

World Bank classification: High income
Total population: 11 617 623
Median age (years): 41.9
Gross Domestic Produc (GDP) per capita (€): 37 040
GDP for health (%): 8.1
GDP for education (%): 6.3
GDP for sports (%): 1.2
Population, male (%): 49.4
Population, female (%): 50.6
Life expectancy, males (years): 79.7
Life expectancy, females (years): 83.9

Source: Eurostat
https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00205/default
table?lann=en&category=t_demo.t_demo_mor_



National recommendations on physical activity for health

Target groups included

YES	Children (< 5 years)	YES	During pregnancy
YES	Children and adolescents (5–17 years)	YES	During breastfeeding
YES	Adults (18–64 years)		
YES	Older adults (≥ 65 years)	YES	People with disability
YES	Frail and very elderly adults (≥ 85 years)	YES	People with chronic diseases

Link to national recommendations: https://www.gezondleven.be/themas/beweging-sedentair-gedrag; https://www.aviq.be/sites/default/files/2021-10/PlanWALAPSant%C3%A9-FICH.pdf

SUCCESS STORY



The Flemish physical activity guidelines 2021 are now officially combined with the evidence-based educational model, Physical activity triangle, as a stepwise recommendation for achieving the physical activity guidelines. The "Physical activity triangle" was tested in physically inactive citizens. It illustrates the proportions of sedentary behaviour, light, moderate and vigorous physical activity, from daily to weekly, stipulating that "every step counts" since 2017. This approach was evaluated and proven to be more motivating than traditional physical activity guidelines and the traditional physical activity pyramid. In the second communication phase, citizens are directed to the official physical activity guidelines, with physical activity expressed in minutes. The physical activity triangle is being implemented by many stakeholders in several sectors (e.g. health, education, work, sport).

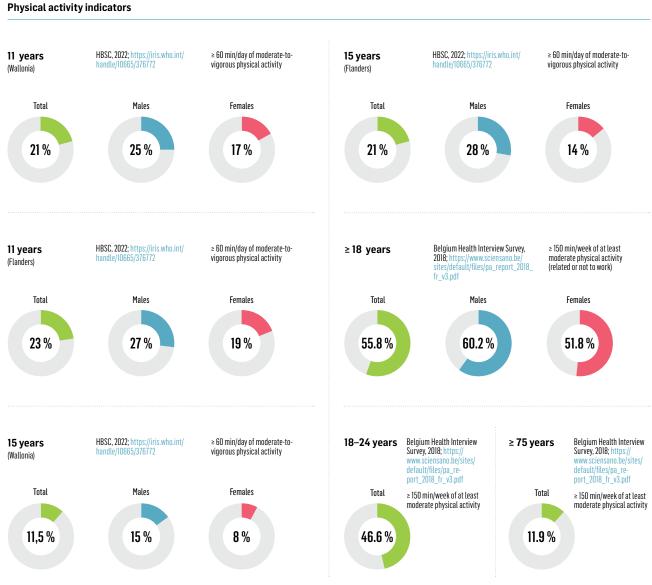
https://www.bewegingsdriehoek.be; https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0738399120303438; https://www.gezondleven.be/files/beweging/aanbevelingen/volwassenen-front-back.pdf

Monitoring and surveillance of physical activity

Sectors with surveillance systems



Prevalence of physical activity





National government coordination mechanism and leadership on the promotion of physical activity

The Flemish Ministry for Health and the Flanders Institute for Healthy Living coordinate a mechanism for HEPA. Additionally, the sport ministries coordinate Belgium HEPA Coordination, established in 2015. These mechanisms consist of informal meetings for data collection, exchange of information and good practices and preparation for international HEPA meetings.

https://www.zorg-en-gezondheid.be/beleid/preventieve-gezondheidszorg/gezondheidsdoelstellingen-en-prioriteiten/gezondheidsdoelstelling-gezonder-leven; https://www.gezondleven.be/projecten/settinggericht-samenwerken-met-partnerorganisatie-ondersteuning-settinggericht-werken-po-osw

Funding for the promotion of physical activity for health

Funding allocated specifically to physical activity promotion by sector



^a Wallonia



SUCCESS STORY

In Flanders, MOEV, an organization funded by the Government, plays a crucial role in advancing physical activity in schools. With oversight from both the Education and Sports ministries, MOEV supports schools in developing and implementing comprehensive sports policies. Their approach ensures that students from nursery through secondary education engage in healthy, active lifestyles by making physical activity enjoyable.

