



# Ireland Lacrosse National Team Vision

## High-Performance Documentation

### Background

The [Ireland Lacrosse National Team Vision \(Player Eligibility & Selection Policy\)](#) was developed in 2018 and is in need of revision.

Ireland Lacrosse has been in continuous operation since 2001, and this proposed revision is based on more than two decades of experience - in Ireland and looking at other NGBs outside of Ireland - and on a vision for the future as articulated in the new [Ireland Lacrosse Strategic Plan 2022-2026](#) which all Ireland Lacrosse members have had an opportunity to contribute to. It is also informed by the emerging Ireland Lacrosse High Performance Framework, which is based on the [Sport Ireland High Performance Strategy 2021-2032](#).

Sentimentally, having an all-domestic national team is a noble pursuit, but the hard data and evidence does not show a causal link between domestic players on national teams and success in development.

Examples which demonstrate this are France, Finland, Austria, Belgium. These countries have been traditionally focused on having national teams with all-domestic players. However, there has been very little expansion of the club system in these countries, and no U19/U20 national teams (Finland had one when it hosted the Men's U19 Worlds in 2012 but has not had one since).

Even internally to Ireland Lacrosse - some of the key people in our organisation developing the game in Ireland have had limited or no experience with our national teams, while some with extensive experience with our national teams have had limited or no involvement in development.

National team events, and Éire team events, all generate cashflow for the organisation which is used to pay overheads (insurance, etc) and is invested in equipment and other items needed for domestic development (field bookings, transport, etc). In particular, this cashflow enables us to make equipment available at little or no cost to players in Ireland which helps us to ensure finances are not a barrier to participation, especially for beginners to the sport.

Income generated from national teams - no matter who plays on them - therefore does have a causal link to promoting development in-country. Therefore, the more national teams and

national team, Éire team, Masters team events there are, the more resources there are available to invest in the development of the domestic game. This is directly and explicitly linked to the Ireland Lacrosse Strategic Plan 2022-2026, priority #3, 'Organisation Capacity' - "Increase income (inc. via teams, events and tournaments) to help achieve goals re: participation."

Apart from the financial aspect, the Ireland Lacrosse mission (as also articulated in the new strategic plan) is "to provide opportunities for all to participate in lacrosse, across the island of Ireland and beyond, from beginner to elite." Irish citizens - no matter where they live - are entitled to represent their country. This also aligns with our Values of Inclusion and Diversity. The Irish diaspora is a strength and provides opportunities. We must act "I dteannta a chéile" - together as one. We mustn't think someone can be "more Irish" or "less Irish" than someone else if they are a citizen of Ireland.

As lacrosse continues to develop worldwide and with Olympic inclusion, Ireland Lacrosse is more and more obligated to align itself with national and international guidelines, including around High Performance. The [Sport Ireland High Performance Strategy 2021-2032](#) provides a very important guide for us to follow. One of the key values of sport internationally is also a respect for competition and fairness - "may the best team win". Any approach to national team player selection where the best eligible players are not selected but some other, non-competition or non-performance-related criteria is applied to this, is a corruption of the values intrinsic in international sport and high level competition.

Participation (domestic development) and High Performance (national teams) are two different things. There are other ways in which national teams can be used to contribute to domestic development, apart from putting a domestic player on the field of play at a major European or World Championship. Such as:

- Having domestic players and coaches involved with Éire teams in various events (and subsidising this participation).
- Utilising the money raised through national team selection events (and tournaments) to pay for equipment, coaching and other development needs in Ireland.
- Utilising the network of players and staff in the USA and Canada to solicit equipment donations, for transport to Ireland.
- Using the profile of the national teams at major European and World Championship tournaments to fundraise through Ireland Lacrosse North America, a registered 501c3 charitable organisation in the USA, to contribute to the costs of developing the game in Ireland.
- Having national team coaches contribute to the development of domestic coaching.

A new Ireland Lacrosse High Performance Framework is in development and will be rolled-out shortly. Part of this is a revised National Team Vision (Player Eligibility & Selection Policy), as follows:

## National Team Vision (Player Eligibility & Selection Policy)

In accordance with the Ireland Lacrosse vision, mission and values, the Ireland National Lacrosse Teams (women and men, senior and under-age, field, box and sixes) will be selected on the basis of participation by players in designated selection events, and in accordance with World Lacrosse rules on player eligibility, which are currently:

- Must hold an Irish passport; or
  - Have a parent or grandparent born on the island of Ireland; or
- Be resident in Ireland for a minimum of two years within the five years prior to a specific tournament; or
- Have a passport of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and be born in Northern Ireland, or have a parent or grandparent born in Northern Ireland.

The selection process will be overseen by the Ireland Lacrosse High Performance Committee and published on the [Ireland Lacrosse website](#), and registration for the selection events must be undertaken through the [JustGo Membership System](#). Players must be members of Ireland Lacrosse to be eligible to participate in any such events.

Individual national team selection will be undertaken by the respective Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches and Ireland Lacrosse staff, including staff based in Ireland, in alignment with the Ireland Lacrosse High Performance Framework. Team selection will ensure that each national team appropriately represents Ireland Lacrosse, including players based in Ireland and those based outside Ireland, in accordance with the Ireland Lacrosse values of ambition, community, inclusion and diversity, accountability and excellence, and players will be evaluated based on attitude, commitment, fitness, playing ability, lacrosse IQ and performance at the relevant selection events.

There will always be a pathway to participation with our national teams for all eligible players based in Ireland and those based outside Ireland, and all eligible players interested in a pathway to involvement with the Irish national teams will be provided with support for trying to achieve that.