Sport has a massive global impact and 2015 was no exception to that. Over 80 world championships and multisport games took place in 2015, generating millions of spectators and billions of hours of media coverage. Supported by the major annual events, they have a huge impact on the world's economy.

But what do we really understand about this impact and how do we accurately explain it to governments, ministries and the general public? There are no consistent standards and methodologies to clearly define the annual impact of sport.

This second edition of the Global Sports Impact (GSI) Report explores the impact of sport in 2015 and 2016, reviewing the major events of 2015 with all the latest developments in 2016, and examines some of the key issues and challenges facing sport in the future.

2015 was another huge year for sport with the Rugby World Cup hosted in England and Wales; the Cricket World Cup taking place in Australia and New Zealand; the Women’s Fifa World Cup in Canada; and world championships in athletics, swimming and many other Olympic and non-Olympic sports. Multisport games included the Universiade in Gwangju, Korea; the Pan American Games in Toronto, Canada and the Special Olympics Summer World Games in Los Angeles, USA.

The GSI Report 2016 studies these major events covering 83 world championships and multisport games hosted in 118 cities and 38 countries.

These events alone generated over 13 million spectators and created a huge economic impact for their host cities. But how much impact did these events really have? According to some reports the Rugby World Cup generated over $3 billion (£2.4 billion) of economic impact. But how do we compare the impact generated by the Rugby World Cup to the impact generated by the African Games in Brazzaville, Congo?

According to analysis by Sportcal these 83 events alone generated a potential net impact of $400 million before a single ticket was sold and an overseas tourism impact well in excess of $2 billion. Our Sports Tourism section explores how sport is driving one of the fastest-growing sectors of tourism and how cities are using sport to drive economic development and tourism.

But economic impact is not the only effect that the GSI Report 2016 looks at. Sport delivers a range of impacts: media; sporting; social and legacy.

The GSI Project aims to develop ways of expressing these impacts and thus enabling a better understanding of the true impact of sport.
Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where once there was only despair. It is more powerful than government in breaking down racial barriers.

NELSON MANDELA
Executive Summary / Global Sports Impact Report 2016

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10. SOCIAL IMPACT
The social impact of sport is of increasing concern and importance to host cities and governments. In a recent survey of major international sports destinations Sportcal identified that it is also increasingly important to hosts.

But very few sports governing bodies measure the social impact of their events. There is little or no agreement on what the standard measure of social impact should be and while educational programmes support many events or some forms of social engagement very few of these are recorded and measured.

Volunteering is probably the only measure that is reasonably well recorded by event owners, and even then the true figure is often not accurately recorded.

Over 114,000 volunteers supported 77 of the events studied in the GSI Report with the Pan/Parapan American Games using the highest number of volunteers in 2015.

11. LEGACY IMPACT
Legacy, the word used for many years to describe what impact is left after the event has moved on, has been replaced by a new buzzword: sustainability.

But whatever the term, the important question is: Does sport really deliver a positive impact for the host nation, whether that be economically, socially or otherwise?

2016 represents the culmination of another Olympic cycle with the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

But what legacy did the last Olympic cycle provide for London and Sochi, the hosts of the summer and winter Olympic Games in 2012 and 2014, respectively.

Our industry experts explore some of the key legacy impacts of these two Olympic Games and what we are likely to see from Rio.

12. EVENT ANALYSIS DATA
Where do each of the 83 world championships and multisport games in 2015 rank, according to GSI’s innovative scoring system?

How many spectators, athletes, officials and media visited each event? And how many bed nights did the event participants create?

The events pages present up to 39 data analysis points on each major event of 2015, analyse the relative impacts that are created by each event, and include tourism impact insight from Sportcal’s exclusive bed nights analysis.
The Fifa World Cup is the largest international single sport event in the world and takes place every four years. There are 32 competing teams split into eight groups with the top two from each group progressing to the round of 16 knockout stages.

Brazil hosted the event for the second time having previously won the event five times, more than any other nation. Organisers sold in excess of 3 million tickets for the event with substantial numbers of non-ticketed spectators visiting fan zones located throughout various cities in Brazil.