Report of the 17th meeting of the European Union Physical Activity Focal Points Network

Nice, 30 – 31 August 2022
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Background

In the context of the European Union Council Recommendation on ‘Promoting Health Enhancing Physical Activity (HEPA) Across Sectors’ adopted in 2013, EU Member States were requested to appoint national physical activity focal points, notably to support the monitoring framework for HEPA policies and physical activity. As part of the collaboration to implement the Council Recommendation in the EU and to promote physical activity across Europe, the European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC), Sport Unit, and the WHO Regional Office for Europe organize regular meetings of the Focal Points network.

Through this network, WHO/Europe, the European Commission and EU Member States are working together to strengthen the monitoring and surveillance of physical inactivity and sedentary behaviour, support the development and implementation of evidence-based policies and strategies to promote physical activity while providing a platform for interaction and sharing between Member States representatives.

The 17th meeting of the EU Physical Activity Focal Points Network was held in Nice, France, 30-31 August 2022. The aim of the meeting — the first in-person meeting since 2019 before the COVID-19 pandemic — was to explore how the research agenda can be aligned with the development, implementation and evaluation of physical activity policies in European Union Member States. The meeting was organized to coincide with the HEPA Europe conference, in order to facilitate exchange between the focal points and the HEPA Europe Network.

The objectives were to:

- identify key priority policies or plans in each country;
- provide guidance to country focal points on opportunities to utilise HEPA Europe Network researchers to support policy implementation;
- raise awareness of HEPA Europe researchers and working groups on country policy priorities; and
- establish links between HEPA Europe researchers and the EU physical activity country focal points.

Physical activity focal points from 20 Member States participated in the meeting, along with representatives of the European Commission, HEPA Europe, the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the WHO Collaborating Centre on Physical Activity and Health.

WHO Regional Office for Europe would like to express their gratitude to the European Commission Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture for their support. This meeting and report were produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union.

Welcome address and opening remarks

Kremlin Wickramasinghe, WHO Regional Office for Europe, welcomed participants to the meeting. He summarized some changes at WHO and the European Commission since the group had last met on a face-to-face basis in 2019. He stressed that WHO is delighted to continue this
joint collaboration to address the challenge of promoting physical activity in a post-COVID-19 environment. This meeting provides an exciting opportunity to interact with the HEPA Europe network, which links around 200 research institutions. The HEPA Europe network has been assessed for potential conflicts of interest and it is now officially approved for interaction with the EU Physical Activity Focal Point Network. This presents an ideal opportunity to put the common rhetoric of “linking research to policy” into practice.

Michael Serneels, Directorate-General Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, European Commission, also welcomed participants and delivered some opening remarks. He indicated that the face-to-face meeting was highly appreciated, and much needed to exchange ideas and policies. He thanked WHO and all the focal points for their valuable contributions to the factsheets. The European Commission is continuing with efforts to promote policy on physical activity. The latest Eurobarometer survey has been completed and were due for publication during the European Week of Sport. The first results suggest a stabilization in physical activity/inactivity levels, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission has set up some new projects, including the Healthy Lifestyle for All initiative. Michael went on to underline that the opportunity presented at this meeting for policymakers to meet researchers is very important.

Country priorities

Catherine Woods, University of Limerick, Ireland, facilitated a series of interactive sessions to help promote exchange between research, practice and policy and identify country priorities.

Interactive session 1

Each focal point was asked to independently write down on a sticky note one policy or action that they considered has been successful. They were then invited to write down three key factors contributing to the success of this policy/action on three individual sticky notes. Working in small groups, participants were then invited to put all the notes onto flip charts. The groups then discussed the emerging themes and sought to identify commonalities or differences and, ultimately, three or four key factors that appear to contribute to success. One person from each group reported back to the meeting.

Group 1

Political commitment and a common understanding of the importance of physical activity were identified as key factors. These can help to get funding and human resources, which are both critical and equally important for success. It is important to have people and time to invest in this issue. Coordination was also identified as an important factor, given the need to get buy-in from a broad range of stakeholders, and coordination at both local and national levels is needed, through, for example, cross-ministerial bodies. In addition, it was noted that national level strategies and structures should be reflected at the local level. Finally, it was suggested that the private sector should not always be seen as a negative influence, sometimes good private programmes can be taken up by governments.

