



PROMOTING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

Current status and success stories from the European
Union Member States of the WHO European Region



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was prepared by the WHO European Office for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases, headed by Joao Breda, and the Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity programme within the Division of Noncommunicable Diseases and Promoting Health through the Life-course, under the leadership of Gauden Galea and Bente Mikkelsen, of the WHO Regional Office for Europe in collaboration with the European Commission.

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WHO expresses its gratitude to the European Commission Directorate-General for Education and Culture for financial support for preparation of the factsheets and for continuing collaboration to promote physical activity in the European Union Member States.

Thanks are also expressed to the European Union Physical Activity Focal Points Network and their national colleagues for collecting and validating the information in this report, without which this publication would not have been completed. The European Union Physical Activity Focal Points Network consists of: Georg Wessely, Christian Halbwachs (Austria); Nancy Barette, Kurt Rathmes and Oliver Courtin (Belgium); Denitsa Pancheva (Bulgaria); Sanja Milanovic and Slaven Krtalić (Croatia); Fani-Anna Poirazi and Michalis Michaelides (Cyprus); Marie Njedla and Hana Dvořáková (Czechia); Tue Kristensen (Denmark); Margus Klaan (Estonia); Päivi Aalto-Nevalainen (Finland); Jean-Francois Toussaint and Martine Duclos (France); Ute Winkler and Anja Wenzel (Germany); Eleftheria Axioti and Nadia Marinakou (Greece); István Kulicity and Réka Veress (Hungary); James Lavelle and Fiona Mansergh (Ireland); Igor Lanzoni (Italy); Kaspars Randohs (Latvia); Inga Gerulskiene (Lithuania); Alexandre Husting (Luxembourg); Robert Portelli (Malta); Wanda Wendel-Vos (Netherlands); Mateusz Lach (Poland); Paulo Rocha (Portugal); Ciprian Ursu (Romania); Robert Ochaba (Slovakia); Poljanka Pavletic Smadzija (Slovenia); Antonio Campos Izquierdo and Ricardo Nacacerrada (Spain); Kajsa Mickelsson (Sweden); and Beelin Baxter (United Kingdom).

This publication was also made possible by funding from the Government of the Russian Federation within the context of the Office for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases.





This factsheet presents the results of a collaboration between WHO, the European Commission and European Union (EU) Member States. Information was collected by a network of physical activity focal points using a questionnaire based on 23 indicators established to monitor implementation of the European Union Physical activity guidelines (1). In addition to the data collected from the questionnaires, a compilation of “success stories”, or examples of good practice, in the promotion of physical activity in the education sector are presented. The background, methods and complete results of this data collection can be found in the *2018 Physical activity factsheets for the European Union Member States of the WHO European Region*. More detailed information on the definitions used, as well as operationalization and data sources on indicators can be found in the European Commission’s staff working document on the monitoring framework (2).

INTRODUCTION

Schools are widely recognized as important settings for the promotion of physical activity among young people. The vast majority of children and adolescents spend most hours of their day at school, so it is essential that they be given ample opportunity to be physically active if they are to reach the recommended level of 60 min/day (3). The school years are a time for teaching young people the skills, knowledge and behaviour for lifelong habits. Physical activity has not only health benefits and contributes to a child's physical, mental and emotional development but also has potentially broad social and academic gains (4).

Physical activity in schools can be increased in several ways. The most broadly used practice is physical education, which is part of the school curriculum in all EU Member States (5); however, the number of hours of physical education provided, whether compulsory or optional, and the quality vary widely among countries.

In order to provide good-quality, regular physical education and promote safe physical activity to all young people in schools, physical education teachers must be adequately trained in promoting health-enhancing physical activity, in addition to traditional sports. More inclusive, varied activities should be offered, as traditional, competitive sports are often not suitable for all young people and especially those who are most in need of physical activity (6).

Moreover, while school-based physical education contributes to the physical activity levels of young people, it is generally provided only a few times per week. Therefore, additional opportunities should be available for physical activity before, during and after the school day to help children and adolescents reach the recommended levels. Such opportunities include active breaks during and between school lessons and after-school programmes. Active travel is another important means of increasing physical activity, particularly walking and cycling. **Box 1** defines some key of the key ways to promote physical activity before, during and after school.

Schools are important settings for the promotion of physical activity among young people.

Box 1. Key definitions

PHYSICAL EDUCATION: structured sessions delivered by trained teachers to develop the physical, social, mental and emotional skills of students;	ACTIVE TRAVEL TO SCHOOLS: all non-motorized forms of travel to school such as walking, cycling, rollerblading and skateboarding;	ACTIVE BREAKS DURING SCHOOL LESSONS: brief, structured physical activity sessions during lessons to break up long sitting periods;	ACTIVE BREAKS BETWEEN SCHOOL LESSONS: opportunities for physical activity and appropriate infrastructure to help young people to be physically active during school breaks, e.g. walking paths around school ovals, adequate playground facilities and access to equipment;	AFTER-SCHOOL HEALTH-ENHANCING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROMOTION PROGRAMMES: provision of opportunities and appropriate infrastructure (at schools, at sport clubs or in communities) to help young people to be physically active after school, which may include sports "homework".
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This report provides a snapshot of the current status of promotion of physical activity in the education sector in EU Member States. It presents data collected on several indicators (**Box 2**) designed to monitor physical education in primary and secondary schools throughout the EU, diverse schemes for school-related physical activity promotion, specialized training for physical education teachers and schemes to encourage active travel to school.

