



# SPORT SCORES

THE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF  
SPORT FOR CRIME REDUCTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“This report, I believe, is further evidence to support my instincts about the economic value of sport as a tool for social change.”



EDWIN MOSES, CHAIRMAN,  
LAUREUS WORLD SPORTS ACADEMY

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN EDWIN MOSES

**Winning medals may be what everyone talks about, but in reality it's only one per cent of sport's value.** It's the other 99 per cent that really matters. Having been lucky enough to have been a professional sportsman I know how sport gave me structure and direction, touching on almost every element of how I live my life from the relationships I've built and the communities of which I've been part to my perception of morality and the motivation that drives me.

And I see this in the work we do as Laureus across the world. I've visited the Laureus supported PeacePlayers International project in the Middle East seeing first hand that sport, as an intervention to address social barriers and distrust created by long standing conflicts, can deliver long term impact.

I've been to the football project Bola pra Frente in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, seeing first hand that sport, as an intervention to address social and economic exclusion can genuinely change lives. And by changing lives I don't just mean making people fitter or giving them a short term distraction. I mean putting those it touches on the right course for a successful life that allows them to become a real value to society.

This report, I believe, is further evidence to support my instincts about the economic value of sport as a tool for social change. We want to highlight exactly how sport is changing the lives of young people and communities worldwide and the returns this generates for society, so that we can build a compelling case for the social returns of sport that engages governments and other funders to invest in sport as a multi-dimensional tool for social change.

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What we see from the projects in this report, and many others that Laureus supports across the world, are the positive benefits that sport can generate in relation to health, education, and employment.”

As we see growing youth disengagement and social unrest – just look at the riots in the UK last year or those most recently in Northern France – combined with the economic turmoil that is affecting us all, governments and policy makers search for ever more cost effective solutions to the social challenges we face. Unfortunately, sport is often seen as a ‘nice to have’ and its power to deliver measured returns for society is over-looked. It’s perceived to be a one dimensional tool rather than a framework to deliver against a range of social issues in a cost effective way, especially amongst children and young people.

What we see from the projects in this report, and many others that Laureus supports across the world, are the positive benefits that sport can generate in relation to health, education, and employment. But the benefits aren’t just for the individual. When these projects work they work for us all – whether it’s more taxes paid through employment of those who are now working, a reduction in police time spent on dealing with criminal behaviour, less health care on those who are leading more healthy lives, or less support for those no longer cared for by social services or the prison system.

However, because sport works on so many different levels, we need to stop thinking of it as an individual intervention that can be compared to single issue initiatives. The power of sport lies in how it inspires and motivates individuals to change their whole approach to life. Sport makes real, far-reaching and long-term change for individuals and society possible.

In these austere times we are seeing governments cut support for community based sport all too often – short-term decisions that are being taken in silos by policy makers who are not seeing the bigger picture.

This report helps frame that bigger picture, by contributing to the growing body of evidence showcasing the social and economic returns of sport worldwide. Building on a 2011 Laureus report (*Teenage Kicks: the value of sport in tackling youth crime*) showcasing that Britain received a £5 return for every £1 invested in sports based crime prevention programmes, this report showcases the compelling value proposition sport can offer governments and tax payers in the UK, Italy, and Germany.

On average this report shows a return of 5.02 Euros for every 1 Euro invested across the 4 projects analysed, providing compelling evidence that the returns showcased in the 2011 *Teenage Kicks* report are not isolated occurrences.

Taken together, these reports provide a compelling case for on-going investment and research within this field – something we will continue to champion in partnership with the sporting heroes, academics, governments and other funders we work with. We hope you enjoy reading the report and would love to hear your comments on how we can continue to move this agenda forward. You can contact us on [foundation@laureus.com](mailto:foundation@laureus.com)



**EDWIN MOSES**  
CHAIRMAN, LAUREUS  
WORLD SPORTS ACADEMY





The report shows that on average across the four programmes analysed, sport provides a return of 5.02 Euros for every 1 Euro invested through savings related to reductions in crime, truancy, and ill health.

## INTRODUCTION

### ABOUT THIS REPORT:

This report is co-financed by the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation and the Ecorys Research Programme. The research was produced by Ecorys with support from Bocconi University Milan, the German Sport University Cologne, the University of East London, the UK research company Substance and Professor Fred Coalter. It draws on validated research methodologies from outside of the sport sector, including from economic impact assessment, health research and the literature on youth crime. This largely quantitative impact research was combined with high-quality qualitative research conducted by our university partners.

