ABOUT THE PASS PROJECT

Taking inspiration from the Designed to Move international campaign, the PASS project – supported by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union - aims at shedding new light on the state of physical activity in Europe. With the support of 6 major European players (EUPEA, FESI, ISCA, ICSSPE, Spolint Institute and TAFISA), the Sport and Citizenship think tank is leading an important campaign on the current state of physical activity policy and practice in Europe. This 3-year project will end in December 2017.

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WORKSHOP 1

THE HEALTH SECTOR

Which Contribution to the Promotion of Physical Activity?
INTRODUCTION

The relationship between physical activity and physical health is now established beyond doubt, and the awareness of the health costs of sedentary behaviours is so advanced that inactivity is now recognized as a major public health concern. For example, physical inactivity is the fourth leading risk factor for diseases. It is becoming clear that there is a trend for sedentary lifestyles across most of developed countries, too.

The challenges Europe is facing, like all continents, are both general and distinctive. The health risks associated with inactivity and sedentary lifestyles apply to all people, irrespective of their location and culture, but the social and environmental characteristics of living and working in Europe need to be understood as peculiar to that region.

Physical activity is important for people of all ages. So, it is concerning that available evidence suggests that activity levels, in Europe, are often low and even declining. The limited surveillance information on children suggests a similar pattern, and this is even more alarming as childhood represents a foundation for later health and activity behaviours. Research shows that around 210 million European citizens are inactive. This situation imposes economic costs of more than 80 billion euros per year to the EU-28 through four major non-communicable diseases (coronary heart disease, type II diabetes, colorectal and breast cancer) and through the indirect costs of inactivity-related mood and anxiety disorders.

Paradoxically, this situation has been quite documented throughout Europe. Unfortunately, not to the extent of acknowledging this public health risk as probably one of the most urgent challenges of the 21st century. It is claimed indeed that 66% of policymakers in Europe are unaware of the obesity levels in their country. Numbers go up to 84% for overweight. This gap in knowledge is detrimental for our economies, societies and well and has to be taken into account seriously. A number of policy documents have been produced at international, European and national levels, most notably thanks to the impetus of WHO and the European Union. A currently under-utilised resource there, has been the more local governmental agencies. They represent a level of administration that is closer to citizens and hold the competencies to animate their territories. Cities offer numerous opportunities to be physically active, and some have turned their built environment into a space that encourages health and activity for all. Active cities are walkable and cyclable. They are safe and well lit, with good public transport and appropriate management of obstacles and barriers. They represent an opportunity to create the conditions for European citizens to be physically active.
WORKSHOP AGENDA

DAY 1: 14.00 – 18.00

- Welcome speech – Boro STRUMBELJ, Director of Sport, Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, Slovenia
- Presentation of project PASS – Maxime LEBLANC, Sport and Citizenship Think Tank
- Introduction of participants
- An insight into the project PASS preliminary results – Richard BAILEY, ICSSPE
- Challenges for HEPA from kindergarten to retirement – Dr Rado PISOT, University of Primorska
- Panel discussion – Raising awareness among policymakers
  - Richard BAILEY, ICSSPE
  - Maxime LEBLANC, Sport and Citizenship Think Tank
  - Andrea BACKOVIC-JURICAN, National Institute for Public Health, Slovenia

DAY 2: 9.00 – 15.00

- General Introduction – Milan HOSTA, SPOLINT Institute
- Good practices sprint reports
- Challenges ahead and inspirations from participants: group work
- Conclusions and way forward
BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The PASS project started in January 2015 with a clear and ambitious mission: to bring a contribution to the fight against the European physical inactivity epidemic.

The project consists of three main activities:

- A transnational study on the state and status of physical activity policy and practice across Europe
- Five topical workshops on health, education, grassroots sport, cities and sport industry
- A European-wide communication and awareness-raising campaign

After completing a study of the state and status of policy and practices on physical activity at European level (a study carried out by ICSSPE), the PASS partners are looking to engage with experts, academics, opinion and good practices leaders in a series of Member States.

The PASS partners approach is cross-sectorial, meaning that the contribution of different sectors/policy areas is seen as instrumental in the fight against sedentarity. This “settings” approach echoes the following areas: health, education, grassroots sports, sport industry and economy, cities and municipalities.

The workshops address a specific thematic field and provide for exchanges of best practices, knowledge and experience among partners, partner’s networks, associated partners and guest organisations.