This report provides an overview of physical activity promotion through the education sector.

Box 2. Indicators of physical activity addressed in this report.

INDICATOR 13	INDICATOR 14	INDICATOR 15	INDICATOR 16
Physical education in primary and secondary schools	Schemes for school-related physical activity promotion	Health-enhancing physical activity in training of physical education teachers	Schemes to promote active travel to school

For indicator 13, countries were asked to report the total number of hours of physical education provided in primary and secondary schools per week, how many of those hours were mandatory and how many optional and whether the quality of physical education was monitored. Countries were also asked whether they had national schemes for increasing physical activity before, during and after the school day (indicator 14) and if they had national schemes to promote active travel to school (indicator 16). An additional indicator was whether health-enhancing physical activity was a module in the curriculum of physical education teachers and whether it was a mandatory or an optional part of their training.

RESULTS

All Member States provide physical education classes in schools, and most included 2 h/week in the school curriculum. In many cases, the number of hours depended on school or subnational policies. Twenty countries reported that the number of hours of physical education was mandatory in primary schools, and 21 reported the same for secondary schools (**Fig. 1**). In the remaining countries, the hours were either partly or entirely optional.

The answers to the questionnaire showed that 20 countries monitor the quality of physical education in primary or secondary schools (**Fig. 2**). Monitoring is conducted in various ways in Member States, including school inspections, screening, quality audits, qualitative and quantitative research with students and teachers and, in some cases, reaching targets as part of the curriculum.

Twenty-one countries (75%) reported that training in health-enhancing physical activity was included as either a mandatory or an optional module in the curriculum for physical education teachers (**Fig. 3**).

Many activities to increase physical activity before, during and after school hours were reported. After-school activities were the most common scheme, 19 Member States offering this at national level. Additionally, 14 countries reported national initiatives for active school breaks; 14 had programmes for active travel to school, and 11 countries had schemes for active breaks during school lessons (**Fig. 4**).

In addition, 12 countries (43%) reported that physical activity in the education sector was monitored or surveyed, and 18 (75%) reported that funding had been allocated specifically to health-enhancing physical activity; 26 (93%) had at least one policy or action plan to promote physical activity in the education sector.

Fig. 1. Proportion of countries that reported that all hours of physical education in schools were mandatory.

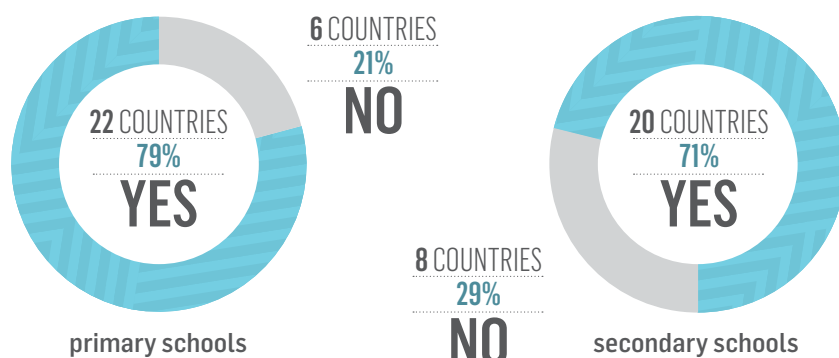


Fig. 2. Proportion of countries that reported monitoring the quality of physical education classes.

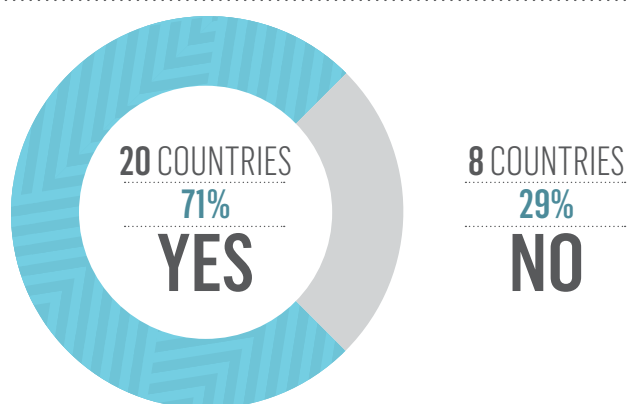


Fig. 3. Proportion of countries in which the curriculum of physical education teachers included a module on physical activity and health.

