly inter schools SPORTSHALL Athletics Championships; and the school went on to represent Offaly at the National SPORTSHALL Athletics Festival in Athlone IT.

The Portarlington programme continues to be delivered by staff of Offaly Sports Partnership. Two programmes (one indoor and one outdoor) were delivered across the calendar year in Portarlington. Of the participants from IAAP Portarlington, 50% of them qualified to represent Laois at the National SPORTSHALL Athletics Festival in Athlone IT.

Furthermore, in support of IAAP Portarlington, an IAAP SPORTSHALL Athletics meet was held in November. Up to 200 participants from 10 clubs ranging in age from u9 through to u13 took part in the meet.

2. ***Integration through sport and physical activity*** – a six week programme was organized with the support of Tullamore Soccer Club to integrate members of the new Afghan community resettled in Offaly into the sport and physical activity community of Offaly. Nine men participated on the programme with one member continuing to train with the club until the end of the season
-

## 2013

The ***Integrated Academy for Athletics Performance (IAAP)*** continued as the main programme catering for the integration of migrants into sport and physical activity programmes in 2013.

The academy was delivered in two locations in 2013, Portarlinton and Edenderry. 80 children participated in the academy across the two locations.

Of the 45 participating in Edenderry, 50% of them qualified to represent their local at the Offaly inter schools Sportshall Athletics Championships. In addition, the same amount went on to join their local athletics club and represented Edenderry Community Games at National Community Games events.

Of the 35 participating in Portarlinton, again 50% of them qualified to represent their local school at the All Ireland Sportshall Athletics Championships. In addition, seven joined their local athletics club and participated in both county and provincial events. A further 11 took part in local and county Community Games with three qualifying to represent their area at the National Community Games athletics final.

---

## 2012

In 2012, a range of programmes were delivered to support the participation of migrants in sport and physical activity as follows: -

1. ***Integrated Academy for Athletics Performance*** - in 2012, the Integrated Academy for Athletics Performance (IAAP) expanded its programme into a second venue. 40 participants trained twice a week in Portarlinton with an additional 30 participants training twice a week in Edenderry.

Of the 40 children training in the Portarlinton academy, 11 secured places on school teams representing their respective counties at the second annual inter county Sportshall Athletics Championships held in March 2012 (i.e. almost half the team). At these national finals the Portarlinton girls' team were overall national champions in the 5th / 6th class girls category and placed 2nd in the 3rd / 4th class girls' category.

In addition, seven members of the academy joined their local athletics club with four achieving podium placings at county athletics championships.

A further three also qualified for the All Ireland Community Games (with one taking an All Ireland gold medal).

The IAAP project has also been used as a case study by the EU funded "JoinIn" project.

2. **Midlands Integrated Sports Day** - this project was established as a Midlands Sports Partnerships collaborative project as part of the Africa week celebrations in 2012. Three counties (Laois, Offaly and Westmeath) and six urban schools with high immigrant populations (St Paul's BNS and Presentation Girls PS, Laois; Edenderry Boys NS, Scoil Mhuire and Tullamore Educate Together NS, Offaly; and Mullingar Educate Together NS, Westmeath) participated in this project. 240 pupils participated in this project with 120 of these pupils participating as members of the Offaly teams.

Edenderry Boys NS won the 3rd and 4th class boys category. Scoil Mhuire and Tullamore Educate Together NS came 2nd and 3rd respectively in the 3rd and 4th class girls' category. Scoil Mhuire NS came 3rd in the 5th and 6th class girls' category. Edenderry Boys NS and Tullamore Educate Together NS came joint second in the 3rd and 4th class boys' category. Presentation Girls PS; while not an Offaly school; has been supported by Offaly Sports Partnership in its training, came second in the 5th and 6th class girls category, and first in the 3rd and 4th class category.

3. **Africa Day Athletics** - this project was established by Sport Against Racism Ireland (SARI) and a number of other migrant stakeholders in order to deliver an initiative designed to support the integration of children of the African Diaspora and other migrant communities into mainstream athletics. Offaly Sports Partnership assisted in the drafting and delivery of this programme; and 16 members of the Partnership's Integrated Academy for Athletics Performance (IAAP) participated in this event with 10 of the 16 achieving podium placings (including four winners).

In addition to the aforementioned programmes, two coaches of immigrant backgrounds with specific skills in the sports of track and field athletics continued to take their skills into the mainstream.

---

## 2011

In 2011; and following the success of the Irish Sports Council funded "migrants in sport" integration programme in 2010; €20,000 was secured from the Office of the Minister for Integration to deliver schools and community based programmes of athletics and gymnastics targeting schools and locations with high migrant populations.

The programme was further established to support immigrant populations to move into the mainstream of sporting participation and to address the imbalance which currently exists.

Programmes rolled out under this scheme include: -

1. **Schools based athletics programme** -1,100 pupils from 7 schools (with some of the highest immigrant populations in the county) participated on this programme.

2. ***Integrated Academy for Athletics Performance (IAAP)*** - following on from the schools athletics programme, the IAAP was established. Over 30 children have participated on this programme. At a recent launch for an event for Africa Day 2012, Sport Against Racism Ireland (SARI) made particular reference to this project and noted that it was a model of good practice which if replicated in other parts of Ireland will go a long way towards addressing the imbalance of immigrant children in mainstream athletics.

In addition to the above programmes, three coaches of immigrant backgrounds with specific skills in the sports of track athletics, field athletics and boxing assisted in taking their skills into the mainstream, a new boxing club (Sparticus) has been established in Tullamore, and the Partnership was represented at the EU "JoinIn" project meeting held in Holland.