



SWITZERLAND

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

FACTSHEET 2019



Total population
8 513 227

World Bank classification 2019
High income

Urban population
73.8%



MEN

Population **49.6%**

Life expectancy **81.6 YEARS**



WOMEN

Population **50.4%**

Life expectancy **85.6 YEARS**

Source: Population Division, World Population Prospects: 2019 Revision



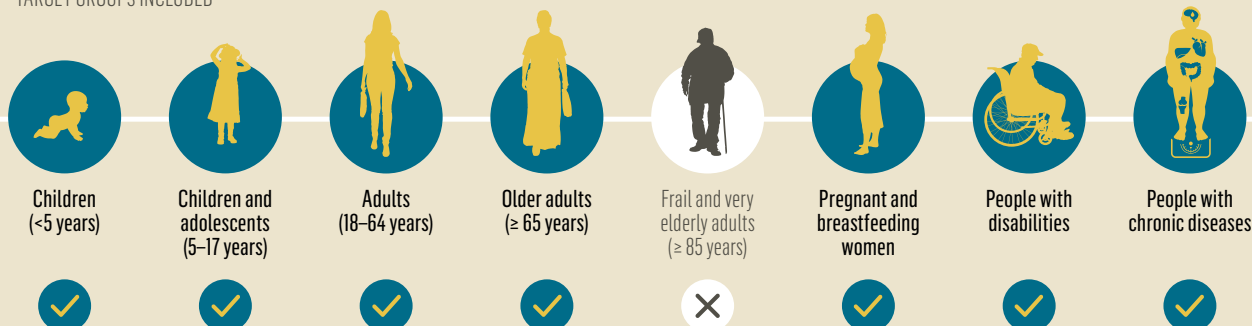
Success story

The national Youth + Sports (Jugend + Sport) programme promotes sports participation to children and adolescents and has been implemented since 1974. Today, it supports courses in more than 70 disciplines and reaches more than half a million children and adolescents every year. Since 2008, it offers sports promotion activities for children aged 5–10 years. Youth + Sports is based on the Federal Act on the Promotion of Sport and Exercise and involves activities that take place mostly in sports clubs. Schools can also organize after-school sports courses and obtain funding through the programme.

MONITORING AND SURVEILLANCE

► National recommendations on physical activity for health

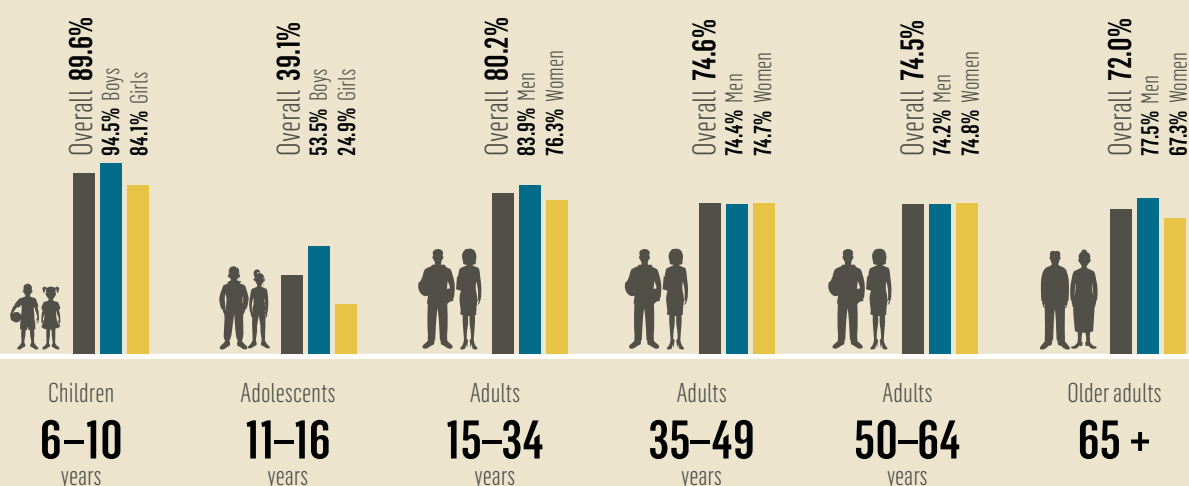
TARGET GROUPS INCLUDED



The first national recommendations for adults were implemented in 1999. The last updates date from 2013; they are based on the WHO recommendations and were consolidated through a stakeholder consultation process. The first recommendations for children date from 2006, and those for preschoolers from 2016.