Group 2

The importance of individuals enjoying participation in physical activity, and being self-motivated, was highlighted. Other key factors identified include funding (at municipality, state and European levels), local level action, a multisectoral approach and evidence-based decision

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making. This last point is important for the link between researchers — who can generate evidence-based statistics — and policymakers.

**Group 3**

This group reported some examples of successful initiatives, including a national adult fitness monitoring programme, the implementation of Europe Be Active at the national level, a strategy on physical education, a fitness monitoring programme for primary and secondary school students and a project to fill the gap between the healthcare sector and HEPA. Key factors the group felt were important for success include: high-level political support; adaptation of an existing legal basis or good practice from another country; alignment with national and EU policies and the scientific evidence; a multisectoral approach (both horizontal and vertical) involving multiple government and non-governmental actors at different levels; and communication to raise awareness among stakeholders before, during and after initiatives.

**Group 4**

Key factors for the success of the national-level policy examples shared in this group included: political will; multisectoral involvement of multiple stakeholders at different levels and, preferably, from the development stage of the initiative; and a robust knowledge and evidence base. All of the examples provided were aimed at reaching the least active groups, highlighting the importance of equity.

**Group 5**

Specific success stories shared included an ongoing 10-year policy on physical activity, a programme encouraging cycling to school, a national plan to promote 150 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity, adoption by government of a plan originally initiated by private companies and a policy to encourage cycling in the summer by closing certain roads. Key factors associated with success included leadership, collaboration, communication and “upcycling” existing parts of a previous or existing programme.

**Reflections**

Micheal Serneels provided some reflections on the outcomes of the session. The conclusions reflected both unity and diversity. While there were many differences in the Member State approaches, there was also a lot of convergence, depending on the context. This exercise provides evidence of the value of sharing good practice, highlighting that the exchange of experience facilitated through the focal point network is extremely useful. It will be important to capitalize on the learning from the good examples and success stories presented.

It was also noted that the key factors to facilitate success that emerged — including political support, funding, human resources, different target groups, recycling and upcycling — are reflected in the 23 indicators in the Council Monitoring Framework. Vertical and horizontal coordination remains critical given the multisectoral nature of this work. The SHARE initiative (see page 11) is trying to increase awareness about the potential to involve non-sport sectors (planning, education, health).

In discussion, it was noted that the facilitated interactive session had been extremely useful.

**Interactive session 2**

Catherine Woods introduced the second interactive session, relating to the challenges and issues that need to be addressed to advance the promotion of physical activity in the next five years. The challenge of interdisciplinary or, ideally, transdisciplinary working (where people venture into another discipline and apply their skills and knowledge) was highlighted. Participants were asked, on an individual basis, to complete a form setting out the challenges and/or issues that
need to be addressed relating to policies, programmes, environment and infrastructure support. It was pointed out that policy interventions “are not to be confused with other types of programme or environmental interventions; policy interventions provide the framework in which the programmes or environmental changes are tendered, developed, financed or implemented”.

Working in pairs, participants then rated the other person’s challenges identified using a 5-point Likert scale, where a score of one represents the least timely and least relevant challenge and a score of five represents the most timely and most relevant challenge. This exercise was repeated five times.

Following analysis of the completed work sheets, Catherine Woods summarized the outcomes of the sessions.

The key factors for success identified were:

- government leadership and demonstrated commitment;
- human resources are key, to avoid a situation where “physical activity is everyone’s responsibility but nobody’s job”;
- existence of a common vision or multiple agendas coming together to address one goal (physical inactivity);
- multisectoral and multilevel approaches;
- buy-in from government, NGOs and other agencies;
- funding and resources, noting that physical activity is not a cost neutral investment and recognizing that there is a return on investment in health, sustainability, social and cultural terms;
- evidence-based decision and knowledge-based information;
- equity, target groups and helping those most in need;
- recycling and upcycling policies, programmes and initiatives; and
- mechanisms to exploit (in an acceptable way) the private sector to provide support for national physical activity plans and programmes.

