



ITALY

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

FACTSHEET 2021



Total population: **59.26 m**

Median age: **47.2 years**

GDP per capita: **24 890 €**

Life expectancy, males: **80.1 years**

Life expectancy, females: **84.7 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 [WHO recommendations](#) (2010), and [WHO guidelines on physical activity and sedentary behaviour](#) (2020). The Ministry of health is updating the recommendations by including children under 5 and for other pathological conditions of different ages.

SUCCESS STORY

The Ministry of Health and Italian Regions adopted in 2019 National recommendations on physical activity for different age groups and with reference to physiological and pathophysiological situations and specific subgroups of the population. The recommendations are a policy document and an operational tool for implementation of the **National Prevention Plan 2020–2025** and in particular for the programme “Active communities”, which promotes physical activity for the prevention of chronic noncommunicable diseases.





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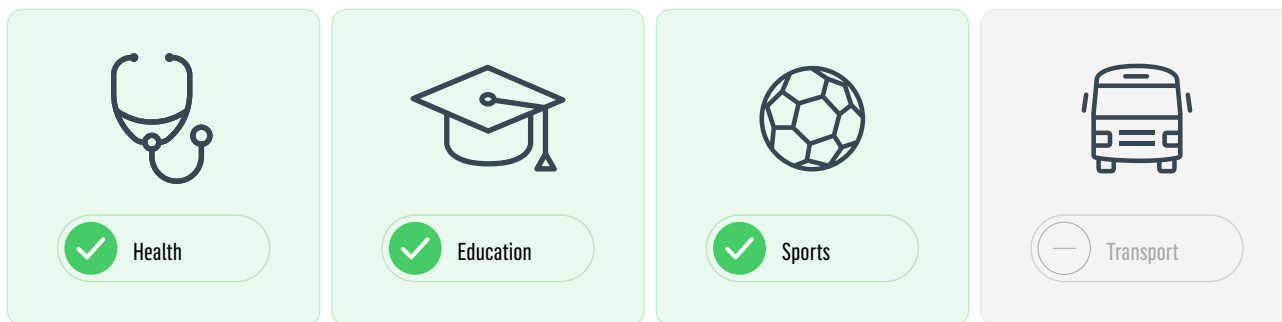
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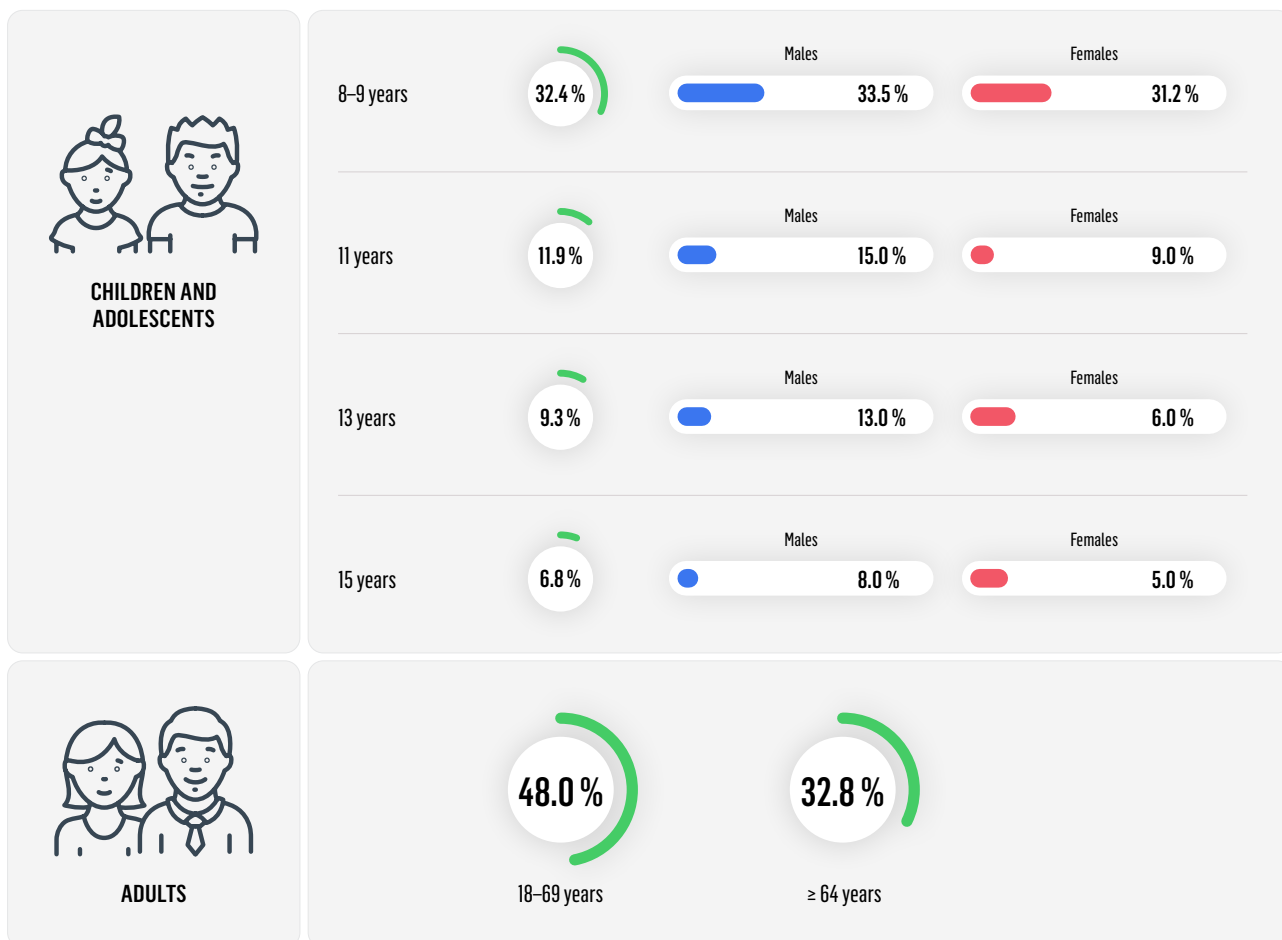