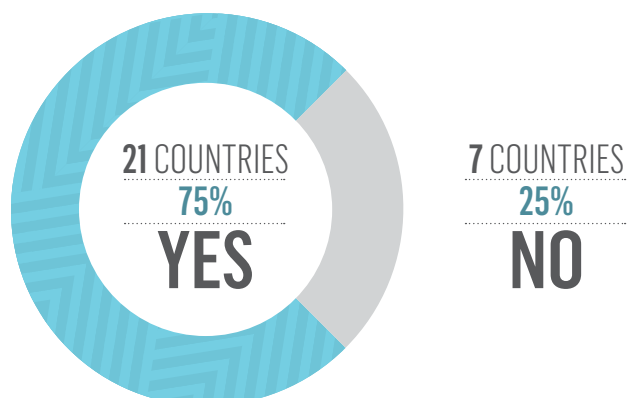


Fig. 4. Proportion of countries with schemes for physical activity promotion at school and for active travel to school



DISCUSSION

Physical activity is already well established in all Member States of the EU in the form of physical education as well as various programmes to enable young people to be physically active before, during and after the school day. Nevertheless, active school breaks and inclusion of physical activity into school lessons could be extended at national level. The number of hours of physical education is often defined subnationally and in some instances by schools. Increasing the number of mandatory hours and setting standards to ensure quality could further help students to reach the WHO recommendations and ensure the potential of schools for promoting physical activity among young people.

It is encouraging that physical education is part of the curriculum in all Member States and that guidance or regulation is in place to ensure that schools deliver it effectively. While most schools offer weekly physical education, the quality is likely to vary within and between countries. Monitoring the quality of physical education is important to maintain high standards, and international benchmarks or checklists can help policy-makers to guide the provision of good-quality physical education. UNESCO defines “good-quality physical education” as a “planned, progressive, inclusive learning experience that forms part of the curriculum in early years, primary and secondary education”. Moreover, the learning experience should be appropriate in terms of development, to ensure that children receive lessons that are inclusive and appropriate for their capabilities, cognitive understanding and cultural context, as well as foster positive attitudes that can lead to a more successful and enjoyable, physically active life (7).

Physical education teachers are important role models for young people and are essential to promoting physical activity and sport among children and young people. To ensure that physical education is of high quality and provides opportunities that interest all students, particularly those most in need of physical activity, physical education teachers must be well trained, not only in providing traditional sports opportunities but also in having a good understanding of physical activity for health. Some countries reported that teachers are still not trained in health-enhancing physical activity. This should be rectified to ensure that early experience of physical activity fosters lifelong habits and interest in participating in sports and other forms of exercise.

The few reported activities to encourage physical activity during school hours other than physical education may be due to a number of factors. One is the limited hours children spend in school. Physical activity has been proven to provide multiple benefits in the school context, such as better concentration, enhanced cognitive performance and better academic achievement (4). Increasing the time devoted

Young people who travel to school in an active way increase the overall amount of time they spend being physically active each day.

to physical activity in schools does not have negative academic consequences (8). Another challenge is that not all teachers are sufficiently trained to encourage all students to be physically active before, during and after lessons. The Physical Activity Strategy for the WHO European Region states that all future teachers (not only those who teach physical education) should receive training on health-enhancing physical activity as a mandatory part of their curriculum (9). This should be taken into account in order to build capacity among all teachers in promoting physical activity throughout the school day, and may increase the implementation of active breaks during and between school lessons.

The promotion of active travel to school can be challenging and may require support from sectors other than education, such as urban planning and transport, to ensure that children can travel to school actively and safely. Numerous examples among Member States show that this can be implemented successfully through collaboration among the relevant sectors.

While there are challenges to implementing initiatives other than physical education, Member States are encouraged to use the opportunities provided in the school setting to increase the levels of physical activity of school-aged children, with the additional benefit of social cohesion, which in turn can boost confidence and self-esteem (4).

Physical education teachers are important role models for young people and are essential to promoting physical activity and sport among children and young people.

SUCCESS STORIES

Member States provided various examples of initiatives to promote physical activity through the education sector or in schools, nationally or subnationally. The most common were improving the quality or increasing the quantity of physical education lessons and promoting active travel to school. Some of the examples consisted of after-school programmes, and only a few were for active school breaks and active breaks during school lessons, in line with the responses to the questionnaire. These examples of good practices can provide inspiration for policy-makers, schools and researchers. They provide a broad overview of the type of actions taken to increase physical activity among children and adolescents in EU Member States.



BELGIUM

Sport after school pass (Sport na school pass)

The "Sport after school pass" (SNS pass) offers affordable after-school sport for all secondary school pupils with the goal of increasing their participation in sport, especially for those who are inactive. The programme introduces young people to local sports facilities and inspires them to participate in sports throughout their lives. It also encourages secondary school pupils to use the sports facilities of selected local sports clubs and sports providers immediately after school. Pupils can choose where, when, with whom and how often they engage in sports. Various activities are tailored to the interests of the target group and take place in different sports facilities or schools in the neighbourhood. The local programme of sports activities is established in consultation with the municipal sports department(s), local sports clubs, schools and private sports centres. The "Flexible assignment of physical education teacher" (Follo) is responsible for organization, coordination and cooperation with the various partners.

