



WOMEN & GIRLS STRATEGY 2026-2028

Sport Starts Here.



WHERE ARE WE NOW?

WOMEN & GIRLS IN GYMNASTICS



80

Member clubs
nationwide

40,000+

Members



FEMALE MEMBERSHIP

- 62% aged 11 and under
- 17% aged 12-18
- 1% adult women
- 75% recreational participants
- 6% competitive participants



FEMALE WORKFORCE

- 81% of coaches are women
- 78% of judges are women
- 84% of our workforce who coach and judge are women



Extensive range of inclusive 'Gymnastics for All' pathway programmes and events covering participation to performance

GYMSTART
DRIVING PARTICIPATION
IN GYMNASTICS

GYMNASTICS IRELAND
NATIONAL SERIES

GYMABLE
INCLUSIVE GYMNASTICS FOR
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The FLOOR
GYMNASTICS IRELAND

GYMACTIVE
GET FIT WITH GYMNASTICS

GYMNASTICS IRELAND
JUMPSTART!

GYMNASTICS IRELAND
NEXT GEN
CHAMPIONSHIPS



Launched our new
Gym4TEENS programme to
retain teenage girls in 2023

GYM 4 TEENS
GYMNASTICS IRELAND



Published Nationally and Internationally
recognised research around retaining
teenage girls in gymnastics in 2022

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DRIVING FORWARD ABOUT US



A sport for all

Inclusive programmes covering participation to performance levels



Member focussed

Prioritising enjoyable, safe and healthy participation



Nationwide & Global

One of the largest sports in Ireland with clubs in all main urban & rural areas. A truly global sport



Growing year-on-year

A sport in constant state of growth with demand still hugely outstripping capacity



High performing

Whether on the Field of Play or as a leader in the wider sports sector



WHAT DO WE VALUE



Enjoyment

Enjoyment in our inclusive sport, whether it is at participation through to competitive levels



Pride

Pride in ourselves, our club, in Gymnastics Ireland & in wanting to represent Ireland well on the international stage



Teamwork

Teamwork underpins our approach, as working together we are stronger



Hard work

Hard work is how we achieve success



Ambition

Ambition to strive to achieve success in everything we do



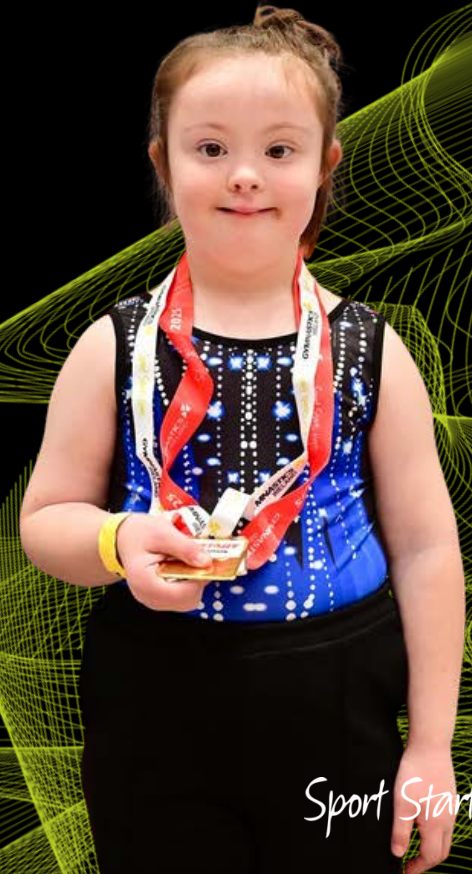
Fairplay

Fairplay is how we achieve our goals



Respect

Respect for each other, our competitors & ourselves



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OUR PROGRAMS

Gymnastics Ireland offers an extensive range of programmes and events covering participation through to performance levels. Each unique programme has varying elements ranging from education courses through to technical resources and events.



GymSTART is the fun and health focussed participation programme for Gymnastics Ireland consisting of coaching courses, workshops, club programming tools and events.



The Floor is an annual showcase event for member clubs. Clubs perform to show everyone just how skillful, fun, entertaining and exciting gymnastics is.



Gym4Teens is a programme targeted at retaining teenagers in gymnastics as well as growing teenage participation rates across our sport.



GymABLE is an inclusive programme targeted at providing gymnastics opportunities for people with disabilities



GymEDGE is a series of gymnastics-based workshops for any coach from any sport designed to develop the complete athlete/player.



