

Physical Activity Factsheet

Thailand



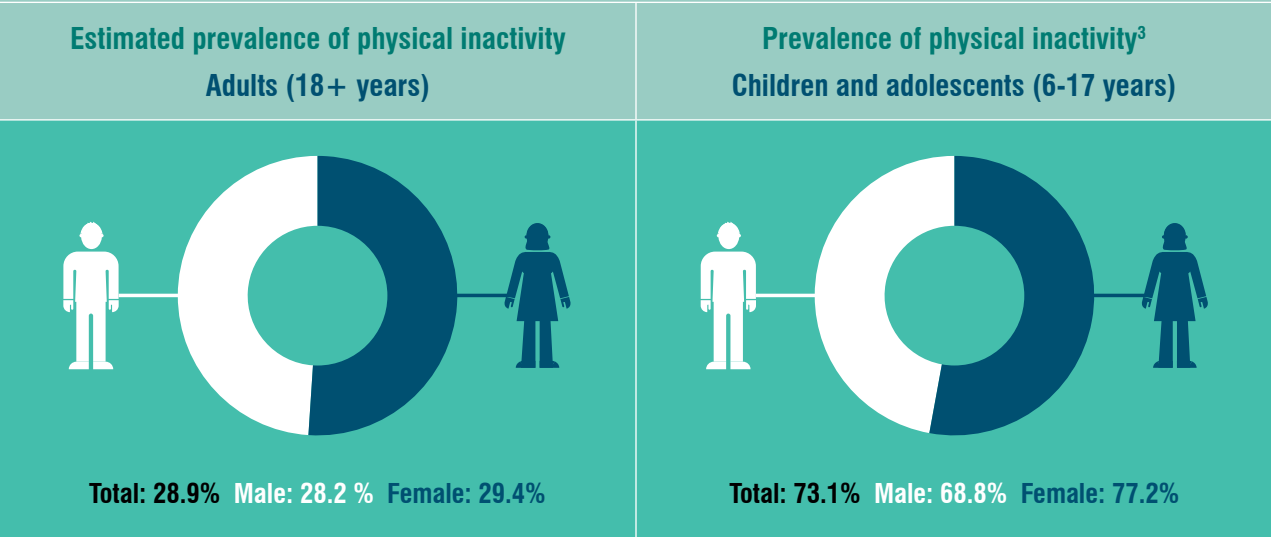
Demographics¹

Capital: Bangkok **Population:** 71 702 435 **Urban population:** 54% **Life expectancy:** 80 years
Gini inequality index: 0.35 **World Bank income category:** Upper middle income

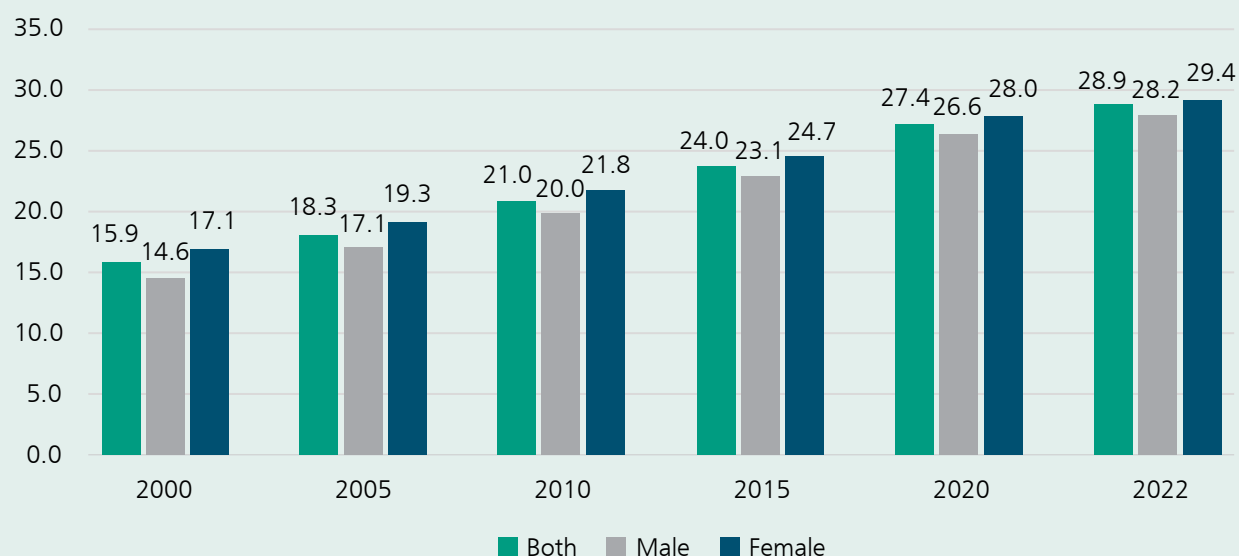
Introduction on physical activity promotion