In Wallonia, the Administration générale du Sport (Adeps) Action Sportive Locale (Local sportive action) initiative simplifies and accelerates funding for sports clubs. By making subsidies more efficient and user-friendly, Adeps fosters the creation of coherent, long-term sports policies that prioritize development and innovation. This initiative supports local needs and encourages a strategic approach to sports programming.

https://www.moev.be; https://www.sport-adeps.be/index.php?id=subventions-sport-local

National policies or action plans for the promotion of physical activity for health

National policy highlights

Project for Developing Sport in Prison

The aim of Development of Sport in Prison for Youth in Public Protection Institutions is to use sports for social reintegration and rehabilitation. Recognizing the role of sports in preventing recidivism and promoting healthy lifestyles, the project targets detainees and young people in public protection institutions. Through structured sports programmes, participants develop essential social skills, learn teamwork and improve their physical and mental health. With a budget in 2024 of $\[\in \]$ 40 000, the initiative invites recognized sports organizations to implement up to 50 h of sports activities per project, fostering values such as perseverance and responsibility. The project's long-term goal is to establish sustainable practices within prisons and youth institutions, contributing to successful reintegration and safer communities.

 $https://www.sport-adeps.be/index.php?elD=tx_nawsecuredl&u=0\&g=0\&hash=5b0e9ebccd3efa97d43ca03c938adcddd1f7bf26\&file=fileadmin/sites/adeps/upload/adeps_super_editor/documents/Appels_a_projets/Appel_a_projets_-Sport_en_milieu_carceral-IPPJ_2024.pdf$

Organized sports sector in Flanders: policy focus on disadvantaged groups

The aim of this initiative is to promote physical activity among disadvantaged populations by supporting sport federations and organizations in developing tailored projects designed to remove barriers to participation, ensuring that sports offerings are accessible and inclusive. Organizations can submit project proposals every 2 years and receive funding for up to 4 years. To qualify for subsidies, they must integrate this focus into their policy plans and report separately on their progress. The aim is to increase physical activity in underserved communities, ultimately improving health outcomes and promoting inclusivity in sports. https://www.sport.vlaanderen/sportfederaties/subsidies-voor-sportfederaties/decretale-projectsubsidies/beleidsfocus-kansengroepen/

Plan Sport au Féminin

The aim of the Plus Sportives (More sportive) campaign (2020–2024) by the Wallonia–Brussels Federation is to increase participation in sports by girls and women and promote gender equality in sports decision-making. It quantifies and highlights gender disparities, encourages women's involvement in sports, ensures better female representation in leadership roles and combats discrimination and sexist violence in sports. As the membership of sports federations is 72% male and 28% female, the campaign addresses barriers such as lack of time, high costs and a preference for single-sex environments, while emphasizing motivations such as social aspects, high-quality supervision, flexible free practice and the physical and mental benefits of sports. https://plus-sportives.cfwb.be/a-propos/

Strategic plan The Flemish Live Healthier in 2025

The plan takes a comprehensive public health approach, with nine core principles, including integrating health into all policies and addressing vulnerable groups. It outlines eight objectives to enhance health in settings such as schools, workplaces and health-care facilities. The 2021–2022 revision added fall and fracture prevention for the elderly, preventive oral care and mental health promotion. Its focus is on increasing physical activity to make healthy lifestyles more accessible in schools, leisure activities and workplace initiatives. The evaluation of the Plan in 2022 noted progress in policy integration and outcomes and identified areas for improvement, such as enhancing stakeholder collaboration and reinforcing promotion of physical activity. https://www.zorg-en-gezondheid.be/gezondheidsdoelstelling-gezonder-leven