GymACTIVE is a gymnastics-based fitness program focusing on strength, flexibility and physical literacy skills. It is available for the leisure, fitness & wellbeing sectors in addition to member clubs and schools/3rd level institutions.



WOMEN IN SPORT

As one of Ireland's largest membership based sports and majority female sports, we continue to invest in programs & initiatives that cater to this large female membership base covering participation through to performance pathways both on and off the Field of Play.



JumpSTART is a club recreational level competitive programme that acts as a bridge between our GymSTART & National Series programmes where gymnasts can compete across multiple disciplines either as an individual or part of a club team.



The National Series encompasses all national level competitions for all competitive disciplines covering development through to performance levels and including various National Championships.



The Next Gen Championships is an event targeting at showcasing the Irish starts of the future while also providing these young & talented gymnasts with critical podium level competition experience at home within each Olympic cycle. It is focussed on specifically defined key development levels within the National Series competitive structure.



Our holistic athlete centred performance programme targeting long term, enjoyable and healthy gymnast development inline with our benchmark target of supporting gymnasts to achieve 'final & medal potential' at international level.



Exchange is our annual hybrid virtual and in-person club support conference covering a wide range of areas relevant to our sport including participation, performance, inclusion, safesport & integrity and club/commercial development. It also provides our clubs with a great platform to connect, share success stories and build relationships.



The National Awards Ceremony is an annual celebration of our members achievements from participation through to performance, club through to national.

For full programme details visit the programme section of gymnasticsireland.com

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OUR PATHWAY

There are three main routes to participate in gymnastics in Ireland. The pathway diagram below illustrates each of these and highlights the relevant Gymnastics Ireland programmes to each pathway route.

Fitness/Leisure Sector



GYMACTIVE

GYMEDGE

GYMABLE

Gymnastics Ireland Member Club



Gymnastics Ireland
Member Club

PARTICIPATION

GYMSTART

GYMABLE



JUMPSTART!

GYMNASTICS IRELAND

WOMEN IN SPORT

COMPETITIVE

JUMPSTART!

GYMNASTICS IRELAND
NATIONAL SERIES



GYMNASTICS IRELAND

PERFORMANCE

GYMNASTICS IRELAND

WOMEN IN SPORT

Schools/3rd Level Education



GYMSTART

GYMACTIVE

GYMEDGE

GYMABLE

OUR PARTNERS

While our clubs and members are our main partners we regularly work with a number of key partners outside of our membership to further develop our sport.



An Roinn Cultúir,
Cumarsáide agus Spóirt
Department of Culture,
Communications and Sport

Department of Culture, Communications & Sport:

The Government of Ireland department responsible for the delivery of the National Sports Policy and distribution of public funds for sport covering participation, inclusion, high performance & events (through Sport Ireland) in addition to capital funding for sports equipment & facilities.'



SPÓRT ÉIREANN
SPORT IRELAND

Sport Ireland: The government appointed agency tasked with the development of sport in Ireland covering participation, high-performance, anti-doping, ethics & coaching. Sport Ireland also is responsible for the development and operation of:

- The Sport Ireland Campus
- The Sport Ireland Institute
- The Local Sports Partnership (LSP) Network



TEAM
IRELAND

Olympic Federation of Ireland (OFI): The National Olympic Committee (NOC) and representative branch of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Ireland. Its main responsibility is planning, preparing and supporting Team Ireland to compete in Olympic events in addition to leveraging the Olympic brand in Ireland.



Federation of Irish Sports (FIS): The voice of Irish sport ensuring sport is kept at the top of the agenda within political, government and media circles in Ireland while providing shared support services for members. The FIS also runs key sports sector events such as the Irish Sport Industry Awards.



European
Gymnastics

European Gymnastics (EG): The European governing body responsible for the governance and development of the sport on a continental level including the operation of the European Championships.



WORLD
GYMNASTICS

World Gymnastics: The world governing body responsible for the governance and development of the sport on a global level including the operation of the World Championships and Olympic qualification pathway.

Ireland
Active

Leisure, Health
and Fitness
Association

Ireland Active: The representative body for the leisure, health and fitness sector in Ireland.

Sponsors

Gymnastics Ireland regularly partners with long-term or project-specific sponsors in the roll-out and delivery of various programmes and initiatives.

