

**Statement by the Republic of Moldova
to EUR/RC70/8 (D) progress report on implementation of the Physical Activity
Strategy for the WHO European Region 2016-2020**

Lifelong physical activity benefits both public health and the sustainable development of society by reducing the burden of non-communicable diseases (cardiovascular diseases, diabetes mellitus, cancer) caused by sedentary lifestyle and inadequate physical activity, by reducing treatment costs of these diseases.

A sedentary lifestyle in the Republic of Moldova is typical for 59.2% of the population over 15 years old.

According to the national study of the assessment of risk factors for chronic non-communicable diseases (STEPS, Moldova, 2013) - every tenth (more than 10%) adult (18-69 years) does not practice daily physical activity, according to the WHO recommendations on physical activity for health, which consists of 150 minutes of weekly physical activity with moderate intensity or another alternative movement.

According to the Study for the evaluation of the Health Behaviors of school-aged children (here-in-after), from 2014 in the Republic of Moldova:

- Only 23% of adolescents exercised for at least 60 minutes a day during a week, and 4.6% did not exercise at all. The frequency of daily physical activity, of at least one hour a day, decreases with age, both in girls and boys.
- Only a third of respondents (33.2%) - 42.5% of boys and 24.3% of girls answered that they practice physical activity outside for 2-3 hours or more per week.

Increasing physical activity is a priority of public health as well as of whole society. Therefore, a multisectoral and multidisciplinary approach is needed at different levels, taking into account the characteristics of the cultural, environmental and individual determinants of certain population groups.

In order to promote a healthy lifestyle, in 2016, the Government of the Republic of Moldova approved the National Health Promotion Program for 2016-2020. One of the specific objectives of the Program is:

- Reducing the prevalence of physical inactivity by 5% by 2020 by promoting and encouraging daily physical activity at all stages of life, reducing inequities.

To achieve this goal, every year, together with non-governmental organizations, civil society organizes different events to promote a healthy lifestyle, including:

- Health promotion activities within the World Day for prevention of diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and obesity prevention, etc.
- Sports competitions, marathon days, sports days at national and local levels, with the participation of people of all ages, including people with special needs;
- Elaboration of recommendations for curative physical activities for different target groups of the population.

For monitoring and surveillance of physical activity, the Republic of Moldova uses the set of tools developed by WHO: the STEPS step-by-step approach - to monitor the dynamics of physical activity indicators and risk factors for the development of non-communicable diseases in the adult population.

In addition, the Republic of Moldova participates in the WHO European Initiative for the Surveillance of Childhood Obesity. It collects nationally representative data on the prevalence of overweight, obesity and health-related risk behaviors among children, as well as on the school environment and the socio-economic status of families, with an emphasis on physical activity.

Also, our country participates in the HBSC research network - international investigation of students: „*The behavior towards health of school-aged children (HBSC)*”. HBSC collects data every four years on 11-, 13-, and 15-year-old boys and girls, their health and well-being, social environment, and health-related behavior.