Finally, the methodology builds on the Laureus research project, *Teenage Kicks* (2011) which placed a value on the return on investment offered by sport projects through comparing existing data relating to the outcomes of sport with national cost benchmarks. This latest study deepens the knowledge base provided by the *Teenage Kicks* report, through conducting new primary research across four sport for good projects in the UK, Italy and Germany, using an innovative mixed methods approach. The report shows that on average across the four programmes analysed, sport provides a return of 5.02 Euros for every 1 Euro invested through savings related to reductions in crime, truancy, and ill health.

PHOTOGRAPH BY: FRANCESCA CECIARINI

Across local communities every day, sporting activities are being used to help channel young people's energies in more positive directions, and improve behaviour, boost health and promote personal development.

## BACKGROUND

**The success of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games demonstrated once again the power of sport to capture the imagination of young people and lift the spirits of a nation.** Added to this, across local communities every day, sporting activities are being used to help channel young people's energies in more positive directions, and improve behaviour, boost health and promote personal development.

Much research has been carried out documenting how sport projects deliver positive results (although the precise mix of mechanisms and success factors can be hard to pin down). These studies most commonly draw on qualitative research methods, such as in-depth interviews and focus groups with participants and stakeholders.

Some studies also incorporate mixed-methods based evidence, combining in-depth interviews with user questionnaires, to identify and measure the range of positive outcomes (including in particular 'soft outcomes' or changes in attitudes), which sporting interventions can help to deliver.

However, there has been relatively little work undertaken which provides an assessment of the impact of sports projects on these outcomes, which for example attempts to control for other factors which may have resulted in positive change. Was it the sports project, or some other influence? Equally important for government agencies outside of the sports sector, findings are not always translated into what this means for them, on their terms.

How much crime and anti-social behaviour can sports interventions help to reduce, to what extent have they prevented young people from becoming NEET (not in education, employment, or training), and what is the potential impact on life expectancy?

Without a more reliable understanding of both of these factors, it is difficult for government to come to an objective assessment of the value for money offered by sport interventions, and to make difficult financial decisions about whether to invest in sport or some other solution to the problems of society.

This research project responds to this challenge, by developing and then piloting a replicable methodology for assessing the impact and value for money offered by sport projects.



LAUREUS ACADEMY MEMBERS STEVE REDGRAVE, MICHAEL JOHNSON & SEBASTIAN COE AT THE LAUREUS-SUPPORTED PROJECT TRACK ACADEMY, UNITED KINGDOM



**ABOUT THE LAUREUS SPORT FOR GOOD FOUNDATION:** The mission of the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation is to fund and promote the power of sport to address social challenges through a worldwide programme of sports-related community development initiatives. The Foundation has raised over €55 million Euros since its inception, and currently supports 134 Sport for Good projects in 34 nations, impacting the lives of over half a million young people per year through the medium of sport.

The Laureus Sport for Good Foundation carries the unanimous endorsement of the Laureus World Sports Academy, a unique association of 46 of the greatest living sporting legends, who act as its guardians and ambassadors. Laureus is supported with generous donations from its Global Partners Mercedes-Benz and IWC Schaffhausen. The contents of this report should not be deemed to necessarily reflect views of individual Laureus donors or partners. For further information or to make a donation go to [www.laureus.com/foundation](http://www.laureus.com/foundation)

**ABOUT ECORYS:** Ecorys is a leading European research and consultancy company, which aims to deliver real benefit to society through the work they do. This project is also part-funded by the Ecorys Research Programme, which explores emerging policy issues in depth and develops new ideas, approaches and methodologies, in partnership with the academic world. It is funded by Ecorys and the Foundation NEI. Over the last couple of years research has engaged in subjects as varied as industrial competitiveness, community justice, childhood obesity, quality of life indicators, and micro health insurance in developing countries.

## WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT HOW SPORT HELPS TO REDUCE CRIME THE SOCIAL COST OF YOUTH CRIME

Young people currently account for a disproportionately high level of offences in England and Wales<sup>1</sup>. 37 per cent of these in turn are first time offences<sup>2</sup>. Additionally, survey evidence suggests that the amount of young people committing crimes may have remained relatively static during the past decade.

