

GERMANY

COUNTRY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FACTSHEET 2024

World Bank classification: High income
 Total population: 83 237 124
 Median age (years): 45.8
 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita (€): 36 010
 GDP for health (%): 8.5
 GDP for education (%): 4.5
 GDP for sports (%): 1
 Population, male (%): 49.3
 Population, female (%): 50.7
 Life expectancy, males (years): 78.3
 Life expectancy, females (years): 83

Source: Eurostat
https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00205/default/table?lang=en&category=t_demo.1_demo_mor



Photo: © Pascal Schiewe

▶ National recommendations on physical activity for health

Target groups included

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	Children (< 5 years)	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	During pregnancy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	Children and adolescents (5–17 years)	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	During breastfeeding
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	Adults (18–64 years)	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	People with disability
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	Older adults (≥ 65 years)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	People with chronic diseases
<input type="checkbox"/> NO	Frail and very elderly adults (≥ 85 years)		

Link to national recommendations: <https://www.sport.fau.de/files/2015/05/National-Recommendations-for-Physical-Activity-and-Physical-Activity-Promotion.pdf>

▶ Monitoring and surveillance of physical activity

Sectors with surveillance systems



Health

YES



Education

YES



Sports

YES



Transport

YES

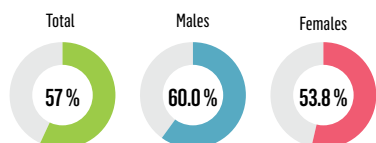
GERMANY

COUNTRY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FACTSHEET 2024

► Prevalence of physical activity

Physical activity indicators

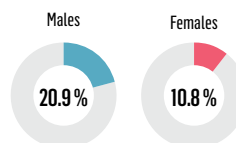
3–15 years



Kindergesundheit in Deutschland aktuell, 2022; https://www.rki.de/EN/Content/Health_Monitoring/Health_Reporting/GBEDownloads/JFocus_en/JHealthMonit_2023_02_German_Childrens_Health_Update.pdf?__blob=publicationFile

≥ 60 min/day of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (telephone survey, WHO 2020 guideline)

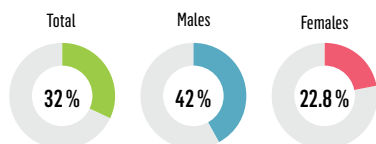
11, 13 and 15 years



HBSC, 2022; https://www.rki.de/EN/Content/Health_Monitoring/Health_Reporting/GBEDownloads/JFocus_en/JHealthMonit_2024_01_Physical_Activity.pdf?__blob=publicationFile

≥ 60 min/day of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (school-based questionnaire survey, WHO 2010 guideline)

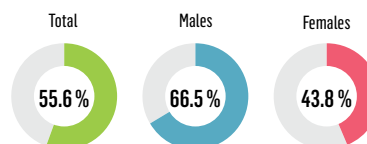
6–17 years



MoMo-Study Waves 2 and 3, 2014-2017 and 2018-2022; [https://www.ifss.kit.edu/MoMo/Nigg & Burchartz et al., in Review](https://www.ifss.kit.edu/MoMo/Nigg%20&%20Burchartz%20et%20al.,%20in%20Review)

≥ 60 min/day on average accelerometer measured moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity (WHO 2020 guideline)

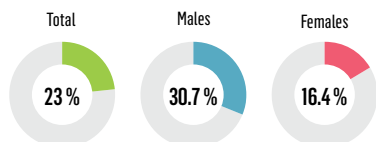
6–10 years



MoMo-Study Waves 2 and 3, 2014-2017 and 2018-2022; [https://www.ifss.kit.edu/MoMo/Nigg & Burchartz et al., in Review](https://www.ifss.kit.edu/MoMo/Nigg%20&%20Burchartz%20et%20al.,%20in%20Review)

≥ 60 min/day on average accelerometer measured moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity (WHO 2020 guideline)