National policies or action plans for the promotion of physical activity for health



- 1 Call for Projects for Developing Sport in Prison https://www.sport-adeps.be/index.php?eID=tx_ nawsecuredt&u=0&g=0&hash=5b0e8ebccd3efa97d43ca03c938adcddd1f7bf26&file=fileadmin/sites/ adeps/upload/adeps_super_editor/adeps_editor/documents/Appels_a_Projets/Appel_a_projets__ Sport_en_milieu_carceral-IPPJ_2024.pdf
- 2 Contrat d'Administration French Community Ministry https://www.federation-wallonie-bruxelles.be/index.php?ell=tx_ nawsecuredl&l=0&g=0&hash=21d6adb4222e4ddeab9423ac8b0186822a14d8fe&file=fileadmin/sites/ portail/uploads/Illustrations_documents_images/A_A_propos_de_la_Federation/4_Ministere/4.3_ Plan_du_management/FEDE_2025_Brochure_globale.pdf
- 3 Déclaration de Politique Communautaire (end 2024) https://gouvernement.cfwb.be/files/live/sites/cfwb0/files/Documents/D%c3%a9claration%20de%20 Politique%20Communautaire%202019-2024.pdf
- 4 Educational goals for health
- 5 Flanders Bicycle Ambition 2040 https://www.vlaanderen.be/departement-mobiliteit-en-openbare-werken/beleidsthemas/fietsbeleid/fietsambitie-2040
- **6** Sport en Inclusie [Masterplan Inclusion In and Through Sport] https://www.sport.vlaanderen/sport-en-inclusie/
- 7 MOEV Sports and Physical Activity Moves Your School https://www.moev.be
- 8 Organized Sports Sector in Flanders: Policy Focus on Disadvantaged Groups https://www.sport.vlaanderen/sportfederaties/subsidies-voor-sportfederaties/decretaleprojectsubsidies/beleidsfocus-kansengroepen/
- 9 Plan Sport au Féminin https://plus-sportives.cfwb.be/a-propos/
- https://plus-sportives.cfwb.be/a-propos/

 Plan WALAP Santé
- https://www.aviq.be/sites/default/files/2021-10/PlanWALAPSant%C3%A9-FICH.pdf
- 11 Strategic Plan 2020–2025 for Assistance and Services to Prisoners in Flanders https://www.vlaanderen.be/agentschap-justitie-en-handhaving/justitie/coordinatie-hulp-endienstverlening-aan-gedetineerden-en-geinterneerden/hulp-en-dienstverlening-aan-gedetineerden
- 12 Strategic Plan 'The Flemish Live Healthier in 2025' https://www.zorg-en-gezondheid.be/gezondheidsdoelstelling-gezonder-leven
- 13 Strategic Vision Statement 2030 on Sports Promotion

Sectors involved in the design of the policy or action plan



Health	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Education	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Sports	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Environment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Urban planning	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Transport	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Plan for evaluation of a specific policy



Policy 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Target groups included



General population	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Children < 5 years	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Children and adolescents (5–17 years)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		9	10	11	12	13
Adults	1	2	3	4						10	11	12	13
Older adults (≥ 65 years)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Frail/elderly (≥ 85 years)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
People with disability	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
People with chronic diseases	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Pregnant women	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Breastfeeding women	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Low socio-economic groups	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Ethnic minorities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Deprived of liberty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Migrants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Unemployed people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Sports clubs for health

In Belgium, the WHO Guidelines for Sports Clubs for Health Programmes have not been formally adopted, but both Flanders and Wallonia are advancing health-focused initiatives for sports clubs.