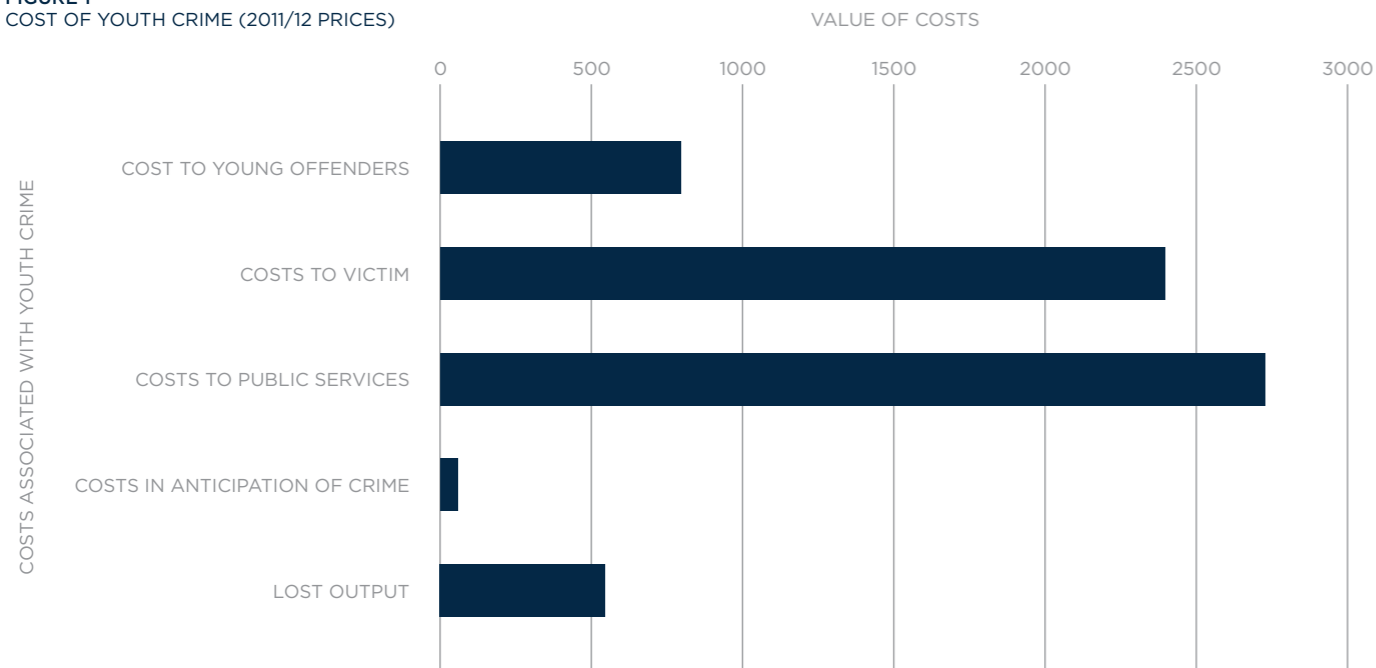
The two most common offences committed by young people tend to be violence against the person and theft (together accounting for around 40 per cent of offences committed by young people).

Additionally, there is currently a concern with the prevalence of gang involvement amongst young people, which itself can lead to severe and socially costly forms of crime.

Ecorys has estimated the average social cost of a youth crime to be £6,400 (based upon adapting and updating a methodology developed by the Prince's Trust<sup>3</sup>). The majority of these costs fall to public services and to the victims involved (Figure 1). It should also be noted that a high proportion of young offenders (33 percent) re-offend, and on average 2.8 times, resulting in multiple costs overall.

1. In 2010/11 there were 123,437 young people (aged 10 to 17) in England and Wales with at least one offence resulting in a reprimand, warning, caution or conviction (as recorded in the Police National Computer).
2. Youth Justice Statistics in England and Wales 2010/11, Ministry of Justice, January 2012
3. The Cost of Exclusion: Counting the cost of youth disadvantage in the UK, Prince's Trust, 2007

FIGURE 1  
COST OF YOUTH CRIME (2011/12 PRICES)



SOURCE: ECORYS ANALYSIS

## RISK AND PROTECTION FACTORS

Many of the young people engaged by crime reduction sport projects, though considered 'at risk', may not have been involved in recorded youth crime. Early behavioural problems can nonetheless provide an indicator of future criminality - a study of three countries, for example, found that physical aggression in boys aged 5-7 (as reported by the teacher) was associated with both violent and non-violent forms of offending in adolescence.

In particular, exclusion from school can accelerate or increase the likelihood of criminal and anti-social behaviour in later teenage years.<sup>4</sup>

In the absence of any prior involvement in serious youth disorder, the measurement of such risk factors (and associated protective factors) can provide a suitable alternative measure of youth crime. In addition to measuring reductions in re-offending, this study also adopts an innovative approach to assessing predicted reductions in crime amongst non-offenders by measuring changes in risk and protection factors<sup>5</sup>.



LAUREUS AMBASSADOR MARCUS ALLEN IN A WORKOUT SESSION AT KICK IM BOXRING PROJECT IN GERMANY

4. The chance of a lifetime: Preventing early conduct problems and reducing crime, Sainsbury's Centre for Mental Health, 2011
5. The methodology is based upon validated research undertaken by the University of Oxford (Role of Risk and Protective Factors, Youth Justice Board, 2006)

## HOW SPORT CAN HELP

Before going out to field, we updated the analysis provided in the Laureus reports *Breaking the Cycle of Violence* (2009) and *Teenage Kicks* (2011) of the reasons why sport is effective in tackling youth crime, building on the very latest evidence.