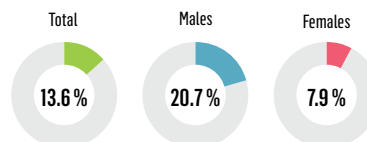
11–13 years



MoMo-Study Waves 2 and 3, 2014-2017 and 2018-2022; [https://www.ifss.kit.edu/MoMo/Nigg & Burchartz et al., in Review](https://www.ifss.kit.edu/MoMo/Nigg%20&%20Burchartz%20et%20al.,%20in%20Review)

≥ 60 min/day on average accelerometer measured moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity (WHO 2020 guideline)

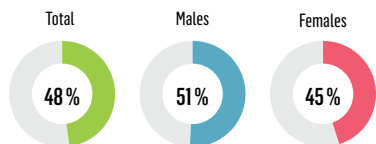
14–17 years



MoMo-Study Waves 2 and 3, 2014-2017 and 2018-2022; [https://www.ifss.kit.edu/MoMo/Nigg & Burchartz et al., in Review](https://www.ifss.kit.edu/MoMo/Nigg%20&%20Burchartz%20et%20al.,%20in%20Review)

≥ 60 min/day on average accelerometer measured moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity (WHO 2020 guideline)

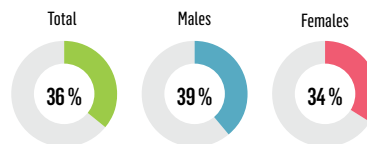
18–99 years



German Health Update (GEDA), 2019–2020; <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/robert.koch.institut/viz/shared/ZQY2RWJG4>

≥ 150 min/week moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity for an average of 10 minutes per day (telephone survey, WHO 2010 guideline)

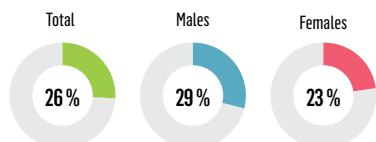
18–99 years



GEDA; https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/Gesundheitsmonitoring/Studien/Geda/Geda_node.html

Muscle-strengthening activities on ≥ 2 days/week (telephone survey, WHO 2010 guideline)

18–99 years



GEDA, 2019–2020; <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/robert.koch.institut/viz/shared/ZQY2RWJG4>

Combination of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity (≥ 150 min/week) and muscle-strengthening activities on ≥ 2 days/week (telephone survey, WHO 2010 guideline)

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

The Federal Ministry of Health and its specialist authorities, the Federal Centre for Health Education and the Robert Koch Institute coordinate the Steering Group on Physical Activity Promotion, established in 2022. They group activities for physical activity promotion and improve coordination to establish mutual understanding of physical activity promotion and agreement on how to proceed. The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development coordinates the National Working Group on Sport for Development, established in 2013. The Group is intersectoral and works with sports in international development. The Ministry of the Environment, Nature and Transport of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia coordinates the Interministerial Working group for the promotion of physical activity established in 2023, to develop a common approach for infrastructure to promote physical activity.

<https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/themen/praevention/bewegungsfoerderung>; <https://www.bmz.de/en/issues/sport>



SUCCESS STORY

In 2022, the Federal Ministry of Health initiated a Round Table on Physical Activity and Health (Runder Tisch Bewegung und Gesundheit), an intersectoral, participatory process involving key Government and nongovernmental stakeholders from all relevant (political) sectors and levels. The goal of the Round Table was to strengthen physical activity promotion in Germany. To achieve this goal, the needs of all groups (young families and infants, children and adolescents, adults and older adults) were identified in a series of meetings. Once the needs had been identified, the Round Table agreed on measures, which are summarized in a consensus paper, to strengthen physical activity promotion in Germany. The Federal Ministry of Health will further support and monitor implementation of the measures.

https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/fileadmin/Dateien/5_Publikationen/Praevention/Broschueren/Konsenspapier_Runder_Tisch.pdf

▶ Funding for the promotion of physical activity for health

Funding allocated specifically to physical activity promotion by sector



Health

YES



Education

YES



Sports

YES



Environment

—



Urban planning

—



Transport

YES



Other

YES

SUCCESS STORY

The Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community launched the ReStart – Sport moves Germany (ReStart - Sport bewegt Deutschland) programme to encourage people to re-engage with club sports after the COVID-19 pandemic. The campaign Your club: Sport, only better (Dein Verein: Sport, nur besser) promoted the programme widely, highlighting the benefits of returning to sports and physical activity.

