



HUNGARY

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

FACTSHEET 2021

Total population: 9.73 m

Median age: 43.3 years

GDP per capita: 12 640 €

Life expectancy, males: 72.3 years

Life expectancy, females: 79.1 years

Sources: Eurostat (2020/2021)



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)



Frail and very elderly adults (≥ 85 years)



Pregnant and breastfeeding women



People with disabilities



People with chronic diseases

The recommendations were implemented in 2011 and are based on [WHO recommendations](#) (2010).

SUCCESS STORY

The Hungarian School Sport Federation launched its “Do60” campaign in 2018. The aim of the campaign is to promote 60 minutes of daily physical activity for children and students based on social game activities, but not focusing on performance. The objective is to ensure a safe and positive sporting environment for pupils. Do60 reflects the age and educational background and provides joyful physical activities for all schoolchildren.





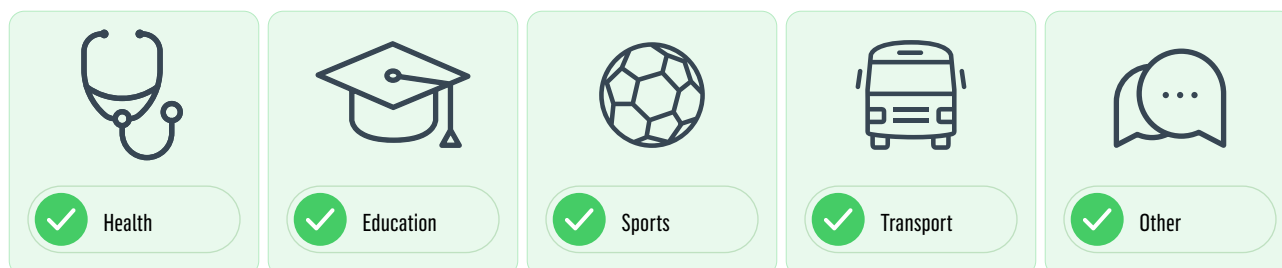
HUNGARY

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FACTSHEET 2021



Monitoring and surveillance of physical activity

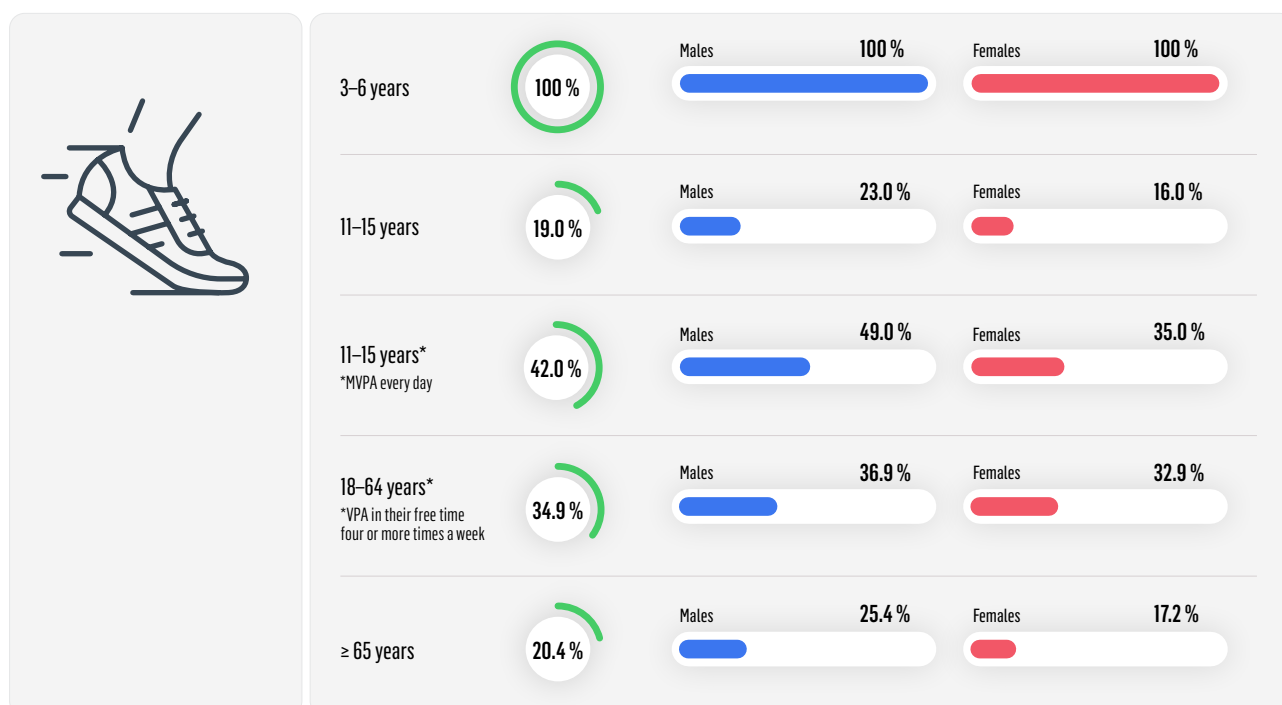
SECTORS WITH SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS



Hungary participated in the European Union (EU)-funded project called **EUPASMOS (European Union Physical Activity and Sport Monitoring System)** through the Hungarian Leisure Sport Association and researchers from the University of Pécs and University of Physical Education. The aim of the EUPASMOS project was to implement a harmonized physical activity and sport monitoring system through the development of an integrated and shared methodological process that will provide comparable, valid and reliable physical activity and sport participation data across EU Member States. The four most commonly used questionnaires (International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ), **Global Physical Activity Questionnaire (GPAQ)**, Eurobarometer and European Health Interview Survey (EHIS)) have been used and their results, which are still being analysed, have been compared against data collected by accelerometers and objective measurements. The GPAQ and the Eurobarometer had already been validated in Hungarian. Criterion validity and reliability of the IPAQ – Hungarian short form against the RM42 accelerometer was conducted within the frame of the EUPASMOS project.

► <https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-021-10372-0>

Estimated prevalence of sufficient physical activity levels



Children aged 3 to 6 years follow the National Basic Program for Preschool Education; levels of physical activity among adolescents were assessed in the **Health Behaviour of School-aged Children survey** in 2017/2018; data for adults and older adults were collected through the **European Health Interview Survey** in 2019.

HUNGARY

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

FACTSHEET 2021



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

The National School, University and Leisure Sport Federation, in partnership with the Ministry of Human Capacities, has been operating a national coordination mechanism for promoting health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA) since 2018.

► <https://ndhsz.hu/2018/06/11/nsulf-hosts-european-union-conference/>

► <https://ndhsz.hu/2020/03/10/sports-club-for-health-2020-22-project-successfully-launched/>

Funding for the promotion of physical activity for health

FUNDING FOR THE PROMOTION OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR HEALTH

Health Yes	Education Yes	Sports Yes	Environment No	Urban planning No	Transport Yes	Active tourism Yes
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Policy response



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

- 1 THE NATIONAL STANDARD PROGRAMME FOR KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION
- 2 T.E.S.I. 2020 STRATEGY (NATIONAL STRATEGY ON PHYSICAL EDUCATION)
- 3 NATIONAL PUBLIC EDUCATION STRATEGY
- 4 CHANGING THE SPEED IN HIGHER EDUCATION 2016- (FOKOZATVÁLTÁS A FELSOÓKTATÁSBAN KÖZÉPTÁVÚ SZAKPOLITIKAI STRATÉGIA 2016-)
- 5 HEALTHY HUNGARY 2014–2020
- 6 NATIONAL POLICY ON AGING (RESOLUTION 81/2009 – OGY HATÁROZAT AZ IDŐSÜGYI NEMZETI STRATÉGIÁRÓL)
- 7 NATIONAL DISABILITY PROGRAMME 2015–2025
- 8 HAJÓS ALFRÉD PLAN 3.0 FOR PROGRESS IN SPORTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION - (FOKOZATVÁLTÁS A FELSOÓKTATÁSI SPORTBAN – HAJÓS ALFRÉD TERV 3.0)
- 9 NATIONAL CYCLING STRATEGY UNTIL 2030
- 10 NATIONAL STRATEGY ON ACTIVE TOURISM (NEMZETI AKTÍV TURISZTIKAI STRATÉGIA)

TOTAL NUMBER OF POLICIES

10



SECTORS INVOLVED IN THE DESIGN OF THE POLICY/ACTION PLAN

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Health	○	✓	○	○	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Education	✓	✓	✓	✓	○	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sports	○	✓	○	○	○	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Environment	○	○	○	○	○	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Urban planning	○	○	○	○	○	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Transport	○	○	○	○	○	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

HUNGARY

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FACTSHEET 2021



POPULATION GROUPS TARGETED BY EACH POLICY

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
General population	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☒	Pregnant women	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Children < 5	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	During breastfeeding	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Children and adolescents (5–17)	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Low socio-economic groups	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adults	☐	☐	☒	☒	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐	☐	Ethnic minorities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Older adults (≥ 65)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	Deprived of liberty	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Frail/elderly (≥ 85)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Migrants	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People with disabilities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	Unemployed people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People with chronic diseases	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐											

POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 The National Standard Programme for Kindergarten Education.** The National Standard Programme centres on promoting healthy habits from an early age (3–6 years) and encouraging children's physical and emotional development. It embraces the concept of HEPA through regular movement games, free play, health-promoting exercise and other tasks that shape the healthy development of children's psychomotor skills and abilities.
- 2 T.E.S.I. 2020 Strategy (national strategy on physical education).** The strategy is based on a health-centred approach towards the operation of public education institutions to provide quality education on physical education that aims to change students' attitudes towards physical and mental health. The objectives of the strategy include developing its framework, setting the conditions for services and implementation in the public education system, and creating the conditions for teacher training and qualifications.
- 7 National Disability Programme 2015–2025.** The programme aims to improve the life of people living with disabilities. It includes increasing access to leisure-time physical activity by improving current infrastructure (such as tracks and sports facilities, parks and playgrounds) and providing adequate equipment. It also seeks to improve physical education, access to sports activities and the development of integrated sport associations to provide programmes for people with disabilities.



SUCCESS STORY

The **PEDELEC programme** encourages car commuters to switch to cycling through the provision of government grants to purchase electric bikes. The aim is to improve the health of the population and reduce air pollution. The programme is under the Ministry of Innovation and Technology in connection with the Climate and Nature Conservation Action Plan. The **Free Sport Parks Map** shows which kinds of sport activities are available in urban and rural areas in Hungary. It has resulted in hundreds of outdoor parks providing physical activities.

► <https://aofk.hu/?lang=en>

Sports Clubs for Health

In the framework of a national pilot project called "More than a club" ["Több, mint egy klub"], the philosophy of the Sports Clubs for Health (SCforH) approach has been tested in an innovative way in Hungary. The pilot project was based on the SCforH concept. The National School, University and Leisure Sport Federation, in partnership with the Athletic Club of the University of Debrecen, tested the HEPA-oriented approach of the framework through a three-year pilot project (started 1 May 2018) in a traditional university sports club environment. The aim of the pilot was not to promote widespread implementation of SCforH guidelines – rather, the goal was to test this approach in a pilot environment – but similar initiatives are planned to take place in the future.

The national programme I Believe in You [Hiszek Benned] raises awareness of the importance of HEPA. The Ministry of Human Capacities provides financial support to local sports organizations to organize events that support the aim of the programme and works in partnership with the Hungarian Leisure Sport Association.

► <https://masport.hu/palyazat/?s=hiszek+bennedpalyazat/?s=hiszek+benned>

HUNGARY

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FACTSHEET 2021



Increasing Access to Exercise Facilities for Socially Disadvantaged Groups

The [Centre for Development of Active and Ecotourism](#) has launched a national programme to set up publicly accessible running and cycling paths and skate parks to encourage people to spend their spare time actively while enjoying nature. These facilities are accessible to people of all ages and social groups, so disadvantaged people may also benefit from this investment.

The Hungarian Government issued Decree nr. 1314/2016 on the [Healthy Sports Park Programme](#) to create spaces to encourage people to participate in physical activity. To date, more than 800 parks have been established or will be inaugurated soon.

Counselling on physical activity and exercise prescription

Health education and physical activity promotion among adults is the primary purpose of the 110 [health-promoting offices \(HPOs\)](#) established since 2013. The HPOs operate in subregions of Hungary, offering services free of charge and without the need for referral. One of their successes has been the engagement of senior citizens with preventive and rehabilitation-oriented physical activities.

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WHO ARE TRAINED IN HEALTH-ENHANCING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

	 Medical doctors ☒ Yes	 Physiotherapists ☒ Yes	 Nurses ☒ Yes	 Nutritionists/ dieticians ☐	 Psychologists ☐	 Other health professionals ☐
Undergraduate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Postgraduate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory			



SUCCESS STORY

The [National Public Health Centre \(NPHC\)](#) has developed a service catalogue that includes evidence-based practices and interventions for promoting HEPA and serves as a supportive methodological tool for the HPOs. The catalogue includes counselling and practical recommendations at individual and community levels that aim to provide the basic skills and knowledge to promote a healthy lifestyle and create healthy physical and social environments. The NPHC has also developed several [lifestyle infographics related to the COVID-19 pandemic](#). Some of these infographics reflect the recommended physical activity levels for children, adults and seniors, thereby contributing to health promotion and disease prevention.

