



World Health
Organization

European Region

UKRAINE FACTSHEET

STEPS | The WHO STEPwise Approach to Surveillance

Physical activity and sedentary behaviour of adults aged 18–69 years

HIGHLIGHTS FROM STEPS

> RECOMMENDED INTERVENTIONS

- **Limit the amount of sedentary time.** Replacing this with physical activity of any intensity (including high intensity) provides health benefits.
- **Aim to comply with the recommended levels of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity** to help reduce the detrimental effects of high levels of sedentary behaviour on health.

> WHO-RECOMMENDED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS (7)

WHO recommends at least **150–300 minutes** of moderate intensity or at least **75–150 minutes** of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination thereof, throughout the week.



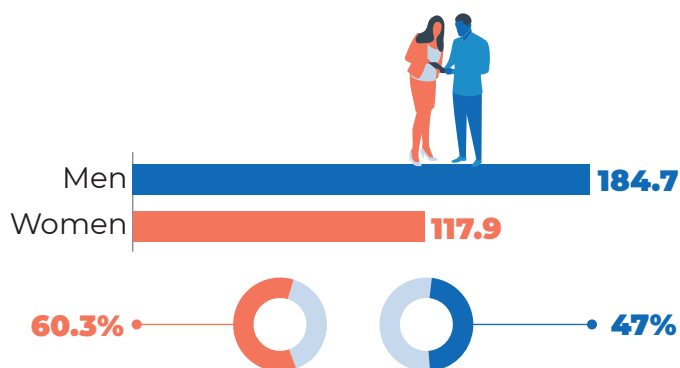
10.0% of adults did not meet WHO recommendations on physical activity for health benefits: 10.8% of women and 9.1% of men.



At least **18%** adults aged 60–69 years did not meet the WHO recommendation on physical activity for health benefits: 18.5% of men and 17.7% of women.

> WORK-RELATED DAILY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY¹

- Men self-reported spending **184.7 minutes** and women **117.9 minutes** on work-related physical activity.
- 53.5% did not perform any work-related physical activity: **60.3%** of women and **47.0%** of men.



> VIGOROUS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY²



73.3%

- 73.3%** did not engage in vigorous physical activity: 86.4% of women and 60.6% of men.
- The proportion of the population not engaging in vigorous physical activity increased sharply with age, reaching 91.3% among people aged 60–69 years.

Notes

1 Work-related activities were assessed by asking respondents about activities performed during work. Respondents were asked to think of work as the things that they had to do such as paid or unpaid work, study/training, household chores, harvesting food/crops, fishing or hunting for food, or seeking employment.

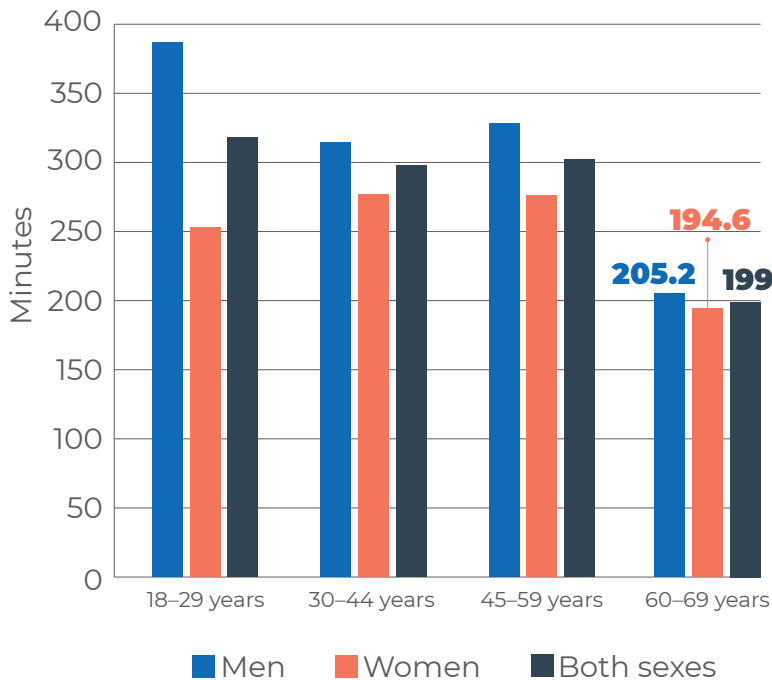
2 Vigorous-intensity activities were defined as activities that require hard physical effort and cause a large increase in breathing or heart rate for at least 10 minutes.

3 Transport-related activities were assessed by asking respondents to think about the usual way they travelled to and from different places (e.g. to work, for shopping, to the market or to places of worship).