The findings suggest that sport can be a powerful tool for engaging disaffected young people in positive activities and promoting positive development, either as a diversionary or rehabilitative approach to tackling crime. However, a number of key 'success factors' must be present.

### 1

The **appeal of sport** can help to attract young people to local initiatives and act as a 'hook' for engagement. Many young people enjoy and identify with sport (and it can generate a sense of excitement for them, similar to feelings experienced as part of a gang). Sports projects, however, need to be **well targeted** in terms of both their location and the engagement of hard-to-reach groups.

### 2

Sport can also provide the right environment/context and influences that promote **positive values**, including developing relationships and trust, taking on responsibility, and learning how to resolve conflicts constructively. Studies have found that the role and **skills of the sports coach** are critical here for engendering a positive 'socio-moral' environment (and perhaps more so than the specific sporting activity). Sports projects also need to be **long-term** in nature if they are to build trust and change attitudes.

### 3

Sport delivers its most positive impacts on behaviour when utilised within a **wider developmental programme** of education and support (for example incorporating integrated mentoring, training, volunteering and work experience programmes). This can help to reinforce positive values and also address risks, including providing alternatives which help young people to move away from crime. This implies that credible staff (such as **trained youth workers**) are also critical to success, as well as approaches that are **tailored** to the needs of different individuals.



LAUREUS ACADEMY MEMBER MARVELOUS MARVIN HAGLER AT THE YOUTH SPORTS FESTIVAL 2012 IN LONDON



PARTICIPANTS FROM THE LAUREUS-SUPPORTED GIRLS KICKING PROJECT IN GERMANY

Sport delivers its most positive impacts on behaviour when utilised within a wider developmental programme of education and support (for example incorporating integrated mentoring, training, volunteering and work experience programmes).



LAUREUS ACADEMY MEMBER SEAN FITZPATRICK VISITS THE URBAN STARS PROJECT IN BELFAST

The young people are encouraged to talk through their challenges on the sports field and learn how to deal with anxiety exploring similar feelings that they might face during conflict in the classroom for example, or during an exam.

## SPORT AND THOUGHT

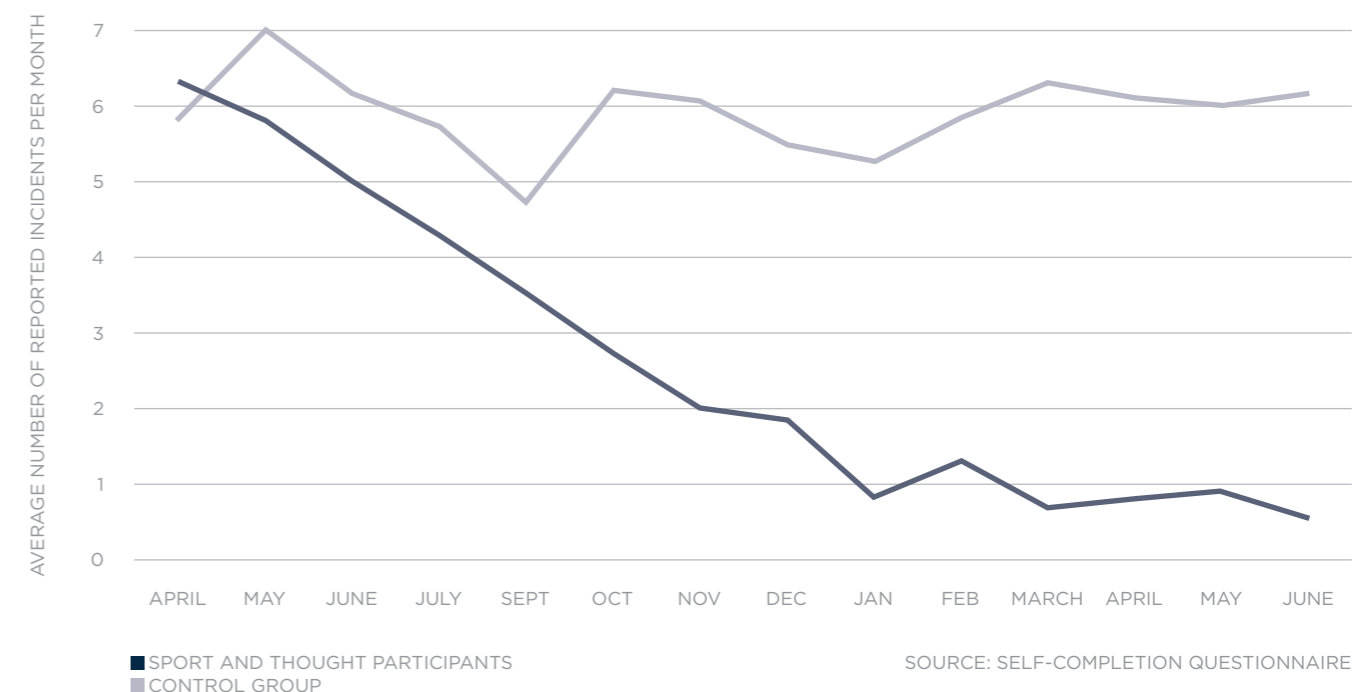
**Sport and Thought is a project working in Newman Catholic College in Brent, North West London.** It perfectly illustrates these processes in action, and the impacts of attractive, well structured and well facilitated sporting activity. It also illustrates how these impacts can build up over time, resulting in significant savings to society.

