



# CYPRUS

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FACTSHEET 2021

Total population: **0.90 m**

Median age: **37.7 years**

GDP per capita: **23 050 €**

Life expectancy, males: **80.3 years**

Life expectancy, females: **84.3 years**

Sources: Eurostat (2020/2021)



### National recommendations on physical activity for health

Cyprus is in the process of adapting the [2020 WHO recommendations](#), involving the Cyprus Sports Organization, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, and the Ministry of Health.

### Monitoring and surveillance of physical activity

#### SECTORS WITH SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS



✓ Health



✓ Education



✓ Sports



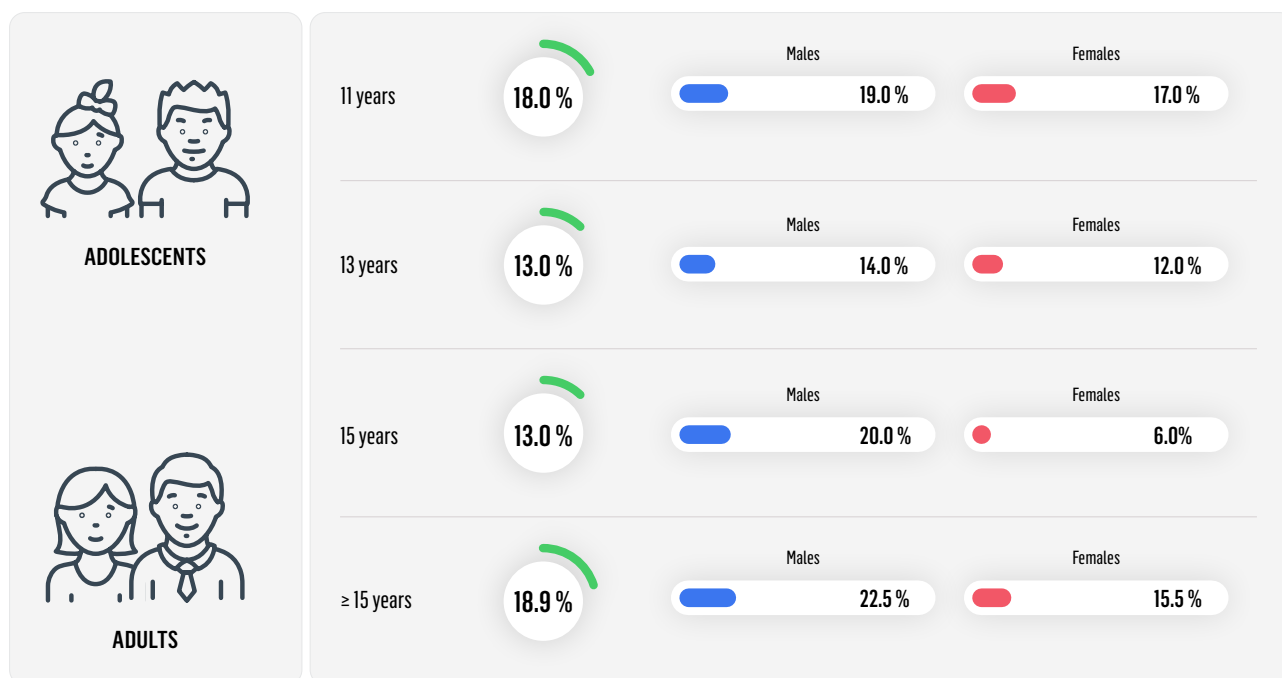
— Transport

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### Estimated prevalence of sufficient physical activity levels



Levels of physical activity among adolescents were assessed in the [Health Behaviour of School-aged Children survey](#) in 2017/2018; data for adults were collected through the [European Health Interview Survey](#) in 2019, and includes at least 4 times/week of recreational physical activity and 1-3 times/week of strength training.

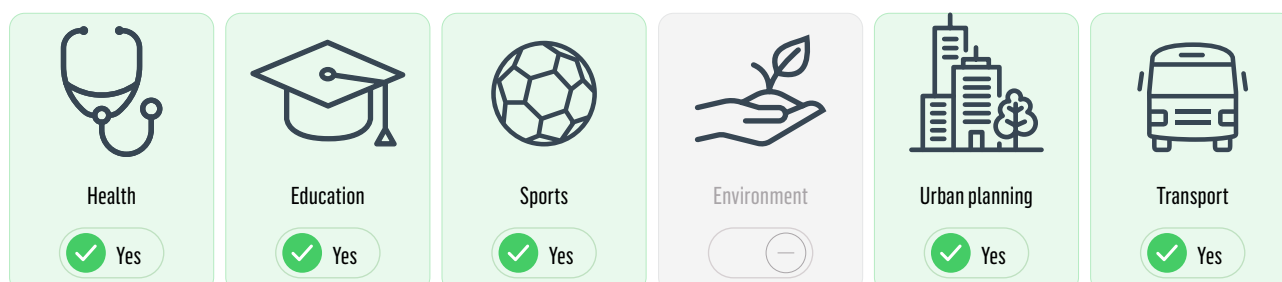
### National government coordination mechanism and leadership in the promotion of physical activity

The Cyprus Sports Organization, which is under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, is responsible for promoting and implementing health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA) in the country. The Cyprus Sports Organization is the highest sports authority in the country and is responsible for implementation of the Government's sports policy and for coordinating actions, policies and other institutions responsible for promoting HEPA. Both the Organization and the Ministry have HEPA focal points, one representing each organization.