Flanders is using a "safe and healthy sports climate" approach to encourage lifelong participation in sports. The "Is your sports club in top shape?" toolkit provides practical resources for improving club health, including first aid, addressing eating disorders and promoting smoke-free environments. This toolkit, developed by the network group on leisure helps enhance the health and safety of sports clubs. This network group strengthens cooperation between organisations working on prevention/health, including to sports clubs.

Wallonia does not have a specific programme aligned with the guidelines but promotes physical activity through the Association Interfédérale du Sport francophone, which supports sports clubs with resources and training. This association, officially recognized by the Ministry of Sports, provides aid in communication, finance, technical support and safety.

www.sport.vlaanderen/sportclubs/toolkit-voor-sportclubs; www.gezondleven.be/projecten/settinggericht-samenwerken-met-partnerorganisatie-ondersteuning-settinggericht-werken-po-osw; https://aisf.be/#l/services https://aisf.be/nos-formations/ https://www.aes-asbl.be/formation-premiers-soins-en-milieu-sportif-adeps/

Increasing access to exercise facilities for socially disadvantaged groups

Initiatives to increase access to exercise facilities for socially disadvantaged groups in Belgium include several strategic initiatives. In Flanders, the UiTPAS programme offers substantial discounts on leisure activities, including sports, to individuals in poverty, often providing cards at a reduced rate or free of charge. Additionally, the Sport After School programme connects youths with affordable sports opportunities. The strategic plan Flemish Live Healthier in 2025 targets health inequity by promoting universal proportionalism. Similarly, in Wallonia, the French Community's Sports Ministry supports access through the Projet Pass Sport, which provides a \in 30 voucher for joining sports clubs, and the Stages ADEPS initiative, which offers low-cost sports courses. Further, the Sport sur Ordonnance project establishes Sports Wellness Houses, which provide specialized physical activities tailored to various groups, including children, seniors and individuals with chronic health conditions or disabilities that affect their ability to engage in regular exercise.

https://www.gezondleven.be/themas/gezondheidsongelijkheid; www.publiq.be/nl/projecten/uitpas; https://sportnaschool.be/wat-is-sns; https://www.sport-adeps.be/index.php?id=8858 Stage Adeps: https://activites.sport-adeps.be/catalogue/stages
Project "sport sur ordonnance": https://www.sport-sur-ordonnance.be/



Counselling on physical activity and exercise prescription

The aim of the project Bewegen op Verwijzing (Sports well-being house) is to increase physical activity levels among inactive and/or sedentary individuals. Funded by the Flemish Ministry of Health and implemented in the public sector, the project allows any health-care professional to refer inactive patients to a physical activity coach. Patients begin with an intake session, when a personalized activity plan is created. They can attend up to 7 h of follow-up sessions per year of motivational interviewing and physical activity counselling. The programme is embedded in communities and involves a network of local organizations, coordinated by the Flanders Institute for Healthy Living, which also provides training and support for coaches.

https://www.bewegenopverwijzing.be

https://www.gezondleven.be/nieuws/bewegen-op-verwijzing-breidt-uit-ook-kinesisten-psychologen-en-sociaal-werkers-helpen-om-meer-te-bewegen

Sport sur ordonnance (Sport on Prescription) allows doctors to prescribe physical activity for patients with long-term conditions (e.g. diabetes, hypertension, cancer), thus integrating physical activity into the treatment of chronic diseases. Patients can engage in regular physical activity supervised by a qualified instructor who follows exercise medicine guidelines. https://www.sport-sur-ordonnance.be/; https://youtu.be/wXMSb3gJm2q.

Project Maison sports bien-être (Sports well-being house): Organized by the Ministry of Sport of the french-speaking community, these multidisciplinary structures (medical, sports, social) offer personalized support for individuals starting or resuming physical activity. They are open to people of all ages, health status and physical condition.