The top 20 challenges identified are set out in Annex 3. In summary, the frequently-mentioned challenges relate to how to successfully:

- establish multisectoral and multilevel buy-in to promote physical activity and collaboration of national physical activity plans;
- address the needs of vulnerable groups;
- create a comprehensive physical activity policy from scratch (and with what resources);
- enable a regular and robust physical activity monitoring and surveillance system;
- obtainable sustainable and adequate funding;
- build and renovate infrastructure for sport and active transport;
- support the long-term implementation of key programmes/environmental changes;
- meet the negative challenges posed by technology on physical activity and sport (e.g., increased use of screens, esports etc);
- understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on physical activity (threats and opportunities); and
- engage the health care setting in the use of physical activity for primary and secondary prevention.

Discussion

Michael Serneels invited participants to describe one takeaway point from the discussion. The main points to emerge are summarized below.

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• Focal points are all facing similar challenges despite the different contexts. The experience of exchanging experience, however, was tremendously useful for demonstrating that other countries have identified solutions and different ways to overcome the challenges. The sense of focal points sharing a “common language”, despite working in different sectors and in different country contexts, is highly appreciated. Ease of communication to benefit from one another’s experience, due to the well-established links, is also valued.

• The challenges of aligning policy across the whole of government had been highlighted repeatedly, but there are countries that have implemented solutions. Some Member States have managed to involve all ministries to work on physical activity or have introduced municipality-level coordinators to work with local populations. Some focal points were motivated to plan more exchange and engagement with other sectors.

• Growing attention to the environment for promoting physical activity was noted.

• There are multiple other, more-specific, positive examples for countries to take away and consider adapting:
  o using the expertise of academia and research institutions in the planning of policies;
  o exploration of ingenious methods to try and motivate people to do physical activity (e.g., financial incentives relating to tax reductions for physical activity participation);
  o how to define and prioritize vulnerable groups and those with particularly low levels of physical activity and how to implement the Health for All and Sports for All approaches;
  o development of national strategies that could be usefully exchanged (e.g., national sports strategy);
  o use of European structural funding to boost national funding; and
  o evaluation of what has or has not worked well for promoting physical activity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

• The operating environment for promoting physical activity is likely to remain challenging in the next few years, as the financial implications of the pandemic and the conflict in Europe persist. The European energy crisis will create new difficulties for sports and physical activity facilities which need power for heating and lighting. It was suggested that further discussion of these ongoing and emerging challenges — and how to mitigate their impact — would be useful for the focal point network.

Michael Serneels emphasized the value of the SHARE initiative to promote cross-sectoral exchange and learning. A cross-sectoral approach is also valuable in relation to funding — while sports funding in Erasmus+ programme has increased by 500 million euros over 5 years, this is still a much smaller budget than for other programmes, and it may be possible to tap into other funding streams for multi-sectoral HEPA initiatives by linking to other programmes. The SHARE initiative is intended to facilitate such a process (see page 11).

Aligning health-enhancing physical activity research with policy priorities

Kremlin Wickramasinghe introduced the afternoon session, underlining the commitment of WHO and the European Commission to improve links between the focal point network and the HEPA Europe network. WHO already has an excellent network of collaborating centres, which produce important research, and the Secretariat can facilitate links between collaborating centres and Member States. To build on such links and further strengthen links between research and policymaking communities, HEPA Europe representatives were invited to participate in the focal
point network meeting. The representatives of the HEPA Europe network that were present introduced themselves.

**HEPA Europe — European network for the promotion of HEPA**

Marie Murphy, co-chair of the HEPA Europe Network Steering Committee, presented an overview of the network. HEPA Europe is a network which works for better health and wellbeing in the WHO European Region through more physical activity for all people. Its mission is to provide a forum for the advancement of HEPA research, policy and practice for better health and wellbeing across the WHO European Region. The network also serves as an advocacy group of like-minded people. The intention of the network is to highlight important data from research, always with a focus on the practical, real-life implications of those findings.

The network was founded in 2005 by a group of interested academics and policymakers. The first conference was held in Glasgow in 2008 with 24 participants. The network now involves over 200 members from 40 countries, and around 350 participants attended the 2022 Conference. Membership is open to organizations and institutions active at the regional, national or subnational level, who are willing to contribute to the goals and objectives of the network.