The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth MOVE campaign and the programme of the German Sports Youth, part of the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB), has addressed various themes over the years, with a recent emphasis on mental health. The Federal programme Future Package for Movement, Culture and Health (Das Zukunftspaket für Bewegung, Kultur und Gesundheit) supports projects related to physical activity, cultural activities and health, specifically targeting young people aged 0–26 years. In 2023, about 50% of funded projects in this programme were related to physical activity and health.

<https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/pressemitteilungen/DE/2024/01/fazit-restart.html>; <https://www.dosb.de/sportentwicklung/restart>; <https://www.move-sport.de/>; <https://www.das-zukunftspaket.de/>



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

National policy highlights

National Prevention Conference recommendations

The National Prevention Conference adopted recommendations to enhance the effectiveness and quality of health promotion and prevention in Germany, emphasizing the importance of physical activity. Framework agreements between social insurance institutions and relevant State agencies have been established to implement the strategy. Central to implementation is promotion of physical activity, one of four action areas defined in the Prevention Guideline by statutory health insurance funds. The funds support and subsidize certified sports and physical activity programmes. State health conferences, involving payers, service providers and self-help organizations, develop health goals, with a focus on physical activity. Since the National Prevention Conference, various projects, for example those in Thuringia, have been launched to create model interventions based on State health conference goals, advancing physical activity promotion and other health objectives.

Recommendations of the National Prevention Conference (Bundesrahmenempfehlungen): https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/fileadmin/Dateien/3_Downloads/P/Praeventionsgesetz/BRE_Fassung_vom_29.08.2018.pdf
Prevention Guideline (Leitfaden Prävention): https://www.gkv-spitzenverband.de/media/dokumente/krankenversicherung_1/praevention__selbsthilfe__beratung/praevention/praevention_leitfaden/2023-12_Leitfaden_Praevention_barrierefrei.pdf

Pedestrian Traffic Strategy

The Strategy was funded through the 2022 Federal budget to increase pedestrian safety and accessibility in Germany while also promoting physical activity. With an allocation of € 2.5 million for 2024, the Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport supports projects such as improved street design and model crossings, making walking safer and more appealing. The strategy integrates pedestrian traffic with other modes of transport and includes digitalization of urban mobility to facilitate more active transport. It includes the Road Safety Programme (2021–2030), which prioritizes protecting vulnerable pedestrians, especially the elderly, and includes educational campaigns to promote safe walking practices.

<https://bmdv.bund.de/EN/Topics/Mobility/Walking/walking.html>

General principles for remedial teaching of sports in schools

The general principles outlined in a resolution by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in May 2022 focus on fostering holistic personality development and addressing motor skill deficits in students. The initiative emphasizes the importance of tailored pedagogical approaches, including appropriate student selection and comprehensive teacher training, to deliver sports education effectively. In response to modern societal changes, such as increased digitalization and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the principles advocate creation of Physical Activity-promoting Schools in which physical activity is integrated into students' daily routines, both during and outside sports classes, to counteract sedentary lifestyles and encourage lifelong engagement in physical activity.

https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2022/2022_05_05-Sportfoerderung.pdf; https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/Dateien/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2023/2023_02_09-Bewegungsfoerdernde-Schule.pdf

