National recommendations on physical activity for health

TARGET GROUPS INCLUDED

- Children (< 5 years)
- Children and adolescents (5–17 years)
- Adults (18–64 years)
- Older adults (≥ 65 years)
- Pregnant and breastfeeding women
- People with disabilities
- People with chronic diseases
- Frail and very elderly adults (≥ 85 years)

The current Danish recommendations are based on WHO recommendations (2010), the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American College of Sports Medicine (1995), as well as Canadian evidence and recommendations (2010).
Monitoring and surveillance of physical activity

SECTORS WITH SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Transport</th>
<th>Other*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Estimated prevalence of sufficient physical activity levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-75 years</td>
<td>71.2%</td>
<td>70.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-4 years</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td>80.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34 years</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
<td>71.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44 years</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>67.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54 years</td>
<td>70.2%</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64 years</td>
<td>67.9%</td>
<td>69.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-74 years</td>
<td>73.6%</td>
<td>74.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥ 75 years</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
<td>54.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Physical activity and sedentary behavior among 11-15 year olds - monitoring with objective measurements in 2017-2018; data for adults and older adults were collected using questionnaires as part of the Danish National Health Profile (Danskernes nationale sundhedsprofil) in 2017, based on WHO recommendations (2010).
National government coordination mechanism and leadership in the promotion of physical activity

Although Denmark has no established national coordination mechanism or leadership in promoting physical activity, the Danish Health Authority is a member of several advisory boards at which physical activity is discussed and coordinated.

Funding for the promotion of physical activity for health

SUCCESS STORY

Local sports are governed by the Danish Gymnastics and Sports Association and the National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation of Denmark. Half of all local sport clubs and associations in Denmark are members of both organizations. The Danish Federation of Company Sports directs sports in local clubs and associations that promote sports in the workplace. The Danish Gymnastics and Sports Association and the National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation are mainly state-subsidized and manage and allocate funds independently. The Act on allocation of revenues from the national lotteries (Udloddingsloven) ensures financing of the organizations, and the Act on informal education and democratic voluntary activity (Folkeoplysningsloven) ensures municipal support to local sports clubs and associations through grants for active members under the age of 25 and facilitates access to Government sports facilities.

Policy response

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

1. THE POLITICAL AGREEMENT ON SPORT
2. THE DANISH SPORT POLICY AIMS
3. MOVE FOR LIFE
4. LGBT PARTICIPATION IN DANISH SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS
5. POOL FOR INCLUSION IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES THROUGH SPORTS
6. ACT ON PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOLS, 2014
7. EXAMINATIONS ON PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT
8. AGREEMENT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF FUNDS FOR CYCLING (AFTALE OM GRØN OMSTILLING AF VEJTRANSPORTEN)
9. CYKELPULJE 2020
10. COMPREHENSIVE CYCLING COUNCIL (VEJDIREKTORATETS CYKELRÅD)

TOTAL NUMBER OF POLICIES: 10

SECTORS INVOLVED IN THE DESIGN OF THE POLICY/ACTION PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
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<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban planning</td>
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<td>O</td>
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<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yes
Funding for Inclusion in Local Communities through Sports. The funding pool is part of the Danish Sports policy. Its aim is to encourage participation in physical activities and sports of socially disadvantaged children, youth, adults, people with disabilities and families. The Ministry of Culture creates opportunities to increase sport and community engagement among people in vulnerable situations, including cooperation of private sports actors, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), associations, civil society and public information.

Examinations on physical education and sport. Primary and lower secondary schools are required to test students’ knowledge and skills in physical education and sports. The aim is to increase exercise and physical activity and promote the status and prominence of the subject to increase learning outcomes and foster early healthy habits. The classes go beyond teaching students about sports and also raise awareness about their responsibility to care for their well-being, health and social integration by living an active life.

Comprehensive Cycling Council (Vejdirektorats Cykelråd). The Danish Road Directorate established a Cycling Council to increase awareness among various stakeholders about the latest cycling practices and ensure efforts to increase cycling. The Council is composed of the Expert Group for Bicycle Tourism, the Electric Bicycle Network and the Cooperation Committee on Tourist Guidance. Networks will be integrated to create a central Cycling Council.

Sports Clubs for Health

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Senior Citizens funds NGOs that engage socially marginalized groups in sports to improve their health, quality of life and community integration. The OMBOLD organization organizes football tournaments among people who do not belong to a sports association, which represent Denmark at the “Homeless World Cup”. The Sport for Life (LIVET) promotes the participation of people at risk of social inclusion, which includes programmes and activities in 42 sports disciplines, training of coaches and tournaments. Sports for the Mind (Idræt for Sindet) is managed by local sport associations and directed by people with mental and psychosocial disabilities who find it difficult to be physically active in ordinary sports associations.

The project Get2Sport under the Ministry of Immigration and Integration and the Sports Confederation of Denmark provide opportunities for children and young people in underprivileged areas to participate in sports, primarily football, in local clubs. It is active in 22 municipalities and provides various benefits, including health, networking, integration, education and employment.
Counselling on physical activity and exercise prescription

In 2015, The Danish Health Authority published materials to support hospitals and primary care centres in assessment of and counselling on healthy lifestyles. After an initial assessment of the patient’s lifestyle (use of alcohol and tobacco, diet, physical activity and drugs), they provide information about their lifestyle and health and, if necessary and requested by the patient, refer them to an intervention in primary care.

### HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WHO ARE TRAINED IN HEALTH-ENHANCING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Postgraduate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical doctors</td>
<td>✔️ Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physiotherapists</td>
<td>✔️ Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>✔️ Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutritionists/dieticians</td>
<td>✔️ Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychologists</td>
<td>✔️ Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other health professionals*</td>
<td>✔️ Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Occupational therapy, psychomotor therapy, nutrition and health, global nutrition and health, chiropracty

### Physical education in schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Hours per Week</th>
<th>Mandatory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRIMARY SCHOOLS:</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECONDARY SCHOOLS:</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Physical education teachers may be trained in physical activity and its relation to health (e.g., health effects, determinants, effective interventions) as part of their undergraduate studies.

The Ministry of Education monitors physical activity in schools through evaluations and research projects, and the SPIF-project evaluates and examines physical education classes continuously according to their content and development of the subject in primary and lower secondary schools.

Daily physical exercise was made a mandatory part of the school day in 2013. Students in public primary and secondary schools are required to engage in 45min of physical activity every day.
National travel survey

The Transport Habits Survey (Transportvaneundersøgelser) of the Centre for Transport Analytics collects data on all methods of transport in Denmark, including active transport, such as walking and cycling. After annual data collection, it publishes statistics of the time spent on all means of transport. The latest data are for 2020.

### Denmark Physical Activity Factsheet 2021

**Promotion of Physical Activity in Schools**

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

**Danish School Sports (Dansk Skoleidræt)** is a sports organization that improves public health through nationwide school activities. These include programmes for active school breaks, such as ‘Legepatruljen’, in which the oldest students design different activities, plays and tournaments for younger students during school breaks in grades 0–3. A similar programme for students in grades 4–6 is ‘GameBoosters’, while ‘Kickstarter’ encourages teachers of grades 7–9 to include movement and physical activity during school breaks.

The initiative Subjects in movement (Fagene I bevægelse) of Dansk Skoleidræt started in 2020 and will end in 2023. The aim of the project is to ensure 45 min of movement during the school day by offering training to teachers and training in management to municipalities and schools. Movement in school (Sæt Skolen i Bevægelse), also designed by Dansk Skoleidræt, proposes exercises and ideas for including movement and physical activity during lessons to teachers. Part of the programme are “brain breaks” that teachers can use during school lessons.

All schools are required to offer an after-school activity (Skolefritidsordning) to children in grades 0–3 that includes body movement and health. Youth school (Ungdomsskole) offers after-school educational and leisure-time activities to students aged 14–18, some of which focus on movement. An independent institution for lower secondary students (14–18 years old) focuses on various aspects of life, which could be sports, in which movement and physical activity are integrated into the school day.

The Act on Primary and Lower Secondary Schools requires students to learn about traffic (Færdselslære). This is mandatory in kindergarten, where children learn about safe travel to and from school, with promotion of active travel, such as cycling and walking.

**Success Story**

The Ministry of Education and the sports organization Dansk Skoleidræt launched Schools’ spring exercise day (Skolernes forårsmotionsdag) to counteract the negative consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. The initiative supports schools in organizing a non-mandatory, inspirational day of sports with a focus on joy, movement and community. Its aim was to increase knowledge and well-being in primary and lower secondary schools in summer 2021 after a long period of home-schooling and distance learning. Various innovative materials, including physical activities, have been prepared by Dansk Skoleidræt to help schools prepare for the spring exercise day.

### Cycling

**Person per day**

- **Time:** 5.9 min
- **Distance:** 1.4 km

### Walking

**Person per day**

- **Time:** 14.0 min
- **Distance:** 1.2 km

The transport habits survey (Transportvaneundersøgelser) of the Centre for Transport Analytics collects data on all methods of transport in Denmark, including active transport, such as walking and cycling. After annual data collection, it publishes statistics of the time spent on all means of transport. The latest data are for 2020.
Infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity

In Denmark, leisure-time physical activity is monitored mainly by unions and sports organizations. Article 3 of the Act on the Primary and Lower Secondary School is Open School (Åben Skole) which obliges schools to cooperate with companies, institutions for vocational education and the local community, e.g., sports unions, that can contribute to leisure-time physical activity in primary and lower secondary schools.

Promotion of physical activity in the workplace

The Danish Federation for Company Sports (Firmaidrætten) promotes physical activity in workplaces through activities such as campaigns, talks and community events. These include the annual Workplace Exercise Day (Arbejdspladsernes Motionsdag), the campaign Count steps (Tæl skridt) and the provision of inspiration to college activities developed in collaboration with industrial workers, such as drivers, craftsmen and nurses. Success stories of active workplaces are collected in the annual event The healthiest workplaces in Denmark (Danmarks Sundeste Arbejdspladser), at which the best cases are honoured and their stories and experiences told to inspire other workplaces.

Community-based interventions for older adults

The Guide to physical exercise and activity for people with dementia was published by the Danish Health Authority in 2018 as part of the National Dementia Action Plan 2025. The aim of the guide is to help municipalities, volunteers, relatives, coaches and others who support citizens with dementia in remaining physically active.
National awareness-raising campaign on physical activity

SUCCESS STORY

In 2021, various unions and sports organizations collaborated on the project Together we move (Sammen I bevegelse) to bring Danish citizens together through movement and physical activity during the COVID-19 pandemic. The aim is to inspire and create a community around movement. Schools around the country are joining the project in various ways, such as the initiative Together we walk (Vi går sammen), in which school classes count the kilometres they walk. As part of the project, the Danish Broadcasting Corporation (Denmark's largest electronic media enterprise) will produce a wide range of programmes and content on radio, television and the Internet during 2021.