HUNGARY

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

FACTSHEET 2021



Physical education in schools

PRIMARY SCHOOLS:	LESSONS PER WEEK	SECONDARY SCHOOLS:	LESSONS PER WEEK
	5 Mandatory		5 Mandatory

Physical education teachers receive mandatory training in physical activity and health (health effects, determinants, effective interventions, etc.) as part of their undergraduate and postgraduate studies. The quality of physical education classes in the schools is monitored in the context of a general evaluation of the pedagogical work.

PROMOTION OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN SCHOOLS

 During breaks	 During lessons	 After school	 Travel to and from school
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The [BikeAcademy \[Bringaakadémia\]](#) is a programme of the Vuelta Sports Office, developed in cooperation with the Hungarian Police and Institute for Transport Sciences. It started in 2008 as a road-safety pilot programme for schoolchildren aged 9–12 with a connected mentor teaching programme. The BikeAcademy programme has a theoretical part concerned with learning about, for instance, road signs and traffic regulations, and a practical part on improving cycling skills to prepare children to ride safely in road traffic. The BikeAcademy now is available to all elementary schools as an optional subject and as a voluntary course. Teachers can apply to do a 30-hour training course to improve their theoretical and practical skills and become mentors.

National travel survey

An [online survey of a representative sample of 3000 adults](#) was conducted in 2018 and 2020 by the Hungarian Cyclists' Club with the support of the Ministry for Innovation and Technology. This survey is the first of its kind to measure cycling practices countrywide. The estimated values for cycling time and distance are related to the active 20% of the population and not the entire population. Walking data are collected through EUPASMOS research.

WALKING		CYCLING	
	PERSON PER DAY  39.9 min  3.3 km		PERSON PER DAY  40 min  10 km

Infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity

The Centre for Development of Active and Ecotourism has launched a national programme to set up publicly accessible running paths, cycling and skate parks aiming to promote an active lifestyle in the near to the living environment. These facilities are accessible to all kinds of ages and social groups.



HUNGARY

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

FACTSHEET 2021



Promotion of physical activity in the workplace



NATIONAL GUIDANCE OR PROGRAMME TO PROMOTE **ACTIVE TRAVEL TO WORK** (E.G., WALKING, CYCLING)

☒ Yes



NATIONAL GUIDANCE OR PROGRAMME TO PROMOTE **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AT THE WORKPLACE**

☐

The **Cycle to Work** programme, organized by the Ministry of Economy and Transport, began in 2007. The Hungarian Cyclists' Club took it over in 2008, running yearly spring and autumn campaigns. The aims are to create healthier and happier communities and more livable environments by maximizing cycle commuting to work. It demonstrates how much easier, cheaper, healthier and more environmentally friendly it is to cycle to work. This campaign is based on community perceptions and builds on workplace relationships, social networks and grassroots cycling movements. It was renewed in 2018 to engage with social media and smartphone platforms.

Community-based interventions for older adults



NATIONAL GUIDANCE OR PROGRAMME FOR COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTIONS TO PROMOTE **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN OLDER ADULTS**

☒ Yes

The nationwide network of walking clubs for older people, led by the Prime Minister's Office and the Minister for Families, was launched in 2017. One hundred walking clubs had registered by the end of March 2021.

Senior-friendly Municipality Awards have a major role in establishing contact with older people in localities. The Awards are of symbolic, but far-reaching, significance, emphasizing the Government's commitment to this issue. Since 2004, the minister responsible for elderly affairs and the Ministry of Interior have invited proposals for the annual Awards, with a separate theme specified each year. The themes for 2017 and 2018 were related to the power of physical activity in maintaining health in older age.



SUCCESS STORY

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic beginning in March 2020 that led to strict Government containment measures, the Hungarian Leisure Sports Association established an online programme called **Move Experience for Seniors**. The aim of the programme is to provide physical activity opportunities for older people through online broadcasts at fixed times twice a day from Monday to Friday and on Sunday. The 15- or 30-minute training sessions are provided by specialist instructors who have many years of experience in working on older people's activity levels. The programme has contributed to keeping seniors active by reaching nearly 10000 participants in their homes.

► <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GXfyehfU90>

HUNGARY

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FACTSHEET 2021



National awareness-raising campaign on physical activity

Several physical activity awareness-raising campaigns are regulated by the Hungarian National Assembly. The Hungarian School Sports Day, National Day of Parasport and Hungarian Day of Sports are promoted by the relevant national sports organizations and the Ministry of Human Capacities.

MEDIA USED IN NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS

						
Television	Radio	Newspapers	Social media	Public events	Public figures	Other
☒ Yes	☒ Yes	☒ Yes	☒ Yes	☒ Yes	☒ Yes	☐