The project consortium is composed of the following organisations:

- Sport and Citizenship Think Tank (project leader)
- The International Council for Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE)
- Federation of the European Sporting Goods Industries (FESI)
- The European Physical Education Association (EUPEA)
- The International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA)
- The Association for International Sport for All (TAFISA)
- The SPOLINT Institute

Every partner organization is responsible for hosting one workshop on each of the five settings identified: health, education, industry, cities and grassroots sports.
WORKSHOP MINUTES

DAY 1 – 6 June

The workshop started with an official welcome address from the Director of Sport at the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport: Dr. Boro Štrumbelj.

Mr. Štrumbelj reported on the current state of affairs in Slovene sport policy. A number of projects were mentioned, among which the healthy life-style project which aims at increasing physical education hours in schools in order to compete against sedentary lifestyle, digitalisation and ageing population.

Even though negative trends are being slowed in Slovenia, Mr Štrumbelj emphasised on the need to give more attention to grassroots sports, vs. the traditional vision of sport which often consists in focusing on the integrity of sport and not much on physical activity as a base.

Setting the scene for debate

The workshop continued with successive presentations from Maxime Leblanc and Richard Bailey, respectively on the PASS project mission and objective and on the PASS project scientific framework and intermediary results.

Pr. Bailey emphasised on the Human Capital Model and the Designed to move (DTM) Framework, from which the PASS Project takes an important inspiration. In particular, DTM argues that physical activity interventions at the early stages of life have an impact on a wide range of benefits, including physical health, learning skills, personal development, etc… One could summarize this idea in these words “Active kids do better”.

The physical inactivity epidemic that has taken over Europe is of major public concern. With growing scientific evidence, political interest is gaining ground in the light of pragmatic opportunities to reserve this trend.

The first round of keynote speakers was concluded by Mr. Pišot from the University of Primorska, on the challenges for physical activity from kindergarten to retirement. Mr. Pišot highlighted the role and importance of physical activity throughout the lifespan, while emphasizing on the need to address challenges facing seniors and sedentary lifestyles. He brought to the attention of the audience that scientific knowledge is available. An important gap remains to be filled to translate it into evidence-base policy-making.
Panel discussion – Raising awareness among policy-makers

Moderation by Milan Hosta | SPOLINT Institute.

Speakers:

- Andrea BACKOVIC-JURICAN | Slovenia | National Institute for Public Health

HEPA Europe developed a HEPA policy audit tool involving 7 EU countries. 25 different national policies had elements of HEPA policy. For a long time, HEPA has been a stand-alone policy. The transversal dimension of physical activity is slowly recognized as an element of cross-sectorial policy. Slovenia for example now has a joint nutrition and PA policy. Having a good HEPA policy is about objective measurements (cf. EU barometer which is a self-estimation and subjective tool). There needs to be a discussion about how to best collect data on physical activity levels.

- Richard BAILEY | Germany | International Council for Sport Science and Physical Education

- Do we know enough to convince policy makers – yes (though lots of room for further research). We need to act, as data is convincing
- One strong argument is the economic impact: 1 euro investing in PA = 20 euro out in benefits on a variety of levels.
- Social marketing of PA, media awareness raising campaigns…
- Positive developments in recent years include the fact that important international bodies are embracing the HEPA agenda, moving away from sport … (WHO, Unesco)
- We should focus more on advocacy and support to the local level, and less on eu policy and who bodies…

- Maxime LEBLANC | France-Belgium | Sport and Citizenship Think tank

WHO, the European Union and other institutions have published framework documents in the last decades. But how are those guidelines relating to the field? How are they communicated to those people, in Europe, who have the competencies and abilities to create engagement and commitment in physical activity?

The force of the PASS research lies in a simple message: research shows that inactivity poses important public health challenges, and yet very few policy-makers are aware of this reality. One of the core questions that arises from the PASS research is how to deliver practical and evidence-based messages to policy-makers. Project PASS has identified the gaps in policies and practices, namely the lacking recognition of the role of local authorities and municipalities.
DAY 2 – 7 June

The second day of the workshop brought together PASS project members and stakeholders from different backgrounds working in HEPA promotion (public institutions, private sector, sport movement, …).