4 Leisure-time activities were assessed by asking respondents to think about their engagement in sports fitness and recreational (leisure) activities (e.g. running or football).

5. Any waking behaviour characterized by an energy expenditure of 1.5 METS or lower while sitting, reclining or lying. Most desk-based office work, driving a car and watching television are examples of sedentary behaviours; this can also apply to people who are unable to stand, such as wheelchair users.

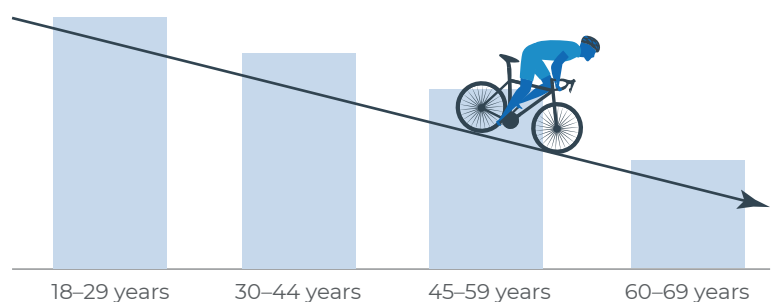
> DAILY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



- More than half of the time spent on physical activity was dedicated to work-related activities (151.8 minutes); one third to transport-related activities³ (109.2 minutes) and only 28.8 minutes to recreation-related physical activity.
- The mean self-reported time spent on physical activity was 289.8 minutes overall: 320.7 minutes among men and 257.9 minutes among women.
- Time spent on physical activity was **the lowest among adults aged 60–69 years**: 199.0 minutes overall, 205.2 minutes among men and 194.6 minutes among women.
- Time spent on physical activity was highest among men and women aged 18–29 years: 387.0 minutes for men, 253.6 minutes for women and 317.9 minutes for both sexes.

> LEISURE-TIME DAILY ACTIVITIES⁴

- 59.4% did not engage in any leisure-time physical activity, with **an increasing trend over the life course**.
- Adults aged 18–29 years self-reported spending the most time on recreational physical activity, at 50.2 minutes.



> SEDENTARY BEHAVIOUR⁵

- On average, the adults spent **235.4 minutes** per day sitting or reclining: 245.5 minutes for those in urban areas and 218.2 minutes for those in rural areas.
- Men spent **241.3 minutes** and women spent **229.2 minutes** in sedentary activities on average per day



235.4 MINUTES



> RECOMMENDED INTERVENTIONS (2)

- Implement **community wide public education and awareness campaigns** on physical activity, including a mass media campaign combined with community-based education, motivational and environmental programmes aimed to support behavioural change in physical activity levels.
- Provide **physical activity counselling and referral** as part of routine primary health-care services via a brief intervention.
- Ensure that macro-level urban design incorporates the core elements of residential density, connected street networks that include sidewalks, easy access to different destinations and public transport.
- **Provide convenient and safe access to quality public open spaces** and adequate infrastructure to support walking and cycling.
- Implement multicomponent **workplace physical activity programmes**.
- **Promote physical activity through** organized sport groups and clubs, programmes and events.
- **Ensure support for a surveillance system on physical activity to** inform the identification of population subgroups at risk of low physical activity (e.g. women and older adults) and the development of tailored interventions.
- **Promote exercise and sports practice as part of recreational activities**, given that the contribution of leisure time to total physical activity is very low.

STEPS DESCRIPTION (3)

The STEPS survey of noncommunicable disease risk factors in Ukraine was organized by the Ministry of Health of Ukraine and WHO within the scope of Serving People, Improving Health, a joint project of the World Bank and Ministry of Health of Ukraine. STEPS uses a global standardized methodology. Data collection for three steps took place from July to November 2019. Behavioural information was collected in Step 1. The survey was a population-based survey of adults aged 18–69 years. A multistage cluster sampling design was used to produce representative data for that age range. A total of 7704 randomly selected households were approached, and 4409 participants agreed to take part in the survey and provide information. The response rate was 57%. This factsheet reports findings on self-reported physical activity based on descriptive and bivariate analyses, all of which were weighted to account for complex sampling design and nonresponse.

References

1. WHO guidelines on physical activity and sedentary behaviour. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2020 (<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/336656>, accessed 26 January 2022).
2. Tackling NCDs: "best buys" and other recommended interventions for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2017 (<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/259232>, accessed 26 January 2022).
3. STEPS prevalence of noncommunicable disease risk factors in Ukraine 2019. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2020 (<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/336642>, accessed 26 January 2022).