The guiding principles are:

- Focus on population-based approaches for the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity, using the best available scientific evidence.
- Encouragement of exchange, dissemination and sharing of experience and knowledge.
- Support cooperation, partnerships and collaboration with other related sectors, networks and approaches.

The main objectives are to:

- foster interdisciplinary communication and knowledge exchange between researchers, practitioners and policy-makers;
- facilitate sharing of experiences and best practice in HEPA promotion;
- contribute to the development of multisectoral and intersectoral policies and strategies for HEPA;
- strengthen collaboration within and between sectors to advance HEPA research, practice and policy;
- provide capacity-building opportunities for researchers, practitioners and policy-makers to strengthen the skillset of the HEPA workforce;
- deliver and support advocacy actions for the creation and maintenance of supportive social, physical and policy environments for HEPA; and
- provide a strong voice for the HEPA agenda.

HEPA Europe publishes a regular newsletter, organizes an annual conference and meeting. The network also has a vibrant early career network.

In addition, HEPA Europe has a number of working groups, comprised of people with shared interests. These working groups bring people together so that can tackle problems with a pan-European approach. These working groups are as follows:

- Active ageing – physical activity promotion in elderly.
- Development of methods for quantification of health benefits from walking and cycling.
- Environmental approaches to HEPA promotion.
- Exchange of experiences in children and adolescents.
- HEPA injury prevention.
- HEPA promotion in health care settings.
Discussion

It was noted that the HEPA Europe working groups are a very valuable resource, and WHO often draws upon their expertise. The evolution of physical activity as a policy area in the period since the establishment of the HEPA Europe network was commented on. This is also reflected in the organizational arrangements between the network and WHO — initially, HEPA Europe was linked to environment, but in 2018 the official link was established with the nutrition, physical activity and obesity programme at the WHO Regional Office for Europe.

There was some discussion of the absence of a focal point for the United Kingdom from the focal point network, since the UK’s withdrawal from the European Union. The question of whether there is a way to re-engage with UK-based policymakers was raised. It was suggested that, while a non-EU Member State cannot join the network, non-EU officials could be involved as part of wider activities and engagement with other networks (e.g., this joint meeting with HEPA Europe).

World Café Session on how to develop closer collaborations between focal points and the HEPA Europe Network

Catherine Woods introduced the World Café session, in which participants broke into groups and each discussed a preset question. One person from each group reported back to the meeting.

Group 1: How can the work, resources and expertise of the HEPA network be shared effectively across Europe, especially to the focal points?

The group proposed a variety of mechanisms to improve cooperation between the two networks, including joint meetings, national-level mechanisms to link policymakers to researchers and placement of PhD students in ministries. Suggestions for methods to improve communication and the flow of information include: an website/internal platform/forum; “HEPA Tinder” a dating app-type app to connect people interested in the same topic; a matching process for similar Member States to work on joint research projects; translation of summary documents into English; a shared database of national documents; HEPA Europe awards for best physical activity practice, policies and for good cooperation between science and policymakers; and inviting networks’ experts to speak at national-level conferences; and co-hosting of national conferences. The group also discussed co-production processes for translation of HEPA learning into practice. The challenges of such processes, in reality, were noted, given that funding agencies rarely fund co-production or applied research. The need for better recognition of the need to fund co-production was noted.

Group 2: How can collaboration between the focal points and the HEPA Europe network be facilitated to bridge the implementation gap between policy and practice?

Suggestions of ways to foster and facilitate collaboration include national-level meetings between focal points and the institutions involved in HEPA Europe, study visits, joint advocacy work, common communication strategies, thematic workshops and advocacy reports. Shared platforms and blogs – publicly accessible, but on which only focal points and members of HEPA Europe network can post – were proposed as a means of sharing of information, along with national and international meetings. It was also suggested that the annual HEPA Europe conference should be leveraged to strengthen ties between the two groups. Finally, interaction at the conferences of other European networks, such as the European Public Health Association
Group 3: How can the HEPA Europe network support the focal points to sustain physical activity policy and action in the long term, especially when governing parties change?

