

## Joining this network allows members to:

- be part of a pan-European platform of leading experts and institutions active in all aspects of HEPA;
- exchange and disseminate information and knowledge and learn from experience available across Europe;
- become active at the interface between science and policy making;
- benefit from the multi-sectoral approach of HEPA Europe, involving experts from the health, environment, education, transport, sports, land-use planning and other sectors; and
- find partners for possible collaborative projects and participate in all areas of HEPA promotion.

## Members of the Steering Committee

- Willem van Mechelen, Vrije Universiteit (VU) Medical Centre, the Netherlands (chairman)
- Alberto Arlotti, Public Health Service, Emilia-Romagna Region, Italy
- Andrea Backović Juričan, National Institute of Public Health, Slovenia
- Winfried Banzer, Olympics Sports Confederation, Germany
- Finn Berggren, Gerlev Physical Education and Sports Academy, Denmark
- Eddy Engelsman, Netherlands Institute for Sport and Physical Activity (NISB), The Netherlands
- Narcis Gusi, Faculty of Sport Sciences, University of Extremadura, Spain
- Charlie Foster, British Heart Foundation (BHF) Health Promotion Research Group, United Kingdom (vice-chair)
- Sonja Kahlmeier, University of Zürich, Switzerland (executive member)
- Maarten Koornneef, Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, the Netherlands
- Niamh Murphy, Waterford Institute of Technology, Ireland
- Jean-Michel Oppert, University Pierre et Marie Curie-Paris6, Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital, Paris, France
- Francesca Racioppi, WHO/Europe
- Harry Rutter, National Obesity Observatory England, United Kingdom
- Tommi Vasankari, Urho Kekkonen (UKK) Institute for Health Promotion Research, Finland (vice-chair)

As observers:

- Global Advocacy on Physical Activity (GAPA), Advocacy Council of the International Society on Physical Activity and Health (currently Fiona Bull, Loughborough University, United Kingdom)

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# HEPA Europe

European Network for the Promotion of  
Health-Enhancing Physical Activity



[www.euro.who.int/hepaeurope](http://www.euro.who.int/hepaeurope)

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## Solid facts about health-enhancing physical activity

Health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA) is any form of physical activity that benefits health and functional capacity without undue harm or risk. Such activities do not have to be strenuous: 30 minutes of daily moderate physical activity considerably reduce the risk of major chronic diseases like cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, and cancer. It also helps to control overweight and reduces osteoporosis and depression.



Around one quarter of the European population does not reach this level of physical activity. This is estimated to cause 600 000 deaths per year. Increased physical activity therefore has the potential to benefit society as well as individuals, and generate large savings to health care systems.



Activities such as cycling and walking can make a difference: people who cycle regularly to work have been found to have a 40% lower risk of death compared to those who did not cycle.

Cycling and walking for transport, especially in urban settings, is an effective way to incorporate physical activity into daily lives: across Europe 30% of trips made by car are less than 3 km and 50% less than 5 km. Substituting such car-trips by cycling and walking can easily achieve the daily target of 30 minutes of moderate physical activity!



## A new international, collaborative project is contributing to address the problem of physical inactivity and sedentary lifestyles

### HEPA Europe – the European network for the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity:

#### Vision

- to achieve better health through physical activity among all people in Europe.

#### Goal

- to strengthen and support efforts and actions that increase participation and improve the conditions favorable to a healthy lifestyle, in particular with respect to HEPA.

#### Objectives

- to contribute to the development and implementation of policies and strategies for HEPA in Europe;
- to develop, support, and disseminate effective strategies, programs, approaches, and other examples of good practice to promote HEPA; and
- to support and facilitate the development of multi-sectoral approaches to the promotion of HEPA.

## Who can become a member?

Membership is open to organizations and institutions active at the international, national or sub-national level willing to contribute to the goals and objectives of the network. These include:

- government bodies such as ministries and agencies at the national and sub-national level involved with the promotion of HEPA (e.g. Ministries of Health, Sports, Education, Transport, agencies for health promotion, etc.);
- research and other scientific institutions;
- non-governmental organizations;
- other institutions or organizations active in a related field; and
- interested individuals (upon invitation from the Steering Committee).

Join HEPA Europe online: [www.euro.who.int/hepa](http://www.euro.who.int/hepa).

#### Sources:

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Andersen LB et al: All cause mortality associated with physical activity during leisure time, work, sports, and cycling to work. *Arch Intern Med*, 2000, 160:1621–1628.

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