Media

Gymnastics Ireland maintains a close working relationship with national TV, digital and print media in order to maximise exposure of our sport to the Irish general public while engaging with the global gymnastics media to ensure Irish stars are visible to gymnastics fans all over the world.

DRIVING FORWARD RETAINING TEENAGE GIRLS

Engaging and retaining teenage girls is a significant challenge in gymnastics and therefore they are a priority group within this strategy.

In 2022, Gymnastics Ireland with the support of Sport Ireland and Women in Sport funding, commissioned Women in Sport UK to collaborate on a year-long research project “The Gymnast’s Voice: Harnessing Opportunities to Retain Teenage Girls in Gymnastics”.

The learnings from this extensive work underpins several areas of our strategy over the next three years. In addition to retaining teenage girls we will deepen our understanding of the needs of adult women and expand the appeal of our sport. This will include increased opportunities to get involved and thrive, both as participants and within our workforce.



STRATEGIC PILLARS

1 ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

2 LEADERSHIP & WORKFORCE

3 VISIBILITY & COMMUNICATIONS

PRIORITY GROUPS

Teenage Girls



Adult Women



WHAT WILL WE FOCUS ON?



The diverse lives and needs of women & girls



Female health and wellbeing



Supporting women & girls to thrive in all environments



Collaboration & innovation



Supportive culture of respect & belonging for all



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1 ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

THE WHAT:



Increase and retain participation amongst teenage girls at all levels.



Expand the appeal of gymnastics to adult women to grow participation.



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1 ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

THE HOW:

Provide a supportive ecosystem that breaks down the barriers teenage girls face to staying involved in gymnastics. We will:



Build on our Gym4TEENS programme and support clubs to develop tailored initiatives for teenage girls to retain them at key dropout points.



Support clubs to develop their female friendly facilities and provision (e.g. safety considerations, changing spaces, sanitary provision)



Embed the physical, psychological and social needs of adolescent girls into our new education framework to develop a knowledgeable and supportive workforce for girls.



Provide practical resources for girls, clubs and parents to support girls to navigate key challenges during adolescence that impact participation (e.g. puberty, attire, body positivity, reframing progression).



Empower coaches to feel confident to drive positive change for girls through formal and informal learning as part of continuous professional development.



Facilitate club collaboration harnessing best practice and sharing learnings to support our community to retain teenage girls.

1 ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

THE HOW:



Optimise and expand our pathways, programmes and opportunities for teenage girls. We will:



Explore ways to provide clear, flexible pathways for girls that support changing needs and motivations to extend participation within teenage years and beyond.



Optimise the marketing, communication and delivery of existing participation initiatives to ensure they are relevant, appealing, and accessible to teenage girls at all levels.



Work with girls and clubs to co-design and expand our Gym4TEENS programme and increase its profile and presence at existing events.

Work with schools, Local Sports Partnerships and partners to expand the reach of gymnastics to girls at different ages. We will:



Expand the provision of gymnastics in primary and secondary education to develop girls' foundational skills early and foster participation through adolescence.



Work with partners to train educators to deliver safe, engaging and positive gymnastics experiences for girls that cater to their changing needs.



Work with key stakeholders to improve girls' participation and transition between education and community settings.



1 ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

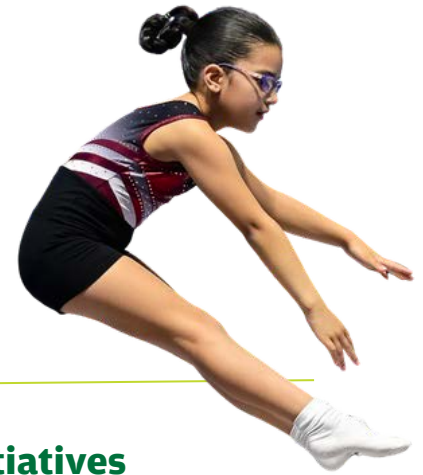
THE HOW:

Deepen our understanding of the changing needs and motivations of women at key life stages to engage in gymnastics. We will:

- Consult with coaches, current and lapsed women members on their experiences within gymnastics to inform and develop our adult offer.
- Explore women's perceptions and attitudes to gymnastics, and barriers to engaging at different life stages (e.g. pregnancy, post-partum, menopause) to uncover opportunities for growth.

Scope and develop innovative initiatives and opportunities to support adult women's participation in gymnastics. We will:

- Review learnings & best practice nationally and globally and work with clubs to develop inclusive and targeted initiatives for women.
- Develop practical guidance and resources for clubs to engage women and support participation at different life stages.
- Work with partners in leisure, fitness and health to scope potential initiatives to engage women in the wider community.