This group underlined the challenges resulting from the short-term vision and approach of political leaders. A combination of long-term and short-term targets, used in combination, is needed to be of interest to policymakers, recognizing that elected politicians are often concerned with establishing their legacy. Other important elements to encourage and support policy action include monitoring of results, use of neutral and unbiased information when communicating with elected politicians, data on return on investment (include social return on investment) and sharing of comparable good practices, drawing on globally-available resources and sources. It is important to keep strong links between those working in health, physical activity and sport. Engagement with social, political and communications scientists will also be very important. One suggestion was for an open call to the HEPA Europe network to identify researchers in the spheres of social, political and communication sciences — and if all the relevant disciplines are not represented in the membership to consider extending the membership.

Group 4: Reaching vulnerable groups was one of the key challenges identified. How can the HEPA Europe network and focal points collaborate to address this challenge?

This group agreed that this is a real challenge on the ground. The knowledge on what policy action is needed exists, along with sufficient evidence, but it is often difficult to adapt this knowledge to the local context. An important first step is to identify who the vulnerable populations are, and regularly updated research on the needs and motivations of these groups is needed. Dissemination and exchange of knowledge and experience is key to addressing this challenge. Suggestions include identification by HEPA working groups of “best-in-class” countries and making reports available on a research hub. There is also a need to support local-level actions and engage with community-based groups and institutions (e.g., schools) to facilitate engagement with hard-to-reach groups.

Group 5: Establishing multisectoral and multilevel support and collaboration for physical activity promotion at a national level was a key challenge identified. How could the HEPA Europe network and the focal points network work together to meet this challenge?

Proposals to support multilevel and multisectoral action included: sharing case studies of successful multisectoral working from completely different areas of policy and examples of good governance; identifying the win-win opportunities where all sectors can see the benefit of engagement; mapping of different stakeholders (by the HEPA Europe policy group); creation of networks within countries involving HEPA Europe and focal points; HEPA Europe network can share research evidence on multisectoral collaboration and help to generate new evidence; mapping experts by sector; development and writing thematic reports on this topic; and collection of “real-world” questions from focal points that could be answered by HEPA Europe members.

SportHub: Alliance for Regional development in Europe (SHARE)

Michael Serneels presented an overview of the SportHub: Alliance for Regional development in Europe (SHARE) initiative.

Following on from a 2016 study exploring the contribution of sport to regional development through the Structural Funds, the SHARE initiative was launched in 2018. This platform brings together the sport movement, cities, regions, universities, small and medium-sized enterprises and business support organizations to promote the role of sport and physical activity in regional development.

The objectives of the initiative are to:
• ensure sport and physical activity are better taken into account for EU, national, regional and local policy-making;
• strengthen the cross-sectoral approach of sport in view of the new Cohesion Policy main objectives; and
• unlock different funding streams for sport and physical activity so that it can deliver its full potential for territorial development.

Activities organized under the initiative include: supporting evidence-based policy-making; capacity building among national, regional and local stakeholders to help them shape strategies and unlock EU funding streams for sport; and awareness raising through dissemination of knowledge and good practices at national, regional and local levels. A number of policy papers have also been developed as part of this initiative relating to the theme of integrating sport/physical activity into regional development.67

The SHARE ALLIANCE comprises a myriad of different types of organizations (over 100), interested in SHARE activities. These organizations mostly wish to stay informed with the latest policy developments at EU level, benefit from the knowledge and peer-learning exchanges promoted within SHARE and act in the further dissemination of knowledge. At the centre of SHARE is the SHARE LAB core partnership of key organisations from the SHARE ALLIANCE which are active at the EU level and committed to steer the initiative towards achieving its objectives. A stocktake of SHARE activities between 2018 and 2020 revealed 15 capacity-building activities in 14 countries, four policy papers, a database of good practices and five high-level events, as well as various communication activities.

Discussion

There was some discussion about the visibility of different funding streams, and it was suggested that the Erasmus+ programme had been well publicised and widely disseminated compared to other funding streams. The importance of national authorities having access to all the relevant information, in order to be able to disseminate information nationally, was emphasized. The information days held for Erasmus+ were highlighted as a particularly positive example.

It was pointed out that the Commission has now installed a tender platform, and this can be searched by keyword. Searching for sport and physical activity will identify other programmes beyond Erasmus+. It is important to find strategic “hooks” to link with particular funding streams, and it is also vital to form partnerships and to take time to fully develop relevant proposals. The SHARE initiative is an important resource to facilitate creation of partnerships.