Participants learned from local experiences through “Good practices sprint reports”, before going into groups to answer four main questions:

1. How can different actors - in collaborative action - and collaborative efforts build success story on local level?
2. How can different stakeholders build and share a local strategic vision, define the targets and become equal in advocacy and decision making process?
3. Why and how to use the international/national documents and agreements for local advocacy?
4. How to achieve significant progress in the implementation of the EU Physical Activity guidelines? How to stop the Time bomb of inactivity

Good practices sprint reports

Sport Union of Slovenia – Healthy clubs: quality mark program
Objectives: Promotion of an organized, regular, professionally managed, properly structured recreational sport activities that takes place in clubs throughout Slovenia. Rewards via a labelling system for healthy clubs

Berghi D.O.O. – Mountain biking and cycling as business opportunities for the upper Sava valley
Objectives: promote mountain biking, currently illegal in Slovenia, to diversify the sport offer, capture new demand.

IASLIM – On infrastructure management, public spending and the promotion of sport for all
Fostering investment in sport and leisure infrastructures open to all

Razgibajmo Ljubljano (“Exercise in Ljubljana”) – Sport gathering outdoors
Promoting the use of streets and outdoor spaces to practice physical activity

SPOLINT Institute – Playness Pedagogy
A digitalized multimedia PA curriculum with easy and ready-to-use content

Urban Institute of Slovenia/Bike 2 Work campaign – PSVS Project
An initiative to encourage cycling to work, based on cooperation and exchange of experiences between work colleagues through an online platform. The project includes a reward system for those who bike to work

Flisek Company – Changing the game
A look into innovative and futuristic sport gear, equipment and infrastructure to best adapt physical activity offer to today’s needs. Sport innovation at the service of physical activity for all

HEPA Europe – General strategy and tools
A look at HEPA Europe structure and assessment tools, namely the HEAT (Health Economic Assessment Tool)

Group work conclusions

1. How can different actors - in collaborative action - and collaborative efforts build success story on local level?
   - Need for a legislative approach. We need rules, definition, clear aims, rules for public funding – question the public investments in professional infrastructure, development of comparable data;
   - Knowledge building, KPI tools, self-assessment on municipality level, guidelines, better identify target audience, reach-out the inactive, more influence on media coverage and adapt communication;
   - Economic issues, supporting the innovative industry and R&D to enhance PA, wearable technology, adapt and adjust equipment to the general (not professional) population;
   - Cost-benefits of PA and sport in order to boost grassroots interventions.

2. How can different stakeholders build and share a local strategic vision, define the targets and become equal in advocacy and decision making process?
   - Active conferences – lead by example (active breaks)
   - How to transfer from national to local level – identify, analyse how many mayors and local clubs are informed on this documents (HEPA reports, strategies...). How to communicate the national policy to local language (emotional, sexy messages) ... who are the receivers and decision makers, who is informed on the local level (health, urban, environment, sport clubs... – multi channelled communication – info bombing) define the partnership network;
   - What is the quality of the PA programs – KPI for local clubs – quality mark/reward system...
   - Partnership and networking: club reach-out policy – how a sport club can connect with other sectors (culture, school, …)

3. Why and how to use the international/national documents and agreements for local advocacy?
   - High-level international and national policy papers.
   - Lack of link with the operational level.
   - Local unawareness of the policy papers or how to put them into action.
   - Diversity of local stakeholders and situations.

One need: Creating the link between international / national and local levels to sustain evidence-based policies while gathering local experiences.
Creating a two-fold toolkit addressing, at local level:

- Decision makers: why should use policy papers and engage policies in the field? How can they synchronise local and international / national policies and regulations?
- Administrators: how can they implement / take into account those policy papers within their specific environment.

**Aim:**
- Make the policy papers accessible.
- Extract key points and positive messages to raise the stakes, create awareness and trigger decision making.
- Show the path how to implement this, including good practice examples, ideas, quick wins.

4. How to achieve significant progress in the implementation of the EU Physical Activity guidelines? How to stop the Time bomb of inactivity?

- Variations, country differences, cultural specifics, political models and structures – so we need flexible models.
- Political players: people from different backgrounds – difficult to provide and agree on singular message.
- The need to identify common goal – shared goal (to what problem is this solution – adapt the communication to the subject making the change).
- Bring bodies together and work on shared agenda, EU & HEPA meetings.
- Easy narratives of complicated systems (human capital model), appealing messages and social marketing.
- Municipality level political organization is under-researched in terms of PA enhancing policies, actions...
- Movement towards a clear goal, results to be seen by politicians (reduced crime, education...).
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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