2 WORKFORCE & LEADERSHIP

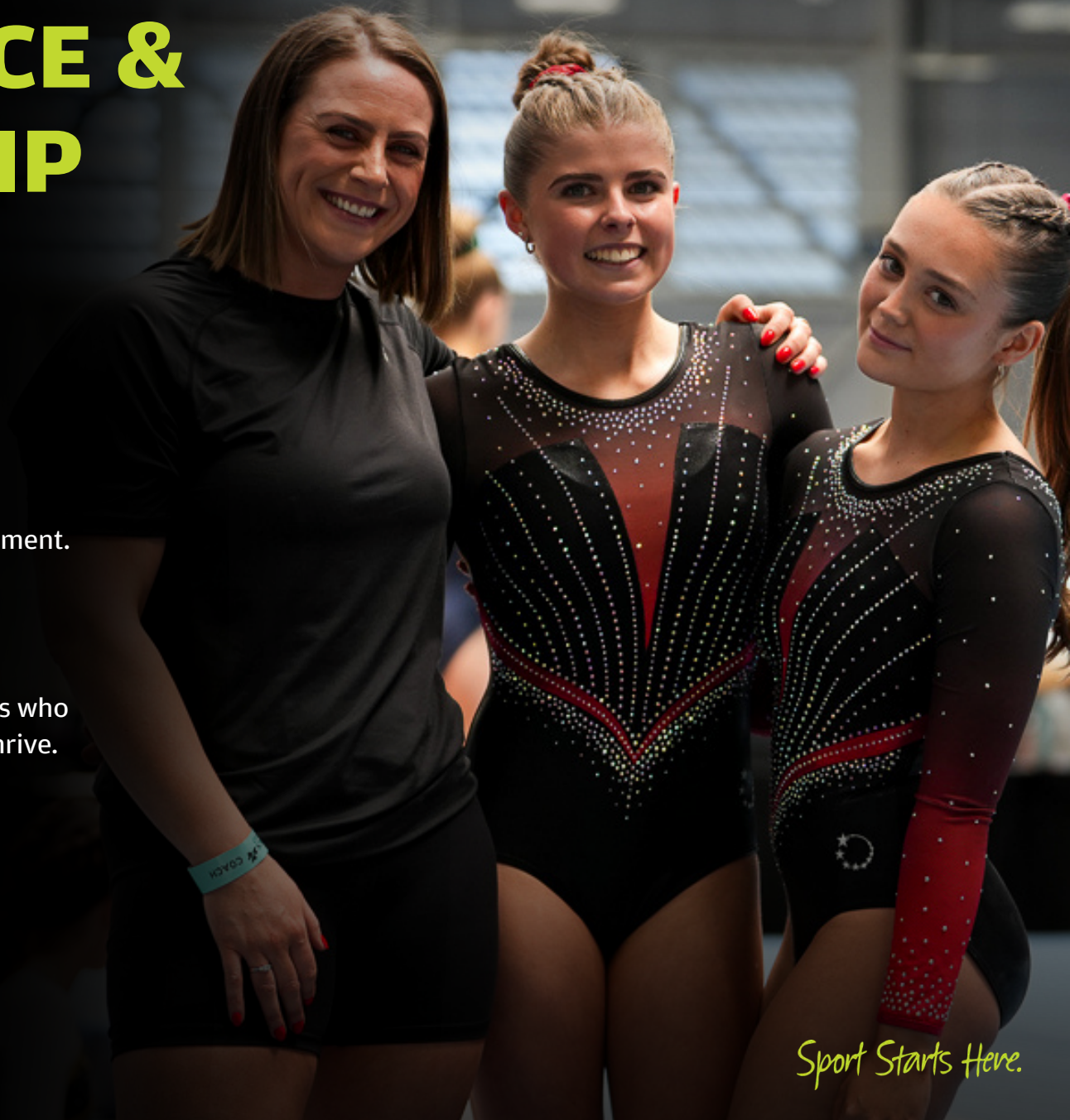
THE WHAT:



Strengthen teenage girls' experience in gymnastics through leadership development.



Increase the number of women and girls who coach and judge and support them to thrive.