Regular physical activity is proven to help prevent and treat noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and breast and colon cancer. It also helps to prevent hypertension, overweight and obesity and can improve mental health, quality of life and well-being. In this factsheet an overview is presented of the status of physical activity promotion and policy response in Thailand.

Physical activity participation²



Prevalence of insufficient physical activity among adults aged 18+ years (age-standardized estimate)²



National surveillance

The Thailand's Health Behavior of Population Survey by the National Statistical Office includes questions to assess physical activity among both adults and adolescence. The survey has been administered in 2021 and the PA questions included are based on the GPAQ questionnaire. There is no national data on sedentary behavior.



Policy response

In 2018 the cabinet endorsed the Thailand Physical Activity Strategy and Multi-Sectoral Action Plan 2018-2030⁴. The policy plan aims to promote sufficient physical activity and decrease sedentary behaviors among Thai people through three strategic actions: Active People, Active Places, and Active Supporting Systems.

Thailand has formulated national guidelines on physical activity, sedentary behaviour, and sleep since 2016 by MOPH, IHPP and ThaiHealth. The guidelines cover different population groups which are children under five years old, children and adolescents, adult, older adults, pregnant and postpartum women, people living with NCD.

In 2023 Thailand conducted a national situational analysis using the WHO SAT tool to collate what is being done in terms of policy action to promote PA. All relevant policy domains, sectors and stakeholders were engaged.



PA policy actions⁵

National target for PA	Yes
(sub)national PA communications campaign	Partial
National road-safety policy	Yes
Promotion of PA in the workplace	No
Brief intervention on PA in PHC	Partial
School based approach	Yes



National coordination mechanism and leadership in promotion of physical activity

There is a national steering committee to promote physical activity as well as a national focal point within the Physical Activity and Health Division, Department of Health, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand.



Promising initiatives

A description of national initiatives/success stories per policy domain

- ◉ In 2005 Thailand initiated a public education and mass media campaign to raise awareness on physical activity. The Ministry of Public Health and ThaiHealth are the leading responsible agencies. National campaigns, such as 'Exercise is best medicine' and 'Run for new life', were developed targeting different population groups.
- ◉ In 2020 Thailand initiated the National Step Challenge (KAO-TA-JAI Project). This ongoing campaign integrates technology as a tool to encourage physical activity for people of all ages and to reduce sedentary behaviour at country-wide level.

Data sources

- (1) The World Bank. Data on population, urban population, life expectancy, gini inequality index, and country income category. Accessed March 2025.
- (2) World Health Organization (2024). Global Health Observatory Data. Prevalence of insufficient physical activity among adults aged 18+ years (age-standardized estimate).
- (3) Anantalia Widyastari et al (2022). Results from the Thailand 2022 report card on physical activity for children and youth. *Journal of Exercise Science & Fitness*, 20(4), 276-282.
- (4) Ministry of Public Health Thailand (2018). Thailand Physical Activity Strategy and Multi-Sectoral Action Plan 2018-2030
- (5) NCD Country Capacity Survey (2023). World Health Organization.