In the academic year 2017–2018, 12 780 passes were active in 852 schools in 208 municipalities. The number of Follo will be increased shortly, and guidance on after-school sports activities will be included in the "lessons package" of physical education teachers. There are plans to expand the programme throughout Flanders.



CROATIA

Healthy living

The Committee for Proper Nutrition and Physical Activity designed the programme "Healthy living" with the aim of promoting and improving the health of the Croatian population by stimulating a healthier lifestyle as well as sustaining and improving mental and sexual health in various environments. The national programme includes projects in areas such as physical activity and nutrition, which are implemented in local communities with the active participation of the population. A project called Polygon was developed to support physical education classes in elementary schools as part of this programme, because of a lack of basic infrastructure, equipment and capacity for implementing the required physical education classes.

In order to prepare schools sports facilities, the Croatian Institute of Public Health and the Ministry of Health supported donation of physical activity equipment to the main elementary schools in the country. Additionally, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports and the Education and Teacher Training Agency have signed a collaborative agreement with the Croatian Institute of Public Health to implement the programme in schools without a sports facility.



CYPRUS

Run for my health

The Ministry for Education and Culture organized a large running event for students in secondary schools, in cooperation with the company OPAP Limassol International Marathon GSO, in January 2018. The race consisted of 1500-m and 3000-m distances for male and female students. The purpose of the event was to motivate participants to increase their physical activity outside school hours. To ensure students' participation, they were required to train during extracurricular school sports periods and to pass a test organized in each school to limit the number of participants in the final race. The schools, and physical education teachers in particular, were fully informed and given instructions during seminars for conducting activities. The race was organized in a festive spirit in the presence of public figures in sports, whom students had the opportunity to meet, such as the Cypriot Fair Play Ambassador football player Constantinos Charalambidis and Cyprus #Be Active lifelong Ambassador Kalli Hadjiosif.



 <http://enimerosi.moec.gov.cy/archeia/l/ypp6747a>

 www.goo.gl/xd2nB1

CZECHIA

Tell me your story

"Tell me your story" is a campaign for schools, low-threshold facilities and sports clubs targeting Roma children and children at risk of social exclusion. The attendance of children from poor socioeconomic backgrounds in sports clubs is low, probably because of difficulties of integration and financial means. The targeted clubs are usually poorly equipped for outdoor activities for children.

In May 2016, about 60 schools and low-threshold facilities in vulnerable localities took part in this campaign. Altogether, 7 primary and special schools and 12 low-threshold facilities for children and young people were involved. They organized sports tournaments and competitions in various disciplines, of which ping pong, athletics and ball games were the most popular. The campaign included a challenge for individual children to write or record their experience of sports, with the goal of motivating them to continue to be physically active in their area of interest. The purpose of the stories was to show children that sport can help overcome obstacles and improve various aspects of life. The campaign lasted for 2 years and is planned to continue and be extended.

 <http://www.szu.cz/tema/podpora-zdravi/je-to-i-tvuj-pribeh-kampan>

DENMARK

45 min of physical activity in schools daily

Daily physical exercise was introduced as part of a school reform in 2013. Students in Danish public primary and secondary schools are required to engage in 45 min of physical exercise per day to ensure consistent or improved learning, health and overall well-being. The method by which the 45 min are incorporated into the school day is the responsibility of the school. Activities can be integrated with learning structures or be conducted during time dedicated to exercise. The Ministry provides inspirational material online and invites professionals to learn how to provide physical exercise in the classroom. Schools and municipalities are assisted in designing systematic, structured plans. Motivation, variety and student involvement are emphasized.

The activities may be joint ventures with local sports clubs or companies and can stretch over a longer time. They can take place in the classroom, in sports grounds and playgrounds or in the environment surrounding the school. It is planned to continue integrating physical activity into lessons and into the curricula of primary and secondary schools.

An evaluation of the initiative showed that inclusion of physical activity in lessons in the Danish language and maths improved the students' well-being and learning. Furthermore, 14% of teachers now incorporate physical activity into everyday teaching; 74% of teachers do so at least once a week, and only 2% never include physical activity in lessons. The students themselves report quieter classrooms, better concentration and a better ability to learn when physical activity is part of a lesson.

ESTONIA

Redesigning physical education

One of the aims of the Fundamentals of Estonian sports policy 2030 is to redesign physical education to include the promotion of lifelong physical activity, habits and motivation to be active. The aim in the near future is to increase the health literacy of all pupils about physical activity.

Physical education is to be changed into exercise education, corresponding to today's requirements, at all levels of education. To achieve this, the objectives of exercise and sport curricula will be updated, and integration of this subject into others will be increased, and training sessions will be organized on the main types of exercise (running, swimming, cycling, skiing, orienteering) and games. The objective is to establish a desire and the habit of engaging in exercise and sports. New versions of physical education curricula have been prepared.

 <http://www.kul.ee/et/tegevused/sport/arengustrateegia-eesti-sport-2030>.