GERMANY

COUNTRY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FACTSHEET 2024

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



- 1 National Dementia Strategy
<https://www.nationale-demenzstrategie.de/english>; <https://gesundheit.dosb.de/demenz>
- 2 National Cycling Plan (NRVP 3.0)
<https://bmdv.bund.de/SharedDocs/EN/Articles/StV/Cycling/nrvp.html>
- 3 Pedestrian Traffic Strategy
<https://bmdv.bund.de/EN/Topics/Mobility/Walking/walking.html>
- 4 National Action Plan In Form
<https://www.in-form.de/>
- 5 General principles of remedial teaching in sports at schools: Resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder of May 2022 Physical activity-promoting school – a summary of current progress in the länder
https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2022/2022_05_05-Sportfoerderungunterricht.pdf; https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/Dateien/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2023/2023_02_09-Bewegungsfoerderung-Schule.pdf
- 6 Sports promotion state laws, for example:
Brandenburg: <https://bravors.brandenburg.de/gesetze/sportfbbg>; Lower Saxony: <https://voris.wolterskluwer-online.de/browse/document/df38cae3-04c8-30fe-a136-a4e15bcd29f>; North Rhine Westphalia: <https://www.lsb.nrw/lsb-nrw/zielvereinbarung-sport-2023-bis-2027>
- 7 Preventive Health Care Act (Präventionsgesetz), 25 July 2015: Law to Strengthen Health Promotion and Prevention
<https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/service/begriffe-von-a-z/p/praeventionsgesetz.html>; https://www.bgbl.de/xaver/bgbl/start.xav?startbk=Bundesanzeiger_BGBl&jumpTo=bgbl115s1368.pdf#_bgbl_%2F%2F%5B%40attr_id%3D%27bgbl115s1368.pdf%27%5D_1712317998461
- 8 Recommendations of the National Prevention Conference (Bundesrahmenempfehlungen), State Health Conference (Landesgesundheitskonferenz) State framework agreements (Landesrahmenvereinbarungen) Prevention guideline (Leitfaden Prävention)
https://www.gkv-spitzenverband.de/media/dokumente/krankenversicherung_1/praevention_selbsthilfe_beratung/praevention/praevention_npk/20180828_BRE_Praevention_barrierefrei.pdf; https://www.gkv-spitzenverband.de/media/dokumente/krankenversicherung_1/praevention_selbsthilfe_beratung/praevention/praevention_leitfaden/2023-12_Leitfaden_Praevention_barrierefrei.pdf

Sectors involved in the design of the policy or action plan



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Health								
Education								
Sports								
Environment								
Urban planning								
Transport								

Target groups included



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

Plan for evaluation of a specific policy



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Policy								

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

► Sports clubs for health

Germany has not adopted the WHO Guidelines for Sports Club for Health Programmes. Instead, it uses its own Sport for Health (Sport pro Gesundheit) seal of quality, established by the DOSB in 2000. All preventive health sport programmes that are licenced with this quality seal must meet the core goals of health sport as well as the seal's own quality criteria. The DOSB is also developing recommendations for creating health-promoting sports club environments, which will include elements of the Guidelines. The initiatives include Recipe for Exercise (Rezept für Bewegung), which integrates written recommendations for exercise into health care, Movement against Cancer (Bewegung gegen Krebs), which promotes physical activity for cancer prevention, as well as change of place (Platzwechsel), which provides diverse physical activities in communities. The German Sports Badge (Deutsches Sportabzeichen) encourages broad participation for fitness, while United against Loneliness (Verein(t) gegen Einsamkeit) addresses loneliness by using sports clubs to build community connections.

<https://gesundheit.dosb.de/>; <https://gesundheit.dosb.de/sport-pro-gesundheit/qualitaetskriterien>
www.deutsches-sportabzeichen.de; <https://platzwechsel.jetzt/> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5f9Gu630yc>

► Increasing access to exercise facilities for socially disadvantaged groups

Germany implements a range of initiatives to improve access for socially disadvantaged populations. The pilot project "Moving Together – Healthy Living in Old Age" (GeniAl) targets older migrants. Funded by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and the Federal Ministry of Health and implemented by the DOSB, this project offers low-threshold sports and exercise programmes. It integrates older migrants through specific exercise and meeting opportunities, enhancing health awareness and fostering social connections. The project also supports establishment of municipal networks involving sports clubs, migrant organizations and multi-generational houses.