Sport and Thought focuses on providing 20 challenging pupils in Year 9, most at risk of school exclusion, with a combination of weekly after-school sport (football) and psycho-therapeutic group sessions. Each 90 minute session involves warm-up activities, running and shooting drills and close communication 'within a tight circle'. The young people are encouraged to talk through their challenges on the sports field and learn how to deal with anxiety; exploring similar feelings that they might face during conflict in the classroom, for example, or during an exam.

The chart below shows the average number of reported incidents per month (removal from class by a senior teacher as result of serious disruptive behaviour) associated with the pupils involved in Sport and Thought during 2011-12. It then compares this against the average reported monthly incidents associated with the 20 pupils with the next worst behaviour records, but who did not attend Sport and Thought (both groups of young people were otherwise subject to similar levels of support and intervention to help address behavioural issues).

The behaviour of Sport and Thought participants quickly improved from the beginning of their involvement with the project from an average of over six removals from class in May 2011, to less than one by June 2012. There was no real change amongst the comparison (control) group.

**SPORT AND THOUGHT**  
NUMBER OF REPORTED INCIDENTS (FORCIBLE REMOVAL FROM CLASS) 2011/12



SOURCE: SELF-COMPLETION QUESTIONNAIRE



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In nearly 25 years working in London schools Sport and Thought is the most effective provision I have come across in tackling the problems of social inequality and its links to performance at school. The combination of soccer and reflective, collaborative analysis has proven to be a powerful tool in improving attitudes towards school.”

SENIOR VICE PRINCIPAL  
NEWMAN CATHOLIC COLLEGE

The sessions were reported by the coach to have encouraged greater self-control, discipline and respect amongst the participants (“building internal structure”), as well as improved communication skills, which in turn translated into better behaviour in the classroom. School attendance improved amongst more than half of the young people, with the group as a whole having a better attendance record (95 percent) than the school as a whole (91 percent).

Of the four participants who were at high risk of permanent exclusion at the start of the project, three were no longer identified as being at any risk of permanent exclusion at the end of project activities. Furthermore, the remaining participant was moved from high to medium risk.

Finally, there was also evidence of educational impacts: one participant had achieved an early entry GCSE by the end of project.

Overall, it is estimated that the project helped save the public sector £73,900 through avoiding the additional educational costs associated with persistent disruptive behaviour and truancy, and the costs associated with permanent exclusions. Taking into account the project’s impact and costs, it is estimated that Sport and Thought has provided a return on investment of **£6.58 for every £1 spent**.



LAUREUS ACADEMY MEMBER MORNÉ DU PLESSIS AND AMBASSADOR MICHAEL VAUGHAN AT THE LAUREUS-SUPPORTED PROJECT URBAN STARS, UNITED KINGDOM

## NOT JUST CRIME REDUCTION

Whilst the focus of this research is on valuing crime impacts, the example of Sport and Thought highlights the contribution that the positive behavioural and attitudinal changes stimulated by sport can make to broader policy objectives.

This includes improved attendance at school and reductions in school exclusions (with the lifetime cost of a permanent school exclusion valued at almost £32,000 per person<sup>6</sup>). Other sports projects, involving the 16+ age group, also aim to help tackle youth unemployment (with the lifetime cost of being NEET valued at almost £54,000 per person<sup>7</sup>). These outcomes in themselves can significantly reduce the risk of future offending, whilst strengthening protective factors.

The benefits of promoting healthy lifestyles and encouraging regular exercise through sport are also well documented, although rarely valued. For the purposes of carrying out the Cost Benefit Analysis for this study, we employ measurements of Quality Adjusted Life Years, or QALYS (valued at £20,000 per additional QALY gained<sup>8</sup>).

We are aware that many sports projects will have other aims and objectives. However we consider these to be some of the most direct and measurable outcomes from sports projects, which can be valued with some degree of confidence. Whilst by no means telling the whole story, they provide a very useful starting point for assessing the minimum return on investment provided by sport for crime reduction projects, and investigating their value for money.

