

# PORTUGAL

PREVALENCE (%) OF ADULTS THAT ENGAGED IN MODERATE- AND VIGOROUS-INTENSITY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FROM EUROBAROMETER, 2014

%	ADULTS	
	MODERATE-INTENSITY*	VIGOROUS- INTENSITY*
BOTH SEXES	14	9

*\*moderate- and vigorous-intensity physical activity on at least 4 days within the past 7 days*

Total population: 10 427 301  
 Median age: 43.1 years  
 Life expectancy at birth males: 77.6 years  
 Life expectancy at birth females: 84.0 years  
 GDP per capita: €15 800  
 GDP spent on health: 10.2% (1)



# Monitoring and surveillance

## Physical activity in adults

Portugal is currently in the process of developing national recommendations on physical activity for health. These will address all age groups of the population and will follow the WHO *Global recommendations on physical activity for health* (2010) (2) and the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) guidelines for exercise (3).

According to Eurobarometer survey results from 2014 (4), 9% of adults in Portugal reported that they engaged in vigorous-intensity physical activity on at least 4 days within the past 7, with 23% of those doing so for less than 30 minutes, 40% for between 31 and 60 minutes and 23% for between 91 and 120 minutes per day. Moreover, 14% of adults reported that they engaged in moderate-intensity physical activity on at least 4 days within the past 7, with 34% of those doing so for less than 30 minutes, 43% for between 31 and 60 minutes and 15% for between 91 and 120 minutes per day.

The intercountry comparable physical activity estimates for 2010 for Portugal from the WHO Global Health Observatory (GHO) (5) show that 62.7% of adults (aged 18+ years) meet the WHO recommended physical activity levels for health, with males being more active (66.5%) than females (59.2%).

## Physical activity in children and adolescents

Portugal uses the international cut-off point for children and adolescents reaching the recommended physical activity levels as endorsed in WHO's *Global recommendations on physical activity for health* (2010) (2).

The GHO 2010 estimates for the Portuguese adolescents (aged 11–17 years) show that 13.3% meet the recommended WHO physical activity levels. Physical activity levels are more than twice as high for boys (18.5%) as for girls (8.8%).

# Policy response

## Major policy documents adopted by government bodies

The Portuguese Institute of Sports and Youth (*Instituto Português do Desporto e Juventude* (IPDJ)) has adopted a National Sports for All Programme (6). The programme defines a set of goals, ultimately aiming to create a strong sporting base to promote and develop sports and education in a Sports for All context. The vision is for all citizens to live healthier lifestyles and enjoy greater quality of life. The principles promoted by the programme include collaboration and cooperation; establishing partnerships; improving physical activity resources; increasing multisectoral and multidimensional activities; and improving monitoring and evaluation of these activities as well as dialogue between generations and social groups. The plan emphasizes the importance of using sports as a means to bring together the population, from all walks of life and from various settings (schools, clubs, companies and even prisons).

Other policies in Portugal have aimed to mainstream sporting activities and embed physical activity within other sectors. The Ministry of Health has created a programme on the integration of sports policies into the Portuguese

National Health Plan (now extended to the year 2020) with a special focus on policy strategies for healthy lifestyles. Together, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Health and the IPDJ have also created a cross-sectoral platform between education, health and sports. The aim of this initiative is to increase the number of primary schools with regular (annual) sports programmes led by qualified physical education (PE) teachers. Furthermore, the Portuguese IPDJ has launched an investigation into health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA) and Sports for All themes, as well as creating a policy (in conjunction with the Portuguese Confederation of Institutions of Culture, Recreation and Sports (*Confederação Portuguesa das Colectividades de Cultura e Recreação e Desporto* (CCPRD) (7)) to support the development of Portuguese traditional games. This aims to promote sports among senior citizens in Portugal through the development of an infrastructure to encourage older adults to partake in traditional games.

## Guidelines and goals

Portugal does not currently have national recommendations on physical activity and health; however, a steering document has been created, framing the country's HEPA policy and suggesting recommendations on physical activity for the future. The recommendations will address all age groups of the population based on WHO's *Global recommendations on physical activity for health* (2010) (2) and the ACSM guidelines for exercise prescription (3). In addition, the IPDJ is in the process of developing recommendations regarding sedentary behaviour among the Portuguese population (8).

Table 1 presents a summary of the key measures in place to monitor and address physical activity in Portugal.

Table 1. Summary of key physical activity initiatives in Portugal

HEALTH	SPORTS	EDUCATION	TRANSPORT	MONITORING	GUIDELINES
Counselling on physical activity as part of primary health care services	Existence of a national Sports for All policy(ies)	Mandatory physical activity in primary and secondary schools	National or subnational schemes promoting active travel to school and/or workplace	Physical activity included in the national health monitoring system or separate routine survey	Existence of a national recommendation on physical activity
NO	YES	YES	NO	YES*	YES**

\* Together with various Portuguese academic institutions, the IPDJ is developing a monitoring system to provide data on physical activity and participation in sports across the Portuguese population. \*\* A steering document has been created, with recommendations on physical activity for the future. National recommendations are envisaged to be released in the near future.

## Additional information on action in key areas

### Schools

In Portugal, PE lessons are compulsory in primary schools for 1 hour, twice per week. In some schools, extra-curricular activity options are available, which increases PE carried out by pupils by an extra 45 minutes, twice per week. In secondary schools, PE is compulsory twice per week: the first session is 90 minutes in duration and the second is 45 minutes. However, schools can choose to run both sessions for 90 minutes.

## References

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