



Playing Fair

How can we increase participation in sport among low income groups?

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Dr Pete Lunn, ESRI

Why should we care about sport?

- Health
 - Big contributor to physical activity
 - NOT all about obesity
 - One of seven leading risk factors for development of serious disease (WHO, 2005)
 - Health benefit associated with regular sport equivalent to being 14 years younger (Lunn & Layte, 2008)
- Other positive outcomes
 - Good evidence of link to better education, plus perhaps reduced crime and drug-use
 - Social capital
- Important to take a broad definition of “sport”

My approach

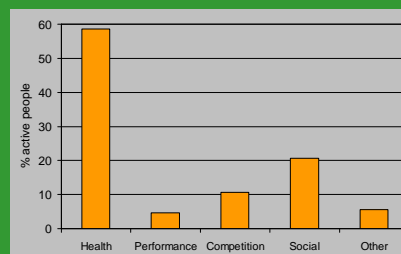


“If you want to convince me of something...
...show me numbers”

We now have good data from three sources:

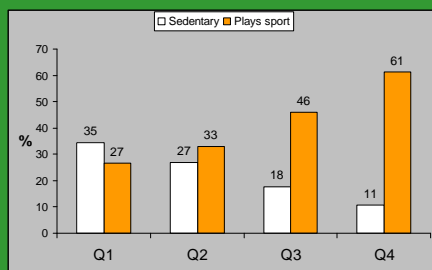
- Survey of Sport and Physical Exercise, 2003 (SSPE)
- QNHS, 2006
- Irish Sports Monitor, 2007 (ISM)

Main motivation of players



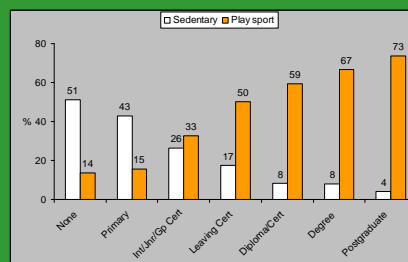
Source: QNHS 2006

Activity by income



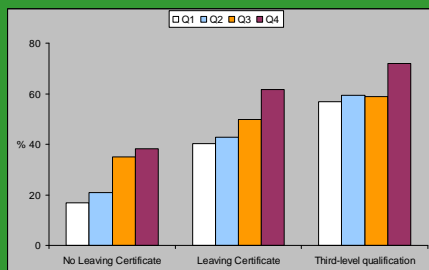
Source: SSPE, 2003

Activity by educational attainment



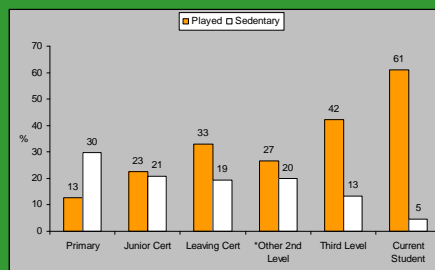
Source: SSPE, 2003

Activity by income and educational attainment



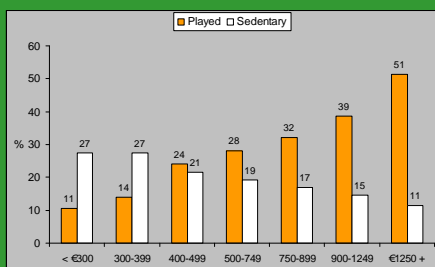
Source: SSPE, 2003

Activity by income (weekly including transport)



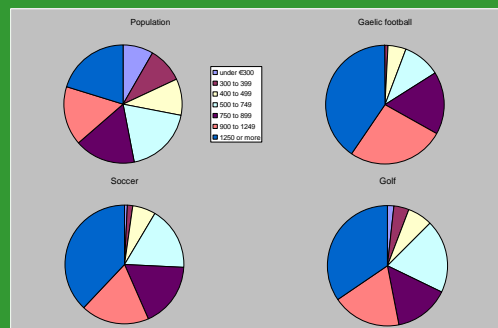
Source: ISM, 2003

Activity by educational attainment (weekly including transport)



Source: ISM, 2003

A slide you will not forget:



Source: ISM, 2003

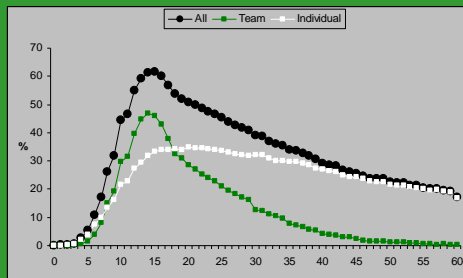
Odds ratios for playing sport

	Ave. age	10 yrs younger	20 yrs younger	
Female	1.00	1.40	1.95	
Male	2.64	3.68	5.14	
	Junior Cert	Leaving Cert	Degree/Diploma	Postgrad
Q1	1.00	1.94	2.73	4.67
Q4	2.00	3.89	5.46	9.36

Implications of social gradients

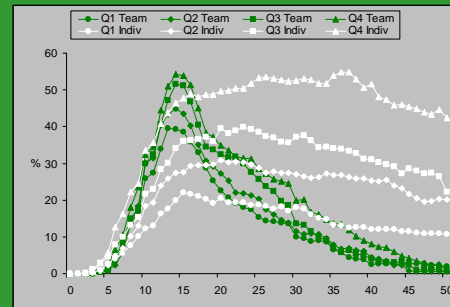
- They are very large
- They apply to all sports
- Note also that much public funding for sport is from the Lottery
- Conclude: Current policy almost certainly regressive
- Challenge: (1) To understand why they are there (2) Design policy to overcome them

The “sport hill”



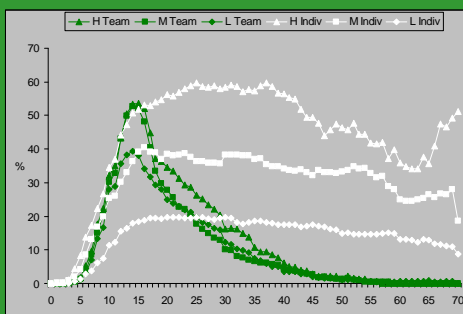
Source: SSPE, 2003

Sport hills by income



Source: SSPE, 2003

Sport hills by educational attainment



Summary of life-course analysis

- Effect of disadvantage begins at early age, especially with individual sports
- Transition from team to individual sport in young adulthood greatly widens the gap
- Lower socio-economic groups both more likely to drop out and less likely to take up new sports

Possible policy interventions

Facilities is not the issue

International meta-analysis:

- Community campaigns that mix organised events and strong local marketing
- Involving pre-existing social groups in sport
- Combining facilities improvements with outreach activities
- Individual physical activity programmes
- Major national marketing campaigns

What might work here?

- Clear need to target disadvantaged people with participation programmes
- National network of local sports partnerships currently gets c. 2% of the budget
- Incentives for National Governing Bodies?
- Links between schools and clubs?

Conclusions

- Very strong link between social disadvantage and sport
- Need to recognise importance of sport for social exclusion
- Need to target participation programmes at the socially disadvantaged
- Need to broaden range of sports available to children from poorer backgrounds
- Need to target transitions during young adulthood