6. Financial Cost of Social Exclusion, Follow Up Study of Antisocial Children Into Adulthood, Scott et al, British Medical Journal, 2001; Misspent Youth, New Philanthropy Capital, 2007
7. Estimating the Cost of Not Being In Education, Employment or Training, Department for Education and Skills, 2002
8. Weighting and Valuing Quality Adjusted Life Years Using Stated Preference Methods: Preliminary Results from the Social Value of a QALY Project, Baker et al, Health Technology Assessment, 2010



KICK IM BOXRING MEMBER PARTICIPATES IN A WORKOUT SESSION

KICK Im Boxing has resulted in around 40 crimes being avoided amongst these participants, delivering an estimated €325,184 (£260,147) worth of savings to society.

## KICK IM BOXRING, BERLIN, GERMANY

**The project association KICK's motto is: Sport against youth delinquencies.**

It aims to act pre-emptively against children and young people sliding into crime by engaging them in sport. KICK Im Boxing (KICK in the boxing ring) is a Laureus-supported project with four bases in Berlin and three partnership programmes with local boxing clubs.

The locations have a high percentage of children and youths in known hotspots for conflict and social exclusion, as well as a lack of leisure opportunities.

Participation is open to anyone who is interested in the project, although the Berlin police is a close partner and arranges for at-risk children and young people to join.

KICK Im Boxing offers varying levels of competitive boxing training 1-3 times per week but also takes a pedagogical approach focussed on its vulnerable participants. Coaches are not only familiar with boxing, but also act as 'social educators', with each functioning as a personal tutor and point of contact for the young people.

In August 2012, an impact survey of participants was undertaken by Ecorys and the German Sport University Cologne, supplemented by qualitative evidence gathered by researchers from the University as part of a parallel study.

Over the past year, around 6,500 extra sessions of physical activity (of at least 30 minutes) were participated in thanks to KICK Im Boxing.

## THE HEADLINE RESULTS FROM THE RESEARCH WITH KICK IM BOXRING:

- 103 young people attended KICK Im Boxing over the past 12 months, with an average duration of participation of 8 months each at the time of the survey.
- KICK Im Boxing has resulted in around 40 crimes being avoided amongst these participants, delivering an estimated €325,184 (£260,147) worth of savings to society.
- The project delivered smaller positive impacts in terms of school truancy and exclusions, and helping young people to stay in or move back into further education (largely since it was not focused on these target groups). However, due to the high costs and benefits to society associated with such outcomes, it is estimated that the project still delivered €92,815 (£74,252) worth of benefit in this area.
- Over the past year, around 6,500 extra sessions of physical activity (of at least 30 minutes) were participated in thanks to KICK Im Boxing. This equates to a total of 1.5 additional years of (quality adjusted) life expectancy gained, with a value of €36,526 (£29,221).
- It is estimated that over half of participants would not have found a similar activity in the area without KICK Im Boxing.
- Taking this into account, overall we estimate that KICK Im Boxing has delivered at least €249,357 (£199,486) of additional social benefit from engaging with its participants. With the annual cost of the project running at €72,600, this delivers a benefit to cost ratio of **€3.43 for every €1 invested**.
- According to young people involved in Kick Im Boxing, in the short-term the project provides a relief from stress: "When you've had a row in school or something, you can let out the aggression on the sandbag. I like that". In the longer-term, Kick Im Boxing helps participants to learn self-control and discipline: "Then I started boxing and here you learn a lot of discipline, respect and that is also a part of life" and "Since I've been here, I've also learned that when someone calls me 'son of a bitch', or something like that, I shouldn't just hit... one just shouldn't listen. Violence is not a solution".



LOCAL PARTICIPANTS DURING A WORKOUT SESSION AT KICK IM BOXRING

“Then I started boxing and here you learn a lot of discipline, respect and that is also a part of life.”

KICK IM BOXRING PARTICIPANT



LOCAL CHILDREN PARTICIPATE IN A WORKOUT SESSION AT THE FIGHT FOR PEACE ACADEMY

Across the 800 participants, it is estimated that Fight for Peace has resulted in 165 crimes being avoided, delivering £1,059,471 worth of savings to society.

## FIGHT FOR PEACE, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

**Fight for Peace is a Laureus-supported project in east London that uses boxing and martial arts as a means to re-engage and support young people with their personal development.** Its aim is to prevent criminal, anti-social and violent behaviour later in life as well as supporting them onto positive pathways. Young people are engaged onto Fight for Peace through workshops delivered in schools, youth services referrals, outreach workers in collaboration with police to identify young people in 'hot spot' areas of high crime, and simply through young people coming with friends to the project.