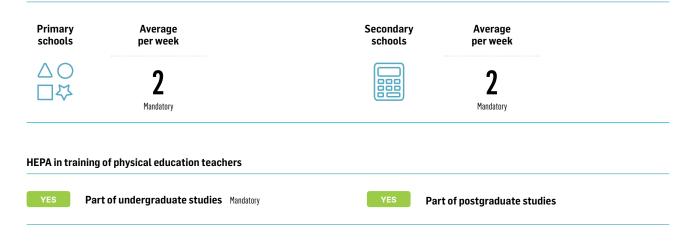
https://www.sport-adeps.be/index.php?id=8760

$\label{thm:continuous} \textbf{Health professionals who are trained in physical activity and health}$

Each institution independently decides whether to include physical activity and health in its curriculum, with no oversight from the Flemish Government. Some universities include such a course for physiotherapists, while other professionals may receive only brief instruction. Increasingly, doctors, dietitians and nurses are receiving such training; however, it is inconsistent and fragmented across institutions.

			— In Wallonia ———		
				5 9	
	Medical doctors	Physiotherapists	Nurses	Nutritionists/ dieticians	Psychologists
	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Undergraduate					
Postgraduate	_	-	_	_	_
	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	

Physical education in schools



Promotion of physical activity in schools

YES	During school breaks (Flanders)	YES	After school
YES	During lessons (Flanders)	YES	Active travel to and from school

SUCCESS STORY



SWEEP is an initiative of the Flanders Institute for Healthy Living, the Department of Health Care, Sport Flanders, MOEV and the Department of Education. Its aim is to inspire and motivate young people aged 12–18 years to exercise and to enjoy it. SWEEP promotes physical activity during lessons, breaks, travel and before and after school hours. It provides teachers with teaching materials, tips, tricks and action boxes with gadgets to integrate physical activity into their teaching. SWEEP helps teachers in all disciplines to organize activities that meet their preferences and curriculum objectives.

https://www.sweep.be

National travel survey

Walking and cycling for all travel purposes (commuting, shopping, leisure, work)



Infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity

Belgium's sports infrastructure is managed by targeted regional frameworks and subsidy schemes to enhance and extend sports facilities across the country. A comprehensive investment plan supports local authorities, sports organizations and federations in constructing, renovating and equipping sports facilities to ensure accessibility and safety. Between 2017 and 2023, substantial funding was allocated to numerous projects to improve both supralocal sports centres and school sports facilities, which are opened to local communities. Additionally, various regional agencies manage databases, analyse sports practices, develop strategies and promote sports through the media, all while fostering exercise-friendly public spaces and infrastructure to support diverse physical activities, including the development of route-based infrastructures such as mountain bike, inline skating, and cycling routes. Sport Flanders has also developed a framework with accessibility standards and a quality label. https://www.sport.vlaanderen/wij-helpen-bij-sportinfrastructuur/subsidies-voor-sportinfrastructuur/; www.agion.be/multifunctionele-schoolinfrastructuur; www.gezondleven.be/settings/gezonde-gemeente; https://perspective.brussels/fr/enjeux-urbains/sport

Promotion of physical activity in the workplace



National guidance or programme to promote active travel to work (e.g. walking, cycling)

YES

Belgium promotes cycling as a sustainable commuting option through a range of initiatives for both individuals and employers. Financial incentives such as kilometric allowances and bonuses for purchasing bicycles, including electric ones, encourage more people to cycle to work. Employers are provided with resources and support, including promotional materials, workplace bike policies and training for mobility coordinators. Additionally, the development of cycle highways will make cycling a practical alternative to driving for short and medium distances, reinforcing sustainable mobility across the country.

https://www.biketowork.be; https://www.vlaanderen.be/departement-mobiliteit-en-openbare-werken/beleidsthemas/fietsbeleid/beleid-fietssnelwegen; https://mobilite.wallonie.be/home/politiques-de-mobilite/wallonie-cyclable/primes-regionales-velo.html; https://mobilit.belgium.be/fr/mobilite-durable/velos/avantages-fiscaux-et-primes-velo



