



# NETHERLANDS

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FACTSHEET 2021

Total population: 17.48 m

Median age: 42.7 years

GDP per capita: 40 160 €

Life expectancy, males: 79.8 years

Life expectancy, females: 83.1 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

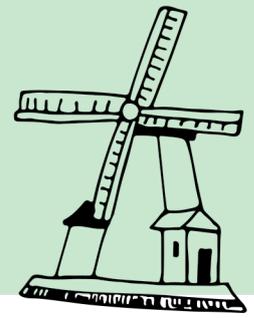
The recommendations are based on a review of the literature performed by the [Dutch Health Council](#) and the reports used for the [Australian physical activity guidelines](#). They were implemented in 2017.

#### SUCCESS STORY

After adoption of the physical activity guidelines in 2017, a target was set in the national prevention agreement for 75% of the Dutch population to adhere to physical activity guidelines by 2040, from 47% in 2017. The Knowledge Centre for Sport and Physical Activity has developed **promotional material (de beweegcirkel)** to be used by professionals to assist people in becoming physically active.



[www.government.nl/topics/overweight-and-obesity/documents/reports/2019/06/30/the-national-prevention-agreement](http://www.government.nl/topics/overweight-and-obesity/documents/reports/2019/06/30/the-national-prevention-agreement)



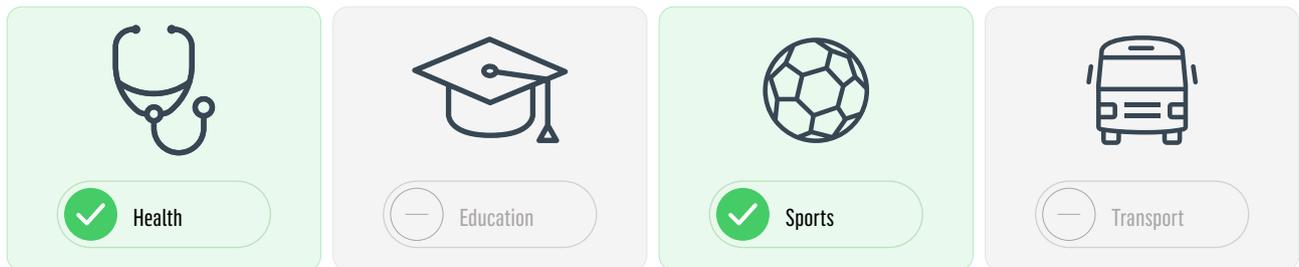
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## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

### FACTSHEET 2021

#### Monitoring and surveillance of physical activity

##### SECTORS WITH SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS



#### Estimated prevalence of sufficient physical activity levels



Levels of physical activity for all age groups were assessed in the [National Health Interview Survey and Lifestyle Monitor](#) in 2020.

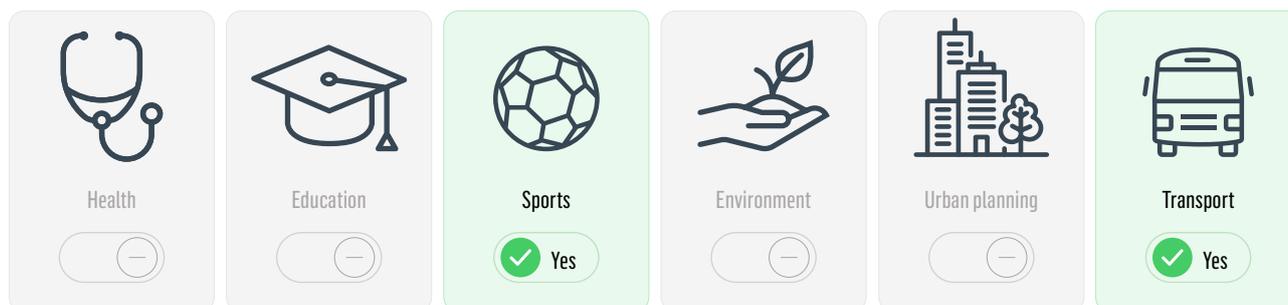


# NETHERLANDS

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FACTSHEET 2021

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

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



### Policy response



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

- 1 PREVENTING SPORTS INJURIES (BLESSUREPREVENTIE)
- 2 NATIONAL SPORTS AGREEMENT (NATIONAAL SPORTAKKOORD)
- 3 NATIONAL PREVENTION AGREEMENT (NATIONAAL PREVENTIEAKKOORD)
- 4 TOUR DE FORCE BIKE AGENDA (SCHAALSPRONG FIETS)

TOTAL NUMBER OF POLICIES

4



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

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

#### POPULATION GROUPS TARGETED BY EACH POLICY

	1	2	3	4
General population	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Children < 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children and adolescents (5-17)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older adults (>= 65)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Frail/elderly (>= 85)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People with chronic diseases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnant women	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Breastfeeding women	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Low socio-economic groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ethnic minorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deprived of liberty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Migrants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unemployed people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



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## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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#### POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