Schools in motion

The project "Schools in motion" is a multicomponent approach to physical activity in schools by providing active lessons, active recess, active transport, physical education lessons for lifelong physical activity and indoor and outdoor environments that encourage physical activity. Key elements of the project are the involvement of all school personnel, students and parents in these active solutions.

Schools are given various ideas for supporting physical activity among students during recess. Pilot schools have used the solutions that suit them best. Examples include dance recess, providing sports equipment for recess activities, outdoor recess, obstacle courses and changes in the environment. Furthermore, playground leaders, mostly older students, have been trained to organize active games for younger students during recess.

Regarding active lessons, teachers in the pilot schools participate in seminars at which possibilities for physical activity during school hours are introduced, such as active breaks, integration of physical activity into lessons and outdoor lessons. Additionally, supportive materials and tools have been developed and are disseminated to teachers, who are encouraged to report good practices.

Schools in motion receives support from the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Estonian Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education and Research.



FINLAND

Finnish schools on the move

"Finnish schools on the move" is a national programme for establishing a culture of physical activity in Finnish comprehensive schools. The schools and municipalities that participate in the programme implement their own plans to increase physical activity during the school day. The aims are to increase physical activity during lessons, school breaks and after school in order to improve well-being, decrease sedentary behaviour and enhance learning, student participation and active travel to school.

The programme is conducted by the Finnish National Agency of Education and the Ministry of Education and Culture. It is financed from the national lottery and coordinated by the LIKES Research Centre for Sport and Health Sciences.

Finnish schools on the move started with a pilot phase in 2010–2012. In May 2017, more than 90% of municipalities and 80% of comprehensive schools (2000 schools) were involved in the programme. This is one of the main projects in knowledge and education in the Government programme, which is to be extended throughout the country to ensure 1 h of physical activity by children each day.



FRANCE

Intervention centred on adolescents' physical activity and sedentary behaviour (ICAPS)

The French intervention on physical activity and sedentariness among secondary schoolchildren (Intervention auprès des collégiens centrée sur l'activité physique et la sédentarité, ICAPS) is based on a socio-ecological approach and involves several areas and types of action, such as changing attitudes and motivation towards physical activity, encouraging social support to promote physical activity, motivating young people to increase their level of practice, providing environmental conditions to promote physical activity inside and outside school, during leisure time and daily life, while popularizing daily active transport. The intervention was conducted as a randomized controlled trial involving 1000 sixth-grade students in eight schools in the Bas-Rhin region. It was monitored annually with questionnaires and medical examinations between 2002 and 2006.

The project is coordinated by a multi-partnership steering committee chaired by the National Institute of Prevention and Education for Health. A guide was written by the ICAPS team and the National Institute for those involved in elaborating and implementing a strategy to promote physical activity in children and young people based on the experience of ICAPS. A "toolbox" is available, with the operational methods for implementing an ICAPS project and benchmarks.



<http://www.mangerbouger.fr/pro/collectivites-locales/agir-74/favoriser-l-activite-physique/212-promouvoir-l-activite-physique-des-jeunes.html>

GERMANY

National recommendations for physical activity and the promotion of physical activity

The national recommendations were made in the context of the national action plan "In form", the national initiative to promote healthy diets and physical activity. Since 2008, In form has been an important basis for various activities for sustainably improving people's diets and physical activity. The national recommendations for physical activity and physical activity promotion were introduced in 2014 by an intersectoral working group at the Federal Ministry for Health for physical activity promotion in daily living and were made possible by project funding from the Ministry.

The recommendations for physical activity and physical activity promotion are for professional stakeholders and organizations, which include all experts and organizations in sports (e.g. sport clubs), education (e.g. child care facilities and schools), the health system (e.g. health insurers), local authorities (e.g. in urban development and spatial planning), politics (e.g. health or education policy) and other relevant areas of society that directly or indirectly influence the development and implementation of measures

<https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/service/begriffe-von-a-z/b/bewegungsempfehlungen/?L=0>

<https://www.sport.fau.de/files/2015/05/National-Recommendations-for-Physical-Activity-and-Physical-Activity-Promotion.pdf> (English version).

to promote physical activity or physical activity-related health promotion. They serve as a scientific guide for those stakeholders and organizations in their daily work and in developing strategies for future activities in physical activity promotion.

National recommendations for physical activity and the promotion of physical activity were published in 2016, which apply to all age groups as well as to adults with chronic diseases. The next phase is dissemination of the national recommendations, and the methods have been discussed by stakeholders in various fields, including target group-oriented information material. A brochure is being prepared to increase physical activity in settings such as child day-care facilities, schools, workplaces and long-term care facilities.

GREECE

Swimming school programme

The “Swimming school programme” emphasizes group activities and teamwork through swimming. In an experimental approach, pupils aged 8 and 9 years learn the rules of basic safety and hygiene and familiarize themselves with the aquatic environment through play and entertainment. Active participation helps pupils to develop individual and social competence.