The project is organised around five pillars of activity: Boxing and martial arts; education; employability; youth support services; and youth leadership. Boxing and muay-thai were chosen for Fight for Peace because the sports are attractive to young people, but can also help instil discipline and respect. Activities also aim to empower young people to do things for themselves and to build up their confidence.

In July 2012, an impact survey of participants was undertaken by Ecorys, supplemented by qualitative evidence gathered by researchers from the Centre for Institutional Studies at the University of East London.

## THE HEADLINE RESULTS FROM THE RESEARCH WITH FIGHT FOR PEACE:

- Around 800 young people attended Fight for Peace in 2011. Participants surveyed by Ecorys had been taking part in activities for an average of 22 months (a relatively long period of engagement for a youth project).
- Across the 800 participants, it is estimated that Fight for Peace has resulted in 165 crimes being avoided, delivering £1,059,471 worth of savings to society.
- It is estimated that around 70 per cent of participants would not have found a similar activity in the area.
- It is estimated that Fight for Peace has helped a significant number of young people to move into further education or employment (around 36 young people have been helped into further education and around 78 young people into a job). Smaller positive impacts in terms of school truancy and exclusions were recorded. Overall, the lifetime educational and employment impacts of Fight for Peace are valued at £2,456,861. This reflects the parallel focus on education and employability.
- Around 59,269 extra sessions of physical activity (of at least 30 minutes) were participated in thanks to Fight for Peace. This equates to a total of 14.1 additional years of (quality adjusted) life expectancy gained, with a value of £264,812.
- Taking this into account, overall we estimate that Fight for Peace has delivered at least £2,563,730 of additional social benefit over the past 12 months. With the cost of the project running at £580,000, this delivers a benefit to cost ratio of **£4.42 for every £1 invested**.



WORKOUT SESSION AT THE FIGHT FOR PEACE ACADEMY IN LONDON



LAUREUS AMBASSADOR WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO VISITS FIGHT FOR PEACE ACADEMY IN LONDON

“It’s a culture of peace we try and promote, and create a safe environment for young people... the training encourages respect of both the coach and the opponent, the training is hard, there’s positive peer pressure, and people are encouraging.”

A BOXING COACH STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT NURTURED BY FIGHT FOR PEACE



PHOTOGRAPH BY: FRANCESCO MION

Across 200 participants, Midnight Basketball has resulted in around 24 crimes avoided, delivering €191,489 (£153,191) worth of savings to society.

## MIDNIGHT BASKETBALL, MILAN, ITALY

**Midnight Basketball is a project delivered by the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation in Italy, based in a public park in Quarto Oggiaro in Milan.** It is a replication of a successful midnight basketball league developed by the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation in London, in partnership with the Active Communities Network and the Metropolitan Police. The project aims to keep young people with low levels of motivation off the streets during late-night hours through basketball.

The longer-term goal is to shift children from gangs into sports teams, and to reduce delinquency. Two street educators recruit young children from parks, streets, recreation rooms during the evening and bring them to the basketball court.

The educators also raise awareness of the project at the Technical Institutes (colleges) in the neighbourhood during the morning. One trainer and one educator then receive and support the young people, exploring concepts such as difficulty, defeat, and criticism, acting as role models and creating a relationship that will last.

In August 2012, an impact survey of participants was undertaken by Ecorys and the Center for Research on Sustainability and Value, Università Bocconi, supplemented by qualitative evidence gathered by university researchers.

## THE HEADLINE RESULTS FROM THE RESEARCH WITH MIDNIGHT BASKETBALL:

- 200 young people are registered as attending Midnight Basketball. Participants surveyed by Ecorys had been taking part in activities for an average of seven months.
- Across 200 participants, Midnight Basketball has resulted in around 24 crimes avoided, delivering €191,489 (£153,191) worth of savings to society.
- It is estimated that around 80% of participants would not have found a similar activity in the area (which suggests that Midnight Basketball is a particularly well targeted project).
- It is estimated that Midnight Basketball has helped a number of young people aged 16 years and over to move into further education or employment (around 5 young people have been helped into further education, and around 9 young people into a job). Smaller positive impacts in terms of school truancy and exclusions were also recorded. Overall, the educational and employment impacts of Midnight Basketball are valued at €185,467 (£148,374), particularly positive given the high rates of NEET in Italy.
- Around 4,256 extra sessions of physical activity (of at least 30 minutes) were participated in thanks to Midnight Basketball. This equates to a total of 1 additional year of (quality adjusted) life expectancy gained, with a value of €23,772 (£19,018).
- Taking this into account, overall we estimate that Midnight Basketball has delivered at least €316,902 (£253,522) of additional social benefit over the past 12 months. With the cost of the project running at €56,180, this delivers a benefit to cost ratio of **€5.64 for every €1 invested**.