It was noted that there are examples of cross-national initiatives (e.g., creation of the walking path in Nice was supported by both the French and Italian governments). It is clear that there are funding streams available. The EU’s Recovery and Resilience Facility has allocated over 600 billion euros to respond to the economic and social consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Another potential avenue is Healthier Together — EU NCD Initiative, which will support actions during 2022-2027 to help Member States meet the SDG targets for 2030 and the WHO 2025 targets on NCDs. More Member State applications are sought for the Healthier Together programme —

focal points are encouraged to contact their Ministry of Health counterpart to explore the options for programmes addressing all NCD risk factors (including physical inactivity).

It was suggested that those in the physical activity promotion community should become more effective in forming partnerships and tapping into available funding sources. There was a proposal for the focal points and the HEPA Europe network to identify relevant contacts and draw up projects to use sport and physical activity as a locomotive for development, and to also find ways to overcome any legal or other obstacles through joint working.

Collaboration between the focal points and the HEPA Europe network is particularly promising to address this issue of accessing available funding streams. The focal points are well placed to find out about the funding opportunities and to facilitate Member State involvement, while the researchers in HEPA Europe have the knowledge and skills to develop projects and write proposals.

**Next steps and closing**

Kremlin Wickramasinghe delivered some closing remarks and outlined the next steps.

He noted that the WHO Regional Office for Europe is now working on integrating physical activity into new guidance on emergency preparedness. This is particularly relevant given the impact of emergencies — such as the pandemic and armed conflict — on vulnerable groups. In Poland, for example, part of the emergency response to the Ukraine refugee situation has included promoting physical activity among Ukrainian children, and similar activities are planned with their mothers.

The WHO European Regional Obesity Report 2022 includes physical inactivity and questions around physical activity policy were raised in discussions with government ministers following the launch of the report. This spotlight on obesity presents an opportunity to raise physical activity on the agenda and as an entry point to advocate for policy implementation.

It is proposed that a future meeting will include a session on capacity building on accessing available funding streams.

In conclusion, he thanked the Université Côte d'Azur for generously hosting the event and HEPA Europe steering group for the excellent collaboration. He thanked Catherine Woods for facilitating the very useful discussions and all participants for their contributions. Finally, he thanked the WHO technical and administration teams for planning and organizing the meeting.
Marketplace — facilitating discussion with HEPA Europe Conference attendees

On the second day of the meeting, country focal points set up tables in a “marketplace” to facilitate discussion with HEPA Europe conference attendees. The goal was to help foster collaboration between countries and researchers. Focal points prepared information about different polices or programmes for the marketplace discussions.

In the follow-up evaluation, the majority of respondents (9/13) considered that the marketplace exercise had reached its goal. Most of the respondents had made between one and five new contacts; two focal points made more than five new contacts and two focal points did not make any new contacts. At least four focal points reported having followed up on the marketplace contacts since returning home and several reported having shared the meeting discussions with national colleagues.

The general idea of the marketplace was well received by focal points. It was suggested, however, that holding the session during the lunch break was not ideal because participants were busy eating and/or did not find the marketplace in its location within the venue (which was somewhat isolated). Suggestions for similar events in the future included hosting it during the coffee breaks or including a specific hour-long session in the conference programme. It was also suggested that the marketplace event would benefit from being more proactively promoted during the conference.
Annex 1. Programme outline

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<tr>
<td><strong>Participant arrival and welcome</strong></td>
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<td>09:00 – 09:15</td>
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<td><strong>Welcome and opening remarks</strong></td>
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<td>Kremlin Wickramasinghe, WHO Regional Office for Europe</td>
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<td>Michael Serneels, Directorate-General Education, Youth, Sport and Culture</td>
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<td>09:15 – 10:30</td>
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<td><strong>Country updates/priorities</strong></td>
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<td>Kremlin Wickramasinghe, WHO Regional Office for Europe</td>
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<td>5 min presentation from each country focal point:</td>
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<td>• Key country policy or plan</td>
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<td>• Successes</td>
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<td>• Q&amp;A</td>
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<td>10:30 – 11:00</td>
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<td><strong>Active break</strong></td>
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<td>11:00 – 12:00</td>
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<td><strong>Country priorities (cont.)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kremlin Wickramasinghe</td>
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<td><strong>Discussion</strong></td>
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<td>Michael Serneels</td>
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<td>12:30 – 13:30</td>
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<td><strong>Lunch</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Aligning health-enhancing physical activity research with policy priorities</strong></td>
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<td>Facilitated session between focal points and members of the HEPA Europe Steering Committee</td>
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<td>Countries will discuss key policy priorities with the HEPA Europe Steering Committee to be presented and discussed with researchers attending the HEPA Europe Conference</td>
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**Day 2**

