Success story

The “U-Bike Portugal” project promotes active transport in academic communities through cycling. The Institute for Mobility and Transport coordinates the project, which rents bicycles to students and staff at academic institutions for a semester or a full academic year. The project encourages regular physical activity while reducing energy consumption and air pollution. [https://www.u-bike.pt](https://www.u-bike.pt)
MONITORING AND SURVEILLANCE

National recommendations on physical activity for health

TARGET GROUPS INCLUDED

- Children (<5 years)
- Children and adolescents (5–17 years)
- Adults (18–64 years)
- Older adults (>65 years)
- Frail and very elderly adults (>85 years)
- Pregnant and breastfeeding women
- People with disabilities
- People with chronic diseases

National recommendations on physical activity are being developed in the framework of the Government coordination and leadership of promoting health-enhancing physical activity, with several academic and scientific bodies. They will provide guidelines for all age groups and for specific populations.

Level of physical activity

ESTIMATED PREVALENCE OF SUFFICIENT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS

- **Children** 10–11 years: 38%
  - Boys: 53%
  - Girls: 23%
- **Adolescents** 14–15 years: 12%
  - Boys: 19%
  - Girls: 5%
- **Adults ≥15 years**: 35%
  - Overall: 5%

Data on levels of physical activity were obtained from the 2018 Eurobarometer survey (QB1B2T). Exercise, sport or other physical activity is performed almost daily by 9% and a few times a week by 26% of the population. Additional data on children and adolescents were collected in 2010 by the Portuguese Institute of Sports and Youth.

Monitoring and surveillance of physical activity

SECTORS WITH SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS

Physical activity levels in Portugal are monitored by the Portuguese Institute of Sports and Youth (National Physical Activity and Sports Monitoring System), by the Directorate-General of Health (Physical Activity as a Vital Sign in primary health care) and by the Directorate-General of Education (FITescola programme). The Institute for Mobility and Transport operates a terrestrial transport observation system, which includes walking and cycling.

“Physical activity as a vital sign” (Atividade física como sinal vital) is a monitoring and surveillance system created for the Portuguese primary health care system to assess the population’s physical activity levels and sedentary behaviour on electronic medical records. The Directorate-General of Health and the Shared Services of the Ministry of Health developed this tool, which was integrated into the database of the software “SClínico – Primary Health Care” in September 2017. Three types of health professionals can use this platform currently: medical doctors, nurses and registered dieticians and nutritionists, and it is available in most primary health care units in the country. [http://www.panaf.gov.pt/iniciativa/atividade-fisica-como-sinal-vital](http://www.panaf.gov.pt/iniciativa/atividade-fisica-como-sinal-vital).

The National Action Plan for Physical Activity, led by the Intersectoral Commission for the Promotion of Physical Activity, was launched in April 2018. This Plan includes national initiatives (policies, programmes, projects and events) to promote physical activity and/or reduce sedentary behaviour in nine core areas: health, sports, education throughout the lifecycle, surveillance and monitoring, communication and information, work and companies, communities and civil society, built environment and active mobility, and special groups. [http://www.panaf.gov.pt](http://www.panaf.gov.pt).

Target groups addressed by national policies

- Low socioeconomic groups
- Pregnant and breastfeeding women
- Ethnic minorities
- People deprived of liberty
- Migrants
- Older people
- People with disabilities
- People with chronic diseases
- Other

“Paiva walkways” (Passadiços do Paiva) are located on the left bank of the Paiva River, in Arouca municipality. They consist of 8 km of walks through a beautiful natural environment, extending from the river beaches of Areinho, Vau and Espiunca. [http://www.passadicosdopaiva.pt](http://www.passadicosdopaiva.pt).

“Diabetes in movement” (Diabetes em Movimento) is a community exercise programme designed for middle-aged and older people with type 2 diabetes. Patients are recruited by family doctors to engage in free-of-charge group sessions (75 min, 3 days per week, 9 months per year) of low-cost, broadly applicable exercise, supervised by exercise physiologists and nurses. This national programme is implemented at local level in community health centres, hospitals, universities and municipalities, with the support of the Directorate-General of Health. [http://www.diabetesemmovimento.com](http://www.diabetesemmovimento.com).
Physical activity promotion in the health sector

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WHO ARE TRAINED IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTH

- Medical doctors
- Physiotherapists

Physical activity for health is a mandatory part of the medical undergraduate curriculum in one medical faculty, the University of Beira Interior; other faculties offer optional modules. Some physiotherapy courses include mandatory physical activity modules.

National awareness-raising campaign on physical activity

MEDIA USED IN NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS

- Television
- Social media
- Public events
- Public figures

A national campaign, “What is your physical activity?”, was launched in 2018 by the Ministry of Health, in accordance with WHO’s Global action plan on physical activity 2018–2030: more active people for a healthier world. The Portuguese Institute of Sports and Youth is preparing a national campaign to promote participation in sports and physical activity.