The programme consists of 12 swimming lessons in one trimester, all of which are mandatory, as part of each school's physical education courses. It was launched as a pilot project in 2015 in schools in Athens and continued in 2016 throughout Greece (40 000 pupils, 2210 groups). To date, the programme has involved 2800 groups and reached 44000 pupils nationally.

HUNGARY

Adaptation of the Hungarian national student fitness test (NETFIT®) to children with special educational needs

The national student fitness test (NETFIT®) is a test of physical fitness supported by online software, developed by cooperation between the Hungarian School Sports Federation and The Cooper Institute, Dallas (TX), USA. Since the school year 2014–2015, every school in Hungary is required to assess the fitness of students from 5th grade upwards.

In 2016, the Federation issued an adapted version for students with special educational needs. The tests were supported by the second edition of the NETFIT® test manual and related video tutorials. Data from the tests are used to monitor individual and group



<http://www.mdsz.hu/en/netfit-2/about-netfit/>

changes in the physical fitness status of students with special educational needs. National intervention programmes for regular physical activity can be developed to improve the physical fitness of these students, for healthier, fitter children. The Hungarian School Sports Federation provides schools with communicational materials and runs regional workshops for teachers, to provide information on the new methodological possibilities of NETFIT®. The codification proposal for NETFIT® is being adapted and is to be part of the compulsory NETFIT® measurements starting in the academic year 2018–2019.

IRELAND

Junior cycle well-being programme

The “Junior cycle well-being programme” was initiated with the first cohort of incoming first-year secondary school students in 2017. The programme comprises provision of a minimum of 300 h over 3 years of learning opportunities to enhance the physical, mental, emotional and social well-being and resilience of students. As students' well-being is of central importance to their educational success and overall happiness, it is a core part of the Junior cycle experience. The programme includes physical education, civic, social and political education and health. The well-being programme is mandatory in all post-primary schools in Ireland (over 700 schools), reaching approximately 60 000 new students per annum. The programme is supported by the Department of Health and the Health Service Executive.



<https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Framework-for-Junior-Cycle-2015.pdf>

ITALY

Classroom sport

Classroom sport (Sport di classe) is a project supported and implemented by the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research and the Italian National Olympics Committee. It is supported by a system of national, regional and territorial governance, with collaboration at all levels of the project. The aim is to promote physical education and physical activity in primary schools, with the involvement of students, teachers, school directors and families. An important aspect is “school sports tutors”, who are appropriately trained for the project. They are responsible for coaching schoolteachers for 1 h/week in physical activities, for organizing sports events twice a year and supporting teachers in promoting participation in physical activity and including pupils with disabilities. The tutors generally function as mediators between the school and the local sports system. Online materials are available for training teachers and tutors. Additionally, sports equipment is provided to schools to promote the involvement of students in more sports and physical activity.



www.progettosportdiclasse.it

The duration of the programme in the school year 2017–2018 was 22 weeks, with 26781 classes in 3026 institutions and 3153 tutors participating. In 2018, the aims are to increase school participation, promote 2 h of physical education in schools per week and stress the educational value of sport as a means of growth and for individual and collective expression.

LATVIA

Everyone exercises

The aims of the project “Everyone exercises” (Sporto visa klase) are to strengthen the role of sports in society, to inspire children to engage in regular physical activity and to monitor the effects of physical activity on their health. The project is conducted by the Latvian Olympic Committee in cooperation with various enterprises and is co-funded by the Ministry of Education and Science. It was introduced in 2014 and targets children in grades 2–6.

In addition to two mandatory physical education lessons per week, participants are offered three optional lessons per week, thereby providing daily physical activity. One lesson is intended for general physical fitness, one for acquiring the skills of football and one for swimming or outdoor activities. The programme will be monitored in a comparative study of aspects such as anthropometry, diet, sleep, motivation, learning achievements and posture parameters. The academic year 2018–2019 will be the fifth year of the project, with more than 8000 participants in 348 classes in over 70 municipalities. The main task is to increase the number of participants, thus making regular physical activities available to as many schoolchildren as possible.



<http://sportovisaklase.olimpiade.lv/lv/jaunumi/foto-galerija/sporto-visa-klase-4-sezonas-atklasana-693/26662>

LITHUANIA

Let's move (Judėkim)

The social communication project “Let's move” (Judėkim) is a long-term campaign to raise awareness about the benefits of physical activity and sport, with a focus on promoting a healthy lifestyle in schools. It is based on sharing good practices among schools and play schools and providing information on good-quality physical education lessons. Schools are encouraged to involve parents actively in common physical activities and to participate in a contest called “My class exercising” by sending videos to the project webpage. In cooperation with the Lithuanian Association of Physical Education Teachers, the project includes “The TOP 10 physical education lessons – LIVE”, to show and share best practices in physical education lessons, with a variety of new, innovative and creative methods, so that the lessons become more attractive



<http://judekim.lt/lt/naujienos>

to pupils. The campaign is widely promoted via the media and financially supported by the Physical Education and Sports Support Fund. The lessons are broadcast live on the most popular Lithuanian web platform (www.delfi.lt) and thus reach a large audience. Prominent athletes actively participate in the project to motivate young people to engage in an active, sporty lifestyle.