2 WORKFORCE & LEADERSHIP

THE HOW:

Create a leadership pathway and opportunities for progression beyond participation. We will:



Collaborate with girls, and clubs that have established leadership programmes, to develop a nationwide gymnast leadership programme that enables girls to take on varied roles, build autonomy and develop key life skills.



Establish a nationwide teenage girl ambassador programme to ensure we continually listen to their voices and needs to inform our teenage girls' work and initiatives.



Facilitate opportunities for teenage girls to share their stories and experiences and demonstrate their leadership skills at key events and conferences.



Actively highlight the different roles within our workforce, leadership and governance to promote lifelong involvement in gymnastics.



Promote the wider value of gymnastics and how leadership development supports girls' personal development, education and careers.



2 WORKFORCE & LEADERSHIP

THE HOW:

Optimise the current coaching & judging pathway and provide more opportunities for continuous professional development. We will:



Develop targeted campaigns, communications and resources to recruit women & teenage girls into coaching & judging.



Continue to develop coach education programmes and create opportunities to engage teenage girls in coaching early in their gymnastics journey.



Increase the roll out of the new online and accessible GymSTART and JumpSTART judging courses.



Provide accessible and flexible continuous professional development through our new educational framework, training and events.



Establish peer support and mentoring networks for female coaches and judges at all ages & levels, and through events and communities of practice.

Ensure policy and guidance is inclusive of the needs of our female workforce. We will:



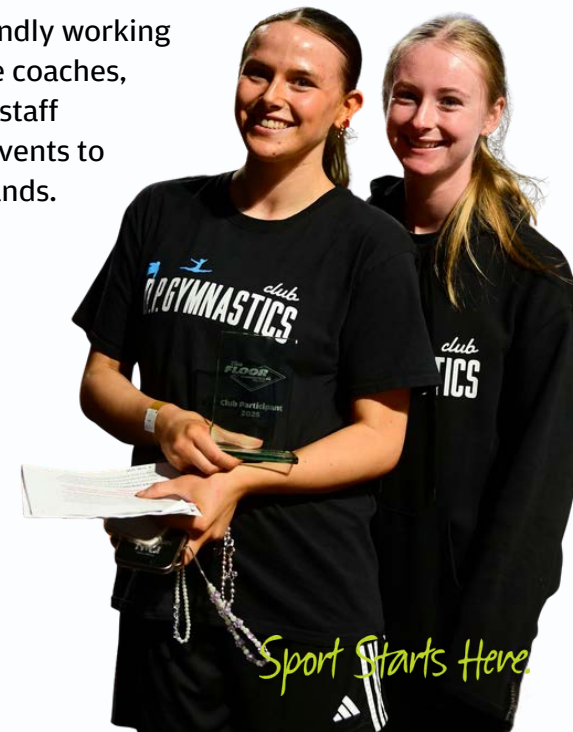
Review and develop relevant coaching & judging policies in line with best practice to reflect the diverse needs of our majority female workforce.



Strengthen our family-friendly working approach to enable female coaches, team managers and other staff involved in international events to balance work-family demands.



Develop guidance and resources to support our female workforce at key life stages, such as pregnancy, postpartum and menopause.



3 VISIBILITY & COMMUNICATION

THE WHAT:



Champion diverse women & girls in gymnastics to inspire.



Improve engagement with priority groups through targeted communications and activities.



3 VISIBILITY & COMMUNICATION

THE HOW:

Develop and implement a comprehensive women and girls communications plan. We will:



Increase the visibility and profile of female role models who participate, work in and support our sport at all levels, through tailored content, campaigns and storytelling on our website and digital channels.



Monitor our imagery, content and messaging to ensure it is realistic, diverse and relatable for women & girls in our community.



Harness key moments throughout the year (e.g. International Women's Day, International Day of the Girl, Women in Sport week, conferences) to amplify key messages and activities around women & girls in gymnastics.



Ensure women & girls' voices and needs sit at the heart of our engagement initiatives, including our new Club Focus Group programme and key events such as Gymnastics Ireland Exchange.



Use our platform and influence to tackle cultural barriers and stereotypes around women & girls in gymnastics and wider sport.



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3 VISIBILITY & COMMUNICATION

THE HOW:

Develop tailored content, messaging and activities to engage teenage girls and adult women. We will:



Review and expand our digital presence to reach and engage our priority groups.



Develop a national digital campaign to champion 'gymnastics for all', that values diverse women & girls and a culture of respect & belonging for all, with associated resources to specifically support teenage retention.