► <https://cyprussports.org/gr/activities/european-affairs/%CF%80%CF%81%CE%BF%CE%B1%CE%B3%CF%89%CE%B3%CE%AE-%CF%84%CE%B7%CF%82-%CF%85%CE%B3%CE%B5%CE%AF%CE%B1%CF%82-%CE%BC%CE%AD%CF%83%CF%89-%CF%84%CE%B7%CF%82-%CF%86%CF%85%CF%83%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE%CF%82-%CE%B4%CF%81%CE%B1%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B7%CF%81%CE%B9%CF%8C%CF%84%CE%B7%CF%84%CE%B1%CF%82-hepa.html>

### Funding for the promotion of physical activity for health

#### FUNDING FOR THE PROMOTION OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR HEALTH





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### SUCCESS STORY

The most enduring and widely spread initiative throughout Cyprus for promoting exercise and sport as a recreational and healthy option is the Sport for All programme of the **Cyprus Sports Organization**. It is very successful and includes over 300 centres established throughout the country that provide opportunities for people of all ages to participate in sports. The Sport for All programme also provides funds to promote physical activity within the National Guard and Prison Department. The programme assigns physical education instructors who engage with soldiers and people living in prisons to increase their participation in recreational physical activity and sports. The approach aims to encourage a more active lifestyle to improve their health status and well-being.

► <https://cyprussports.org/en/activities/national-programs/sports-for-all.html>

## Policy response



### NATIONAL POLICIES OR ACTION PLANS FOR THE PROMOTION OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR HEALTH

- 1 SPORTS FOR ALL
- 2 TACKLING DEPENDENCE ON LEGAL AND ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES
- 3 STRATEGIC PROGRAMME FOR INCLUSION OF FOREIGNERS AND IMMIGRANTS
- 4 NATIONAL PLAN FOR SUPPORTING MINORITY RELIGIOUS GROUPS
- 5 NATIONAL PLAN FOR SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS' SPORT ACTIVITIES
- 6 NATIONAL PLAN TO SUPPORT VULNERABLE POPULATION GROUPS

TOTAL NUMBER OF POLICIES

6



### SECTORS INVOLVED IN THE DESIGN OF THE POLICY/ACTION PLAN

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Health	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Education	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sports	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Urban planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transport	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### POPULATION GROUPS TARGETED BY EACH POLICY

	1	2	3	4	5	6
General population	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Children < 5	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Children and adolescents (5–17)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adults	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Older adults (≥ 65)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Frail/elderly (≥ 85)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People with disabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
People with chronic diseases	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Pregnant women	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Breastfeeding women	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Low socio-economic groups	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ethnic minorities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deprived of liberty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Migrants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unemployed people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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### POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

- 2 Tackling dependence on legal and illegal substances.** This policy supports people undergoing treatment for drug addiction. The programme provides free access to sports activities and equipment to promote healthier choices and prevent the use and/or abuse of legal or illegal substances. The target population includes young people who have dropped out of school, children whose parents have a problem with substance abuse, children under the care of the State, adolescents with delinquent behaviours and pregnant women who use alcohol. The programme is under the Cyprus Sports Organization in partnership with the ministries of health, education and culture, and social welfare services, and the Cyprus Addiction Management Authority.
- 3 Strategic programme for inclusion of foreigners and immigrants.** This programme provides financial support to municipalities and communities to promote and organize sports programmes or events that seek to integrate foreigners and immigrants at local level. The purpose is to provide equal opportunities and resources through sports opportunities for all people residing in Cyprus. Nongovernmental and not-for-profit organizations that promote sports activities for foreigners and immigrants are eligible to apply for grants.
- 6 National Plan to Support Vulnerable Population Groups.** The plan targets people with long-term physical and mental disabilities and noncommunicable diseases. Its purpose is to improve the physical, mental and social well-being of vulnerable population groups through physical activity and sports. The objectives include raising awareness among the groups of the benefits of greater involvement in physical activity, identifying people's basic physical activity needs, and offering free exercise services and sports equipment through organizations that specialize in working with people with disabilities and noncommunicable diseases. Financial support is offered to cover additional expenses for activities directed to promoting physical activity.

## Sports Clubs for Health

The Sports clubs for health guidelines are not well known in Cyprus, but many clubs promote social and recreational sport and physical activity with objectives that are compatible and in agreement with the guidelines.