Since 2014, the project has directly involved about 140 schools in the contest "My class exercising" each year, and others have followed news and advice for independent physical activity online.

LUXEMBOURG

Active schools

"Active schools" is a project to increase physical activity in elementary and primary schools in Luxembourg. It was first conducted in three primary schools between 2014 and 2016 and was extended to 10 primary schools from 2016. All participating schools commit to providing 15–20 min of additional physical activity every day. During the first year of the programme, schools instituted active breaks; during the second year, the programme also included active learning. Free sets of exercise cards and materials for different modules have been provided to teachers and childcare workers.

The project was monitored and evaluated by the University of Luxembourg. The results showed that active learning was used five to ten times a week, indicating its popularity among teachers and students. This was reinforced by feedback from parents, collected through a survey, in which about 60% claimed that their children took more pleasure in being physically active, with better coordination, learning and classroom climate. In 2017, schools that introduced daily exercise into their school routine received the label "clever move" in recognition of The Ministry of Education, Children and Youth is to extend the programme to national level.

NETHERLANDS

Learning together, performing well

"Learning together, performing well" (Samen leren, goed presteren) is a case study of a primary school in The Hague that integrates physical activity and physical education into the whole curriculum. The school provides 3h of physical education a week, with additional hours for sports such as martial arts, tennis and volleyball. The programme also facilitates sports participation during and after school. The schoolyard is designed to enhance and promote physical activity. All activities are categorized by the degree of competition and personal contact in order to match activities with children's abilities.



<https://www.onderwijsraad.nl/upload/documents/tinymce/presentatie-De-Springbok.pptx.pdf>

POLAND

School sports club

The "School sports club" programme (Szkolny klub sportowy) is offered to primary and secondary schools to stimulate physical activity, in particular among children and adolescents with poor physical fitness and little recreational physical activity, by providing optional additional physical activity, under the supervision of a physical activity teacher. The programme finances schools to pay physical education teachers to organize extracurricular sports, which are conducted systematically in a variety of modern, attractive forms. Classes are held twice a week, in 60-min sessions, for a minimum of 15 students. A second iteration of the programme was begun in January 2018, which will run until December.

Since 2017, 26 344 students have taken part in the activities of this programme, led by 14 542 teachers, for a total of 15 970 study groups and 639 321 h of classes held in all regions of Poland and at schools of all levels.



https://www.szkolnyklubsportowy.pl/uploaded_files/14949698911000_sks-logo-gotowe-01.jpg

PORTUGAL

CicloExpresso do Oriente

Active travel to school is one the main forms of physical activity for younger children, contributing to attainment of several of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The "CicloExpresso do Oriente" is a "bike train" (or "bike bus") comprising a group of children cycling to their school, accompanied by parents (at least one adult per four children), in the eastern part of Lisbon. It is organized by a group of local parents who are bike fans, with the support of the local parish council and school parents associations. Children must have good bike control and follow the rules, such as always keeping in a single line behind the first adult. They can catch the "train" at different places or "stations".

The programme started on 15 May 2015, with 12 children in the first "train", and was repeated every Friday during that school term. In the next school season, more "train lines" were created to different schools, involving more children and parents. In the near future, the aim is to increase the numbers of "train lines", schools involved, "trains" per week and children and parents who use them regularly.



<https://cicloexpressodoorientе.wordpress.com/>

ROMANIA

Community guideline on healthy eating and physical activity in play schools and schools

To cultivate healthy behaviour among children, Romania has set guidelines for all teachers and also for other professionals, such as nurses and school doctors, who conduct activities that can contribute to better education for health in schools and play schools. Based on behaviour identified in the Health Behaviour of School-aged Children survey, the guidelines propose four essential interventions to ensure: sufficient physical activity (to the WHO recommendations), regularly eating breakfast, adequate consumption of fruit and vegetables and drinking only water. The guidelines provide 45 tools for educators, teachers and health professionals.

The number of schools conducting activities based on the guideline and the numbers of beneficiaries of the activities are reported quarterly within the national programme of evaluation, health promotion and education for health of the Ministry of Health. The guidelines were printed in 16 800 copies, which were distributed nationwide. In 3 years of implementation, more than 2500 community professionals have been trained, and more than 450 000 children have received information and adopted healthy eating and physical activity behaviour. The guidelines will be distributed to all the remaining schools and play schools, in line with the indicators of the National Health Strategy 2014–2020.



<https://insp.gov.ro/sites/1/rezultate/>

SLOVENIA

The surveillance system SLOfit

Since 1987, a surveillance system entitled SLOfit has been in operation in Slovenia to monitor the physical and motor development of children and adolescents. It covers about 90% of the Slovenian population in the age range 6–19 years, who are systematically measured each year. This examination has been integrated into the revised systematic medical examinations, with an intervention algorithm for individuals at risk.