► Level of physical activity

ESTIMATED PREVALENCE OF SUFFICIENT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS



According to national health surveys, the prevalence of sufficient physical activity levels in adults increased continuously from 62.5% in 2002 to 66.6% in 2007, 72.5% in 2012 to 75.7% in 2017. This corresponds to an average increase of about 1% per year over 15 years. In this time period, levels of sufficient physical activity increased from 67.5% to 77.8% in men and from 58.0% to 73.6% in women. Overall, physical activity levels have thus increased remarkably in Switzerland and the gap between men and women has narrowed. Data presented for children and adolescents aged 6 to 16 years were collected using accelerometer devices as part of the Swiss children's Objectively measured Physical Activity (SOPHYA) study.

► Monitoring and surveillance of physical activity

SECTORS WITH SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS

Physical activity prevalence has been measured every five years since 1992. A generic Swiss instrument is used and, since 2012, also the International Physical Activity Questionnaires (IPAQ) short version. Sports participation is measured every six years through self-reported frequency and duration of sports participation. Walking and cycling distance, number and duration of stages is measured every five years.



Health



Education



Sports



Transport



POLICY RESPONSE

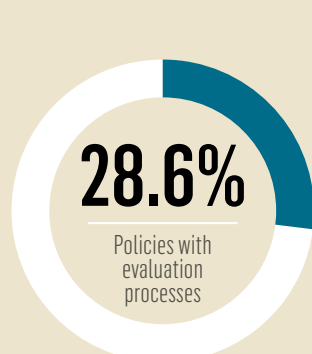
Funding allocated specifically to physical activity promotion by sector

The Swiss hepa.ch network was founded in 1999 and is still in operation. It has been hosted by the Federal Office of Sports (FOSPO) and is also supported by the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH), Health Promotion Switzerland and the Swiss Council for Accident Prevention. It is constituted by around 120 member institutions (mainly from the sports and health sectors), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) (health and sports) and the private (fitness) sector. One measure in the National Noncommunicable disease (NCD) Strategy is to continue the hepa.ch network until 2024, including coordination in the field of activity-friendly environments. The main activities of the network are an annual meeting, dissemination of the national recommendations on physical activity and health (together with other stakeholders) and the dissemination of reports and communication materials. It focuses on active living, reduction in sedentary behaviour, supportive environments, training and sports.



Based on the Federal Health Insurance Act, 1996, health insurance companies are required to collect a premium from every insured individual, which is currently €4.30/year. These funds are used for health promotion and prevention of diseases. The Health Promotion Switzerland foundation has been mandated with this task. Part of these funds are used for the Cantonal Action Programmes on diet, physical activity and mental health in youth and older adults, which are implemented in cooperation with 24 of the 26 cantons and now also coordinated with the National NCD Strategy 2017–2024. In the context of this strategy, funds also go to prevention projects in the health-care setting.

National policies by sector



7
Total number of policies

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

Sectors that are involved in each of the national policies or action plans to promote physical activity

Target groups addressed by national policies

- ✓ **GENERAL POPULATION**
- ✗ Low socioeconomic groups
- ✗ Pregnant and breastfeeding women
- ✗ Ethnic minorities
- ✗ People deprived of liberty
- ✗ Migrants
- ✓ **Older people**
- ✗ People with disabilities
- ✓ **People with chronic diseases**

In 1985, a national law was implemented that made it the responsibility of the cantons to create and maintain walking and hiking paths. It was required to assess and, if necessary, improve the path networks as well as to establish an administrative structure to manage them. In 2018, an initiative to include cycling paths in the law as well was accepted by a majority of 73.6% of the population through a national poll. Cycling now has a status equal to that of walking and hiking.