**Health-enhancing physical activity marketplace**

Each focal points will present a key policy or plan to researchers attending the HEPA Europe Conference to explore how research can support.

*Kremlin Wickramasinghe and Catherine Woods*
Annex 2. List of Participants

17th Meeting of the European Union
Physical Activity Focal Points
Network

30-31 August 2022
09:00 – 17:00 CET (30 August)
12:00 – 13:30 CET (31 August)

Provisional list of participants

MEMBER STATES

Austria
Claus Farnberger
Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, Civil Service and Sport
Christian Halbwachs
National Expert
Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, the Civil Service and Sport

Croatia
Helena Križan
Head of the Physical Health Determinants Surveillance Unit
Croatian Institute of Public Health

Cyprus
Georgios Loucaides
Scientific Associate of Cyprus Sports Research Center
Cyprus Sports Organization

Estonia
Norman Põder
Adviser
Ministry of Culture, Sports Department
Finland
Päivi Aalto-Nevalainen
Senior Ministerial Advisor
Ministry of Education and Culture, Sports Division

France
Antoine Noel-Racine
Ministry of Sport - Directorate of Sport

Germany
Karim Abu Omar
Department of Sport Science and Sport
Chair of Physical Activity and Public Health

Hungary
Réka Veress
Officer for International Affairs
Ministry of Human Capacities
National School, University and Leisure Sport Federation

Ireland
Ian Smith
Irish Administrative Officer
Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

Italy
Igor Lanzoni
HEPA National Focal Point

Latvia
Ronals Ronovskis
Senior Expert at Sport department
Ministry of Education and Science

Lithuania
Inga Gerulskienë
Senior specialist
Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania

Luxembourg
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Annex 3. Top 20 challenges facing promotion of physical activity ranked by participants

Participants were asked to identify what they thought the key challenges to promotion of physical activity might be for the next five years. The instructions included writing anything related to policy, programmes, environment and/or infrastructure support. Each person was then asked to rank the statements they read on a five-point scale of 1=least timely/least relevant to 5=most timely/most relevant. The scores below show the top 20 challenges put forward by the group.

**Key challenge/issues need to be addressed to advance the promotion of physical activity in the next 5 years?**

1. How to reach the inactive part of society. 24
2. Aligning multi-sectoral support and communication 24
3. How to align the European Initiatives with national policies to help promote sport and PA. 23
4. How do we ensure funding for policy implementation? 23
5. How to continue to develop and resource national physical activity programmes (which are permanent and have continued funding streams). 23
6. How can we gain political support? 23
7. How to strengthen the inter-sectoral cooperation for physical activity promotion. 23
8. What motivating strategies should be used to get people more involved in PA.? 23
9. How do we successfully enlarge the cooperation across different levels i.e. national, regional, local for promotion of PA? 23
10. How do we establish harmonised, national government of physical activity promotion 22
11. What monitoring systems and how these systems/data/stats should be used for the future? 21
12. The most important action is to create new sport infrastructure in different regions of the country 21
13. How to engage other sectors at European and National level to support PA 21
14. Establish a system for PA monitoring and surveillance in the general population 21
15. Ensuring sustainability and follow-up of project and base interventions 21
16. How to get the politicians/decision makers to recognise the importance of physical fitness (on a population level). 20
17. How can we get other sectors involved, not for one meeting, but for a longer period 20
18. Are there good examples of making good use of old and aged infrastructure 20
19. How to make results from the 'report cards on PA' more effective 20
20. Government regulation to facilitate sport/active transport 19
The WHO Regional Office for Europe

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