The United Against Loneliness (Verein(t) gegen Einsamkeit) project, 2022–2024, addresses loneliness through sports clubs. Funded by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, its aim is to integrate socially isolated individuals into the approximately 87 000 sports clubs in Germany. The project includes social media campaigns and awareness materials to reach lonely individuals and incentivizes clubs to engage with them. It also awards prizes to clubs for activities that combat loneliness and funds local sports days to attract inactive individuals.

The Federal programme, the Future Package for Movement, Culture and Health (Das Zukunftspaket für Bewegung Kultur und Gesundheit) supports projects led by young people for physical activity, culture and health. This programme, funded by the German Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, is designed particularly for socio-economically disadvantaged youth.

<https://integration.dosb.de/inhalte/projekte/gesundheitsfoerderung-aelterer-migrantinnen>;
<https://gesundheit.dosb.de/angebote/vereint-gegen-einsamkeit>; www.das-zukunftspaket.de

► Counselling on physical activity and exercise prescription






Statutory health insurance covers physician-prescribed rehabilitation sports and functional training and bonus programmes for health-conscious behaviour, with measures decided by the insurer. The 2015 Preventive Health Care Act promotes health and prevention, including physical activity counselling and medical recommendations.

<https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/service/begriffe-von-a-z/p/praeventionsgesetz.html>



GERMANY

COUNTRY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FACTSHEET 2024

Health professionals who are trained in health-enhancing physical activity

	 Medical doctors	 Physiotherapists	 Nurses	 Nutritionists/ dieticians	 Psychologists	PSYCHOTHERAPISTS, TEACHERS, EARLY EDUCATORS
	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Undergraduate	YES	YES	YES	—	—	—
Postgraduate	—	—	—	—	—	YES
	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory

Physical education in schools

Primary schools	Average per week	Secondary schools	Average per week
	1.5–2.25 Mandatory		2.25–4.5 Mandatory

HEPA in training of physical education teachers

YES	Part of undergraduate studies	Mandatory	YES	Part of postgraduate studies	Mandatory
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SUCCESS STORY

The aim of the Safe Swimming Teaching and Learning programme is to teach all primary schoolchildren how to swim safely in the context of basic physical education. It addresses water safety, motor experience and training in selected swimming techniques. The programme also includes modified movements to ensure inclusion and encourage active participation in sport and physical activities.

<https://www.kmk.org/de/dokumentation-statistik/beschluesse-und-veroeffentlichungen/bildung-schule/sport.html>

Promotion of physical activity in schools

YES	During school breaks	YES	After school
YES	During lessons	YES	Active travel to and from school

► National travel survey

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



"Mobility in Germany" study: <https://bmdv.bund.de/SharedDocs/DE/Artikel/G/mobilitaet-in-deutschland.html>

SUCCESS STORY

Since 2016, the State of Baden-Württemberg has implemented the Cycling Promotion Strategy (RadSTRATEGIE Baden-Württemberg), which comprises eight action areas, from infrastructure to health promotion and communication for behavioural change. One of the cycling promotion campaigns in Baden-Württemberg is the annual City Cycling (Stadtradeln) competition, which has had an almost exponential increase in the number of participants. In 2023, 220 000 citizens participated – an increase of 50 000 over the number in the previous year. Together, the participants cycled 49 million km, corresponding to one fifth of the total kilometers cycled in the whole nation. For the first time, in 2023, the Federal State Government also supported and promoted the School Cycling (Schulradeln) programme. Nearly one in every four schools took part in the first programme. In the same framework, Movers is organized in cooperation with the Federal State ministries for Transport, Education and the Interior.