Raise continuous awareness of the importance of body positivity and wellbeing within our gymnastics community.



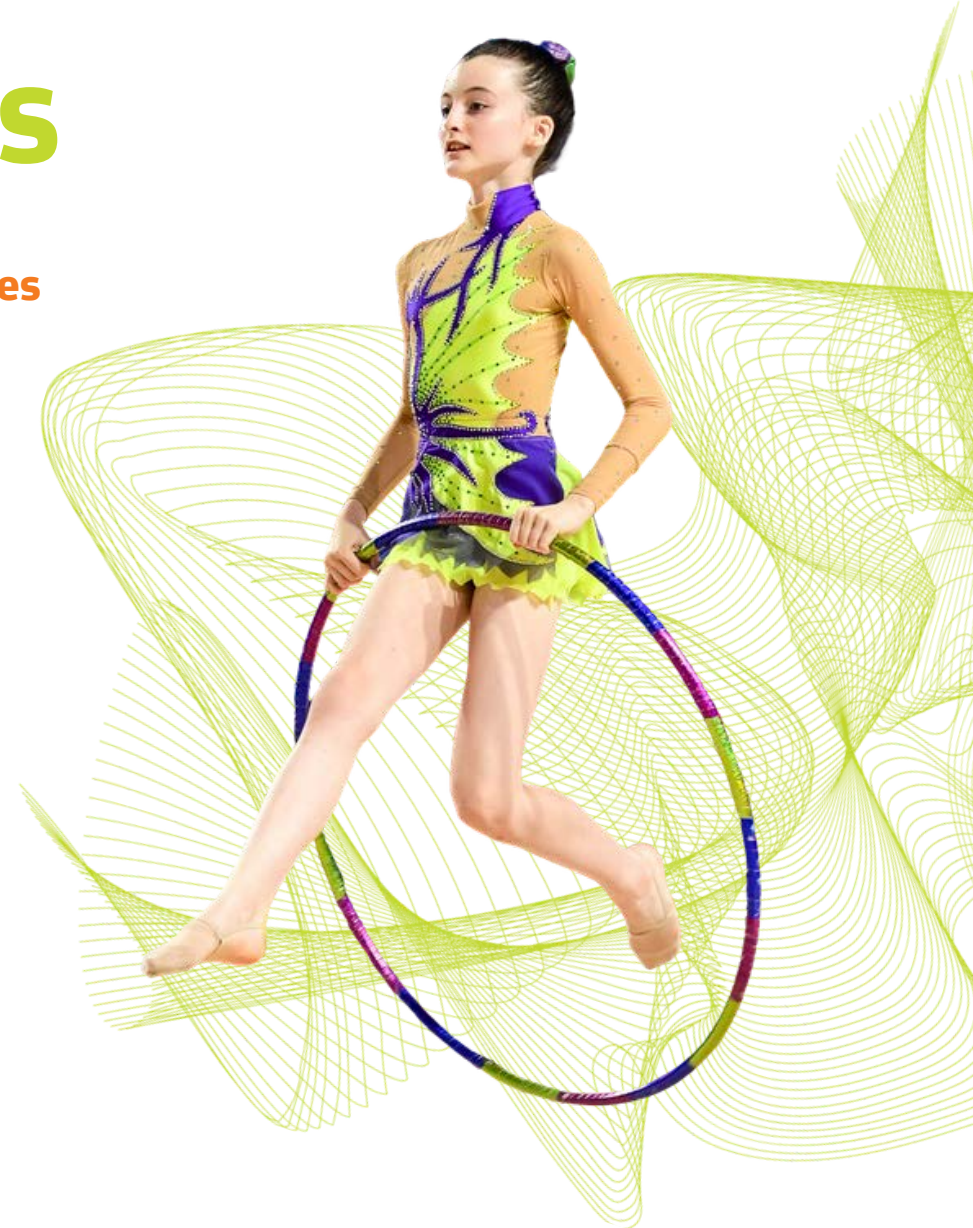
Promote positive stories and examples of good practice around our priority groups at events and on our website and digital channels.

SUPPORT STRATEGIES & PLANS

In addition to this strategy Gymnastics Ireland operates a number of other strategies & plans that support the overall aims of our master 'Strategy 2025-2028'.

These include:

- Participation
- Disability & Inclusion
- Schools
- Education
- Club Development
- Commercial
- High Performance



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