In 2016, a web tool, My SLOfit, was introduced to allow pupils and their parents to access their SLOfit results. Physicians and physical education teachers can also see a child's SLOfit results with this application. The information can help parents, teachers and physicians to make informed decisions about school and out-of-school physical activity and the dietary habits of children. It offers an opportunity to design and implement health-enhancing activities in schools, customized to pupils' needs.



<http://en.slofit.org/>

<https://moj.slofit.org/Prijava>

SPAIN – GALICIA

Data on assessment of a healthy physical condition

Datos sobre la valoración de la condición física saludable (DAFIS) is an official system for the Galician community, in which professionals in physical activity and sports monitor the physical conditions of individuals and groups. The protocol includes various tests of physical fitness, including aerobic condition and strength, for the general population and improves counselling and guidance on health. The system is part of the “Healthy Galicia” (Galicia saludable) plan under the Council for Culture, Education and University. The plan includes various educational programmes to promote sport and physical activity in schools. This tool will be used in schools to assess students’ physical fitness.



 <https://dafis.xunta.es/es/>

SWEDEN

Emphasizing the importance of outdoor environments for children’s play, learning and health

In the Swedish education system, schools should provide all pupils with physical activity throughout the school day, and pupils should develop all-round movement capacity and an interest in being physically active and spending time outdoors in nature. The Swedish system of spatial planning supports this aim in several ways. The outdoor environment at schools is considered important for children’s play, learning and health, and a law states that there must be a sufficiently large open space appropriate for play and outdoor activities on the site or in an adjacent area of lots that are to be developed for after-school centres, preschools, schools or similar facilities. If there is insufficient space for both an open space and parking, an open space shall take precedence.

 <https://dafis.xunta.es/es/>

The National Board of Housing, Building and Planning has issued general advice on the meaning of the provisions, guidelines to stress the importance of free space for play, learning and health and the relevant regulations. Since publication of the general advice and of the guidelines, there has been a general increase in local guidelines for providing sufficient outdoor space for pre-schools and schools. In 2016–2018, educational institutions were able to apply for State funding to improve and develop the outdoor environment in order to enhance physical activity in schools and pre-schools. Several applications led to improvements that allowed physical activity breaks and after-school activities. For example, a school for mentally disabled children received money and created school grounds adapted to the children’s needs and allowing them to move freely. A national survey of the actual size, structure and development of children’s access to open space on school grounds showed, however, that the area of open space per pupil decreased by 8% between 2014 and 2017, with large differences between regions and municipalities and between public and private schools.

UNITED KINGDOM – ENGLAND

Walk to school

“Walk to school” was established in 1997 by the charity Living Streets. This England-wide programme promotes active travel to school by walking among students in primary and secondary schools in order to increase the physical activity of English children while at the same time decreasing air pollution and carbon emissions by reducing traffic congestion due to parents and carers take their children to school by car. The programme also uses the beneficial effects of physical activity to increase the learning ability and focus of children during lessons. The programme is funded by the Department of Transport.

In 2017, one million children in 4000 schools took part in “WOW”, a year-round walk to school challenge, as part of “Walk to school”. A similar challenge for students at secondary schools is the “Free your feet”, which motivates pupils to walk all or at least part of the way to school for one week. According to internal monitoring by the Local Sustainable Transport Fund of the “Walk to school” programme, 23% more children walked to school after participating in the programme for 1 year, and the number of cars at school gates decreased by 30%.



<https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/what-we-do/walk-to-school>

UNITED KINGDOM – NORTHERN IRELAND

Active school travel programme

The aim of the “Active school travel” programme is to increase the number of pupils who travel actively to school. The number of children who walk or bike to school in Northern Ireland has been decreasing since 1995, while the number of car rides to and from school has been increasing. In the school year 2016–2017, the programme worked with 229 schools, representing 22% of schools in the country. At the end of the school year, the number of children who walked, cycled or scooted to a participating school had increased from 36% to 46%, and the number of pupils who were driven to school fell from 56% to 47%. The programme will run until 2021 with funds from the Public Health Agency and the Department for Infrastructure.



<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/sites/default/files/images/files/AST%202016-17%20Summary%20Report.pdf>

UNITED KINGDOM – WALES

The daily mile

The "Daily mile" is a health incentive in Wales to promote physical activity among schoolchildren. The principle of the programme is to motivate children to go outside at their school and run or jog for 15 min every day as a simple, free opportunity for them to be physically active. The activity is intended to increase children's learning ability and awareness of their own health as well as encourage social skills and support integration. The programme is supported by the Welsh Government, Public Health Wales and several private and Government institutions. The Daily mile was launched in Wales in March 2017, and, to date, more than 280 schools participate in the programme.



 <https://thedailymile.cymru/>

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The WHO Regional Office for Europe

The World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations created in 1948 with the primary responsibility for international health matters and public health. The WHO Regional Office for Europe is one of six regional offices throughout the world, each with its own programme geared to the particular health conditions of the countries it serves.

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