National guidance or programme to promote physical activity at the workplace

YES

Belgium emphasizes workplace health and well-being through various initiatives to promote physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour. Programmes such as the Healthy Work framework and Sports at Work offer lunchtime sports, gym facilities, walking tracks and incentives for employees to stay active. Innovative collaborations are being launched to create healthier office environments, with support for small and medium-sized enterprises and self-employed individuals through initiatives like the FitBonus program, which provides personalized health guidance. Public sector institutions also encourage participation in physical and cultural activities, reflecting a nationwide commitment to fostering a healthier work environment.

https://www.gezondleven.be/settings/gezond-werken; https://www.sport.vlaanderen/bedrijven/word-sportbedrijf; https://fitbonus.be/

Community interventions for older adults



National guidance or programme for community interventions to promote physical activity in older adults

YES

Belgium is committed to promoting active ageing and physical well-being among older adults through various initiatives and programmes. The country supports sports activities for seniors by developing accessible options and motivating this population to stay active. Platforms like Blijf in Beweging (Keep Moving) of Sport Flanders offer a wide range of exercise videos, while community interventions include falls prevention and encouraging daily physical activity through campaigns such as the 10 000 Steps project. Additionally, recognized federations and organizations provide adapted sports and leisure activities tailored for people over 50 years, emphasizing fun, social connections and healthy ageing without performance pressure. The "Citoyen, en mouvement pour ma santé" project, developed by the university hospital and the University of Liège, also offer free weekly physical activities for people with chronic conditions, fostering well-being in collaboration with local communities and health professionals. Fit Your Mind is a non-profit organization offering adapted physical and dance activities supervised by health and fitness professionals.

 $https://www.sport.vlaanderen/sporters-beleven-meer/actief-ouder-worden/; https://10000stappen.gezondleven.be/; https://www.chuliege.be/jcms/c2_26224880/en-mouvement-pour-ma-sante/accueil; https://fityourmind.be/$



SUCCESS STORY

In 2023, ÉnéoSport launched the «Quinzaine Aînergie» campaign, which has been renewed with support from the Mutualité Chrétienne (health insurance), the Sport Ministry and the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. This initiative encourages seniors to stay active by highlighting the importance of physical activity and motivating them to engage in sports through ÉnéoSport's network of over 330 affiliated sports circles.

 $\frac{\text{https://www.sport-adeps.be/index.phpid=detail_article\&tx_cfwbarticlefe_cfwbarticlefront\%5Baction\%5D=show\&tx_cfwbarticlefe_cfwbarticlefront\%5Bpublication\%5D=4398\&cHash=c1a49278999ea1e89622402808b04533$

National awareness-raising campaign on physical activity

Sport Flanders acts to inspire the Flemish population to exercise more and adopt a healthier, more active lifestyle. Their long-running campaign, #sportersbelevenmeer (#athletesexperiencemore), serves as an umbrella for various initiatives. A new campaign within this framework, "More time for sport" (in early 2024), addresses 60- to 70-year-olds, especially those nearing retirement or recently retired, to promote the importance of physical activity and connect them with local sports resources. 10 000 Steps, by the Flanders Institute for Healthy Living, is an annual campaign that promotes physical activity through evidence-based strategies. It addresses inactive adults and older people through individual and environmental interventions, social media strategies and other campaign materials.,

https://www.sport.vlaanderen/sporters-beleven-meer

The Sports Ministry organizes the annual European Sport Week (#BeActive) during the last week of September, an initiative of the European Commission to promote lifelong physical activity. The 2023 edition addresses involvement, inclusion and innovation. For the 2024 Olympic Games, the Ministry launched the Paris Gagnant campaign to encourage physical activity. The campaign features a video with athletes already qualified for the Games, promoted via social media. In 2019, the Sports Ministry of the French Community conducted a survey on physical activity practices, identifying expectations, obstacles and motivational factors. The results were used to plan actions to promote physical activity.

Media used in national campaigns



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