PHOTOGRAPH BY: FRANCESCO MION



PHOTOGRAPH BY: FRANCESCA CECIARANI

“Midnight Basketball creates togetherness. Children from different backgrounds have learnt from each other that there is another way of living. Playing together and staying together, that is to say winning together and losing together, they become friends and they share their experience creating a sense of union.”

ONE OF THE EDUCATORS EMPHASISED THE ROLE OF COHESION IN THE PROJECT'S SUCCESS



Sports projects can deliver positive impacts on crime, health, retention in post-16 learning, and progression to employment, as well as on a smaller scale truancy and school exclusions.

## CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS

Ecorys and Laureus are still working through the full results of the study. The full final report will provide a detailed list of conclusions and recommendations. A number of key conclusions and recommendations are immediately evident:

■ **THE IMPACT OF SPORT CAN BE MEASURED.** Through transferring expertise from other disciplines, Ecorys and Laureus have developed a research methodology capable of providing a more robust assessment of the impact of sport on crime and related positive outcomes. What is more, this methodology is easily transferable and replicable across sport projects.

■ **SPORTING INTERVENTIONS DELIVER A RANGE OF POSITIVE IMPACTS.** Sports projects can deliver positive impacts on crime, health, retention in post-16 learning, and progression to employment, as well as, on a smaller scale, truancy and school exclusions. These impacts are magnified where projects are well targeted in areas with little competing provision, and engage with the most at-risk groups through partnerships and referral mechanisms.

PHOTOGRAPH BY: FRANCESCO MION





LAUREUS AMBASSADOR VITALI KLITSCHKO WITH PARTICIPANTS FROM THE KICK IM BOXRING PROJECT IN GERMANY

#### SPORT PROJECTS PROVIDE EXCELLENT VALUE FOR MONEY.

Through applying techniques of cost benefit analysis to the results of the impact research, the findings from three Laureus projects suggest that attractive, structured and facilitated sports activities can generate, as a minimum, between 3 and 5 pounds in social benefit for every pound invested. Part of this is related to the cost-efficiency of sports projects; sport offers an opportunity for the engagement of both small groups of significantly disadvantaged children as well as large groups of mixed ability young people at a relatively low cost, as well as proving effective in delivering positive outcomes.

#### NEET IMPACTS PROVIDE A SIGNIFICANT RETURN ON INVESTMENT.

Whilst many sports projects are focused on crime reduction, building in associated objectives around helping young people aged 16 years and over back into further education, training or employment can help to maximise their return on investment. This is because of the particularly high lifetime costs associated with being NEET. The two objectives however are complementary; reductions in NEET (as well as school exclusions) help to reduce the risk factors associated with offending and re-offending in the longer-term.

#### SPORT WORKS THROUGH MULTIPLE MECHANISMS.

This study has confirmed that sports projects are most effective when embedded within a complementary programme of support for personal development, underpinned by skilled youth work. However we would suggest that it is the combination of this with the positive values that sporting activity itself can help to instil, as well as the hook and wider appeal which sport provides for many of the hardest to reach young people, which results in sport being such a potent tool for tackling social exclusion.

The Social legacy plans of mega sporting events can and should become increasingly ambitious – setting targets not just for participation but for the measured social and economic outcomes that (as shown in this report) sport can and does attain.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

■ **GOVERNMENTS, FUNDERS AND UNIVERSITIES NEED TO CONTINUE INVESTING IN ROBUST RESEARCH INTO THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RETURNS OF SPORT** – with a view to deepening our collective understanding of what good practice looks like in this space, and how exactly sport can best be used to achieve value for society. As a minimum, this should involve primary research with project participants, and where possible take a longitudinal approach and employ use of suitable control groups to help assess impact.

■ **PUBLIC POLICY MAKERS SHOULD ADOPT A 'PAN-ISSUE AND PAN-DEPARTMENTAL' APPROACH TO SPORT**, that takes account of the broad and inter-linked returns that sport can generate across multiple social and economic areas.

■ **THE SOCIAL LEGACY PLANS OF MEGA SPORTING EVENTS CAN AND SHOULD BECOME INCREASINGLY AMBITIOUS** – setting targets not just for participation but for the measured social and economic outcomes that (as shown in this report) sport can and does attain.

■ **FUNDERS OF SPORTS BASED COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES SHOULD INVEST NOT JUST IN PROJECT DELIVERY BUT IN SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES THAT ENABLE PROGRAMMES TO COLLECT SOCIAL IMPACT DATA** – and track their impact over time. Going forward this will help ensure that the 'sport for social change' field continues to deepen its collective knowledge base, while making externally led research easier and more cost effective to conduct.

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