**Running clubs** are private initiatives that contribute to the overall development and growth of the running/jogging movement in Cyprus, at national and local levels. The running events aim to promote social sport and encourage a healthier and more active lifestyle, and include people of all ages. These clubs continue to grow in number by attracting new runners and aid in training and promoting running events. Some clubs promote programmes such as the Running and Kids academies to increase physical activity among children.

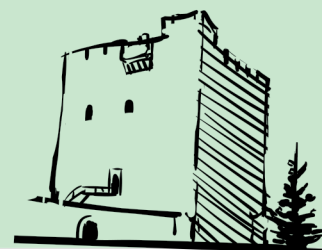
## Counselling on physical activity and exercise prescription

Currently, there is no active programme for prescription of counselling on physical activity by health-care professionals, but the Cyprus Sports Medicine Association, in cooperation with the Cyprus Sports Medicine and Research Centre, is planning action in this area. The Cyprus Sports Medicine Association is a member of the European Federation of Sports Medicine Associations and the International Federation of Sports Medicine and, in accordance with their guidelines, has started establishing exercise prescription by health-care professionals.



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#### Physical education in schools

PRIMARY SCHOOLS:	HOURS PER WEEK	SECONDARY SCHOOLS:	HOURS PER WEEK
	<b>1.5–2</b>		<b>2–2.5</b>
	Mandatory		Mandatory

Physical education teachers receive both mandatory and optional training in physical activity and health as part of their undergraduate studies. The quality of physical education classes is evaluated via audits conducted by qualified physical education inspectors and random advisory class visits by school principals. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization checklist and benchmarks for evaluating the quality of physical education in schools are used to develop the physical education curriculum and instructors' personal development programmes.

#### PROMOTION OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN SCHOOLS

 During breaks	 During lessons	 After school	 Travel to and from school
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The Active School Breaks programme is run by physical education teachers of schools. It aims to encourage students to take part in physical activities during break times and promote healthy engagement with exercise, cooperation and appropriate social behaviour.

A variety of extracurricular activities to promote health education and physical activity exists in primary and secondary education, with implementation at national and local levels. These programmes aim to increase the number of students involved in physical activity, raise the total time spent in physical activity, scout for talent and support cooperation with sports clubs and nongovernmental organizations.

#### SUCCESS STORY



**Junior NBA Cyprus** is part of the official development programme of the international National Basketball Association (NBA). In Cyprus, it runs in collaboration with the Cyprus Basketball Federation and is managed by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth. The programme organizes a kind of NBA "league" for schoolchildren aged 12–13 years who have no previous experience of playing basketball. It aims to encourage and support children to play and have fun and at the same time increase the time they spend in physical activity. The programme was implemented in 2018 and 2019, but has been put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

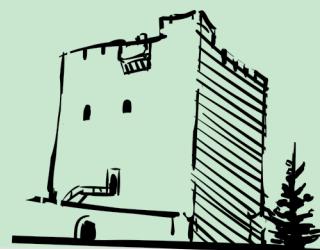
#### Infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity

The Cyprus Sports Organization subsidizes the construction of several outdoor communal sports facilities. Economic subsidization of projects of this type aims to increase participation in sports and exercise in general among citizens of all ages and make exercise and sports facilities accessible to all.

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#### SUCCESS STORY

Athletic facilities co-funded by the Cyprus Sports Organization have contributed to increasing access for local populations to promote physical activity. Examples include a futsal pitch in Tseri municipality in Nicosia district completed in 2019, a basketball court in Kato Mylos in Limassol district completed in 2020, a skatepark in Deryneia municipality in Famagusta district completed in 2015, and outdoor tennis, basketball and volleyball courts in Livadia municipality, Larnaca district, completed in 2018.

## Promotion of physical activity in the workplace

There is no national guidance or programme to promote active travel to work or physical activity at the workplace. However, some private companies have taken the initiative to provide infrastructure such as gyms and changing rooms with showers to motivate their employees to commute to work by walking or cycling, while others provide free gym memberships.

## Community-based interventions for older adults

The Sports for All programme established by the Cyprus Sports Organization in 1985 specifically promotes physical activity in older adults. The programme has been implemented widely in Cyprus, with around 300 centres nationwide. Participation has been growing over the years and the programme has developed a multisectoral approach by bringing together the Cyprus Sports Organization with municipal authorities and senior citizens' organizations.

## National awareness-raising campaign on physical activity

The Cyprus Sports Organization implements the European Be Active campaign across Cyprus to ensure the option of adopting regular sports participation is available to the whole population. The promotion of Be Active during the European Week of Sport has a similar objective. These programmes are promoted throughout the country through sport stations in which qualified coaches and instructors encourage, instruct, guide and organize sporting events that are accessible to all citizens.

#### MEDIA USED IN NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS

Television	Radio	Newspapers	Social media	Public events	Public figures	Other
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>



#### SUCCESS STORY

**#Be Active** in Cyprus is a very successful action that is promoted throughout the country. It involves mass participation of people of all ages in events organized to attract people to participate in new sports. This campaign has promoted sports throughout the population and has made sports which previously had not been familiar to many people more widely known in the general population.