Within the federalist structure of Switzerland, there are a wealth of guidelines, handbooks derived from case studies and technical aides, including the following selection of documents from national institutions: Federal Roads Authority. *Guidelines and legal regulations for improvement of walking and cycling infrastructure*; Federal Office of Sports. *Guidelines and regulations for building sports infrastructure*; Federal Office of Spatial Development. *Guidelines for the promotion of (green) open spaces, mainly in urban areas*; deduced from case studies, Federal Office of Energy. Coordination office for sustainable transport, including platform for the exchange of knowledge and experiences among projects.

► Physical activity promotion in the health sector

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WHO ARE TRAINED IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTH

The "Physical activity promotion in primary care" (PAPRICA) programme supports physicians to deliver brief interventions aimed at increasing physical activity in patients. The programme offers physician training, a manual, a patient brochure and other material and is based on the principles of motivational interviewing. In the canton of Vaud, PAPRICA has been implemented broadly for many years. In the German-speaking regions, it has been implemented only sporadically but more comprehensive implementation will soon start in the canton of Zurich. In the Italian-speaking region, the programme is implemented in combination with another health counselling intervention (Girasole Ticino). The programme "PAPRICA petite enfance" (early years) educates health professionals on the role of physical activity and health in young children and provides information material. Till date, it has been implemented in the French-speaking region of Switzerland. Brief interventions by physicians are reimbursed through the ambulant consultation tariff of the national health insurance system.

Prevention in health-care is a new and important pillar of the national NCD Strategy 2017–2024. In this context, the PAPRICA programme is supported via the overarching prevention programme PEPra. Other pilot projects, with a particular focus on referral from physicians to specialists in adapted physical activity, are supported as well and have been evaluated (example: "Pas à Pas", Canton of Vaud).

► Physical activity in schools

- ✓ Physical activity during school breaks
- ✓ Physical activity during lessons
- ✓ Physical activity programmes after school
- ✓ Active travel to and from school



Total hours of physical
education per week in
PRIMARY SCHOOLS



3 All mandatory

Total hours of physical
education per week in
SECONDARY SCHOOLS



3 All mandatory

Active travel to school has always been high in Switzerland. In 2015, 68% of 6–12 year olds walked and 10% cycled to school. There are many initiatives that promote and support active travel to school by different players. Measures in the different programmes or projects range from providing safety training; campaigns offering prizes to classes that walk or cycle to schools during specific weeks; organizing walking buses; providing information materials for teachers, parents and local authorities; and having audit schemes to identify problematic stretches in the physical environment for active travel to school.

The concept of active schools has a long tradition in Switzerland. Written theoretical concepts are available, different approaches are taught by educational colleges and optional training courses for teachers are offered. A variety of projects are implemented in schools. One of them is "Schools on the Move" (Schule.bewegt), a national campaign that started in 2005. It was run by the FOSPO until 2016, after which Swiss Olympic took over as a private donor. Teachers are supported with a range of material to encourage active breaks and active learning. The campaign will be evaluated in 2020.

After-school sports are mainly organized and funded through the national Youth + Sports programme. These offers are voluntary for schools/communities and there is great variability among cantons and schools regarding the existence of such offers.



An important factor that favours movement is the built environment. Therefore, the FOPH promotes, in collaboration with other federal offices, neighbourhoods that are attractive for physical activity, safe and accessible playgrounds, footpaths and cycle paths, and encourages active mobility. Vulnerable groups in particular can benefit from an environment conducive to physical activity. Two of the FOPH's main activities are the Model Projects for Sustainable Spatial Development (www.modellvorhaben.ch), which promotes healthy spatial planning, and the Coordination Office for Sustainable Mobility KOMO (<https://www.energieschweiz.ch/page/de-ch/koordinationsstelle-fuer-nachhaltige-mobilitaet-komo>), which supports active mobility projects.

► Promotion of physical activity in the workplace

✓ Active travel to and from the workplace

✗ Physical activity at the workplace



The bike-to-work campaign, starting in 2005, is led by the NGO "Pro Velo Switzerland" and supported by private partners and the Swiss Cancer League. Companies sign up. Their employees register in teams of four who then collect kilometres travelled by bike over two months. In 2018, 2114 companies and 64 680 individuals participated, accumulating a total of 15 million kilometres by biking to work. <https://www.biketowork.ch/en>