<https://www.aktivmobil-bw.de/radverkehr/radstrategie/die-radstrategie>; <https://www.movers-bw.de/>

► Infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity

The DOSB was involved in development of the European Guidelines for Improving Infrastructure for Leisure-time Physical Activity. In Germany, each state is responsible for development of their sports facilities. The recommendation of the German Association for Sports Science is that integrated sports development should be planned to further develop sports infrastructure. Recently, research on further development of sports facilities has been funded by the Federal Institute of Sports Science.

https://www.oeiss.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Main/Forschung/2017_impalanet/2011_IMPALA_guideline_web_DE.pdf; https://www.sportwissenschaft.de/fileadmin/pdf/download/2018_Memorandum-2-SEP_web.pdf

► Promotion of physical activity in the workplace



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

YES

Since 2018, the Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport has been supporting a programme, Corporate Mobility Management (Betriebliches Mobilitätsmanagement) by funding implementation of mobility concepts. The goal of the programme is to reduce work-related CO₂ emissions by achieving more frequent use of public transport, cycling and walking and making working life more flexible. Specific funding measures to make active travel more attractive include purchase of bicycles, cargo bikes or electric bikes, construction of bicycle parking facilities and installation of shower and changing facilities. About 30 companies have received about million in funding for implementation of individual mobility concepts. From March 2024, a further 10 companies were supported in implementation of innovative mobility concepts.

<https://mobil-gewinnt.de/>



National guidance or programme to promote physical activity at the workplace

YES

Beyond active travel to work, the Corporate Mobility Management programme is making business trips more sustainable by creating networking opportunities. The measures have been shown to have a positive impact at both individual and societal levels.

The Social Code V mandates statutory health insurance funds, in cooperation with accident insurance institutions and authorities responsible for occupational health and safety to be used in the Federal states to establish and strengthen health-promoting structures.

<https://mobil-gewinnt.de/>

► Community interventions for older adults



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

YES

Long-term care insurance funds are legally required to provide prevention services in long-term care facilities, to make proposals for improving the health of residents with long-term care needs, to strengthen health resources and care and to support implementation.

The project Healthy and Active Ageing (Gesund und aktiv älter werden) of the Federal Centre for Health Education promotes activity among older adults in municipalities and nursing homes. The initiative is based on the WHO planning guide for physical activity by Edwards and Tsouros (2008). One element of the project is a digital toolbox developed by the Federal Centre for Health Education, the driving force for promoting physical activity (Impulsgeber Bewegungsförderung), which supports development of interventions to promote physical activity in municipalities. The toolbox is a step-by-step guide to creating an activity-friendly environment for older adults. Counselling services are also being developed to support municipal stakeholders.

Guidelines of the National Association of Statutory Long-term Care Insurance Funds: https://www.gkv-spitzenverband.de/media/dokumente/pflegeversicherung/Leitfaden_Pravention_Pflege_2023_barrierefrei.pdf; www.impulsgeber-bewegungsforderung.de

► National awareness-raising campaign on physical activity

The aim of the German Federal Centre for Health Education is to raise awareness among various target groups (such as children and young people, parents, older people) through different communication strategies. Below are selected examples in the field of physical activity promotion. There is a health communication initiative to promote healthy lifestyles and prevent noncommunicable diseases, including obesity in children and adolescents: <https://www.uebergewicht-vorbeugen.de>. Specific information on physical exercise for people living with diabetes is available on <https://www.diabinfo.de/>. The participation initiative Make children strong (Kinder stark machen) is based on the approach of promoting life skills, including exercise, to children aged 4–10 years in order to enable an addiction-free life. The DOSB and sports club are a major support in Kinder stark machen.

United against Loneliness (Verein(t) gegen Einsamkeit, 2022–2024) demonstrates how sports clubs can build community and combat loneliness. The MOVE campaign motivates young people to participate in sports and supports their mental well-being. Physical activity against cancer highlights the importance of physical activity in cancer prevention and care.

ReStart Project 2023, Your club: Sport, only better, encouraged sports participation in clubs after COVID-19 to promote a more active society. The project also provided financial and infrastructural support to sports clubs.

GERMANY

COUNTRY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FACTSHEET 2024

Media used in national campaigns



Television

YES



Radio

YES



Newspapers

YES



Social media

YES



Public events

YES



Public figures

YES

WEBSITES,
PODCASTS, POSTERS
AND ADVERTISEMENTS,
SPOTIFY, BILLBOARDS

Other

YES

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