- 2 National Sports Agreement (Nationaal Sportakkoord).** The aim is for every Dutch person to enjoy sports and exercise during their lifetime regardless of age, physical or mental health, ethnic background, sexual orientation or social background. Although most Dutch people comply with physical activity guidelines, the levels of people with disabilities, low-socioeconomic status and immigrants and refugees remain low. Thus, the agreement promotes inclusive sports and exercise, both participation in and representation on sports boards, trainers and volunteers. The aim is to be reached in collaboration with national, regional and local governments, the business community and civil society organizations.
- 3 National Prevention Agreement (Nationaal Preventieakkoord).** The Agreement, under the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, seeks to reduce tobacco use, obesity and alcohol consumption. Municipalities are encouraged to use an integrated local approach to implement intensive policy in these areas. It promotes a healthy physical living environment by investing in bicycle incentive programmes and bicycle infrastructure. A long-term objective is to increase the number of people who meet physical activity guidelines through the Exercise Wheel Circle, which is a scheme like the Wheel of Five, which encourages healthy diets. It will target health-care and school settings and promote healthy sports sponsorships and healthy sports events. By 2020, at least 35 municipalities had implemented a comprehensive approach to obesity in children.
- 4 Tour de Force Bike agenda (Schaalsprong Fiets).** This partnership involves governments, businesses, social organizations and knowledge institutions that are committed to boost, motivate and inspire the population to cycle regularly. It seeks to increase engagement in sports and recreation, create more spaces for cycling, support municipalities in modernizing bicycle parking standards and show that cycling is attractive, safe and beneficial for individual well-being and the environment. Every year, a quantitative analysis of cycling infrastructure and bicycle use is published in a report.



#### SUCCESS STORY

The **National Sports Agreement** funds municipalities to hire a professional sports trainer to organize and facilitate discussions about implementation of local or regional sports agreements. Once a municipality concludes its local or regional agreement, a grant can be requested for its implementation. The budget depends on the number of inhabitants. In 2020, the total number of municipalities in the Netherlands was 355. So 346 out of the 355 were in the process of or already had developed a sports agreement.

## Sports clubs for health

The Netherlands promotes health promotion under the National Prevention Agreement, which aims to provide healthy sport environments including healthy foods by the year 2025 across 50% of the sports clubs with their own canteen.

## Counselling on physical activity and exercise prescription

Since 2019, a combined lifestyle intervention is included in basic health insurance in the Netherlands. It includes exercise on prescription for patients who have a body mass index > 25 kg/m<sup>2</sup> and another risk factor (e.g., risk factors for cardiovascular disease, type-2 diabetes) or a body mass index ≥ 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup>. General practitioners and specialists in primary health care refer patients to the combined lifestyle intervention, which is provided by either lifestyle coaches, dieticians, physiotherapists or exercise therapists. The intervention involves 30% of neighbourhood sport connectors and employees of local organizations who support people in their search for appropriate recreational or sport activities.

▶ <https://www.loketgezondleven.nl/zorgstelsel/gecombineerde-leefstijlinterventie>



#### SUCCESS STORY

Although physical activity and health are not officially included in the curriculum of health professionals, the Dutch College of General Practitioners and the Royal Dutch Society for Physical Therapy have standard approaches (NHG-standaarden) to medical issues that require physical activity counselling and interventions. The curricula of several health professions include information on these standards.

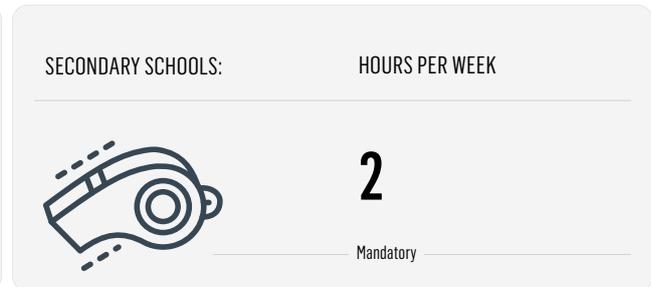


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### Physical education in schools



Physical activity and health are offered in the curriculum of physical education teachers as both a mandatory and an optional subject. Being active for health, exercising with minimal risk of injuries and behavioural aspects of exercise are included in many parts of the curriculum.

The [Dutch Inspectorate of Education](#) is responsible for inspecting and reviewing schools and other educational institutions. The latest report was published in 2018 and described in detail characteristics and trends in physical education in primary schools.

### National travel survey

The Dutch travel survey On the road in the Netherlands (Onderweg in Nederland) consists of a basic and, if applicable, additional modules. The basic module provides estimates of the daily mobility of the Dutch population. Respondents aged  $\geq 6$  years are asked to keep a detailed travel diary for 1 day.



### Infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity

Laws concerning the living environment are combined and modernized in the Environment Act, which achieves a balance between using and protecting the living environment. In addition, part of the National Sports Agreement guides development of sustainable sports infrastructure.



#### SUCCESS STORY

In 2021 a new **indicator for national monitoring of sport and exercise** was defined to monitor the "friendliness" of the living environment for physical activity. This indicator is based on four sub-indicators: the numbers of public sports accommodations, play areas and recreational space (blue and green zones) and the proximity of services.



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## 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

The **work-related costs scheme** allows employers to provide some benefits, such as travel allowances. Employers may also offer employees the opportunity to take tax-free fitness classes and purchase a bicycle for commuting purposes tax free.



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

Yes

**Vital work environment (Vitaal Bedrijf)** is an initiative of the Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers and SME Netherlands (MKB-Nederland) that guides entrepreneurs towards a vital future, with more effort, more enjoyment, more productivity and more return. The initiative provides an overview of what does and does not work and advice on how to implement actions suitable for different situations.

### Community-based interventions for older adults



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

Yes

**Cycle-on (Doortrappen)** is an initiative of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, which enables older adults to continue cycling safely for as long as possible.