Monitoring and surveillance of physical activity

SECTORS WITH SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS



Estimated prevalence of sufficient physical activity levels



Levels of physical activity among children were assessed in the [OKkio alla SALUTE National surveillance system](#) in 2019; data for adolescents were derived from the [Health Behaviour of School-aged Children survey](#) in 2017-2018; data for adults were collected in the [Progressi delle Aziende Sanitarie per la Salute in Italia \(PASSI\) National surveillance system](#) in 2016-2019; and data for older adults were collected in the [PASSI d'Argento study](#) 2016-2019.



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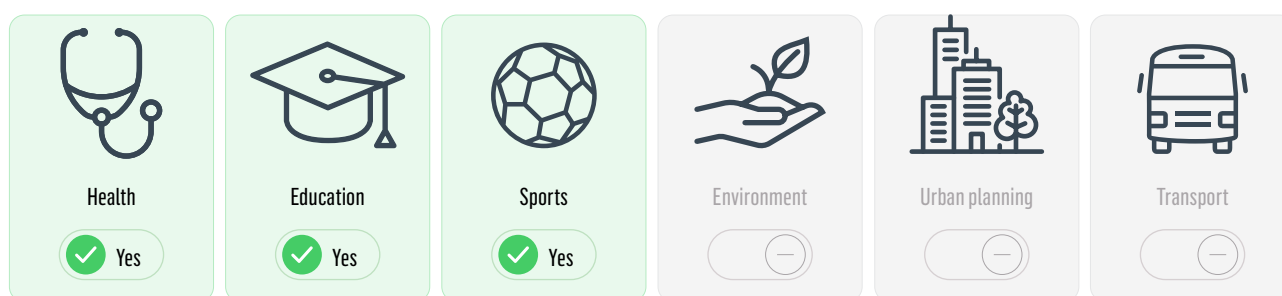


National government coordination mechanism and leadership in the promotion of physical activity

Although there is no national government coordination mechanism or leadership in the promotion of physical activity, the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Office for Sport at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and the National Olympic Committee are working on HEPA implementation.

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 NATIONAL PREVENTION PLANS (2014–2019 AND NEW 2020–2025)
- 2 GAINING HEALTH PROGRAMME (GUADAGNARE SALUTE 2007)
- 3 NATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS GUIDELINES ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
- 4 SPORTS CLASS NOTEBOOKS (SPORTI DI CLASSE)

TOTAL NUMBER OF POLICIES **4**

SECTORS INVOLVED IN THE DESIGN OF THE POLICY/ACTION PLAN

	1	2	3	4
Health	✓	✓	✓	✓
Education	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sports	✓	✓	✓	✓
Environment	✓	✓	✓	✓
Urban planning	✓	✓	✓	✓
Transport	✓	✓	✓	✓

POPULATION GROUPS TARGETED BY EACH POLICY

	1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4
General population	○	○	○	○	Pregnant women	○	○	○	○
Children < 5	✓	○	○	○	Breastfeeding women	○	○	○	○
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	✓	✓	○	○					



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POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 National Prevention Plan 2020-2025.** The Plan is based on the vision that good health is associated with a balance and sustainable development between humans, nature and the environment (One Health). Further, it promotes a life-course approach to strengthen preventive interventions that lead to positive health outcomes throughout the individual's lifetime and for whole communities. The approach is to reduce risk factors for people's health and provide access to healthy environments and choices that encourage a healthy lifestyle. The plan will implement preventive actions that start from the period between conception and the first 2 years of a child's life.
- 2 Gaining Health Programme (Guadagnare Salute).** The aim of the Programme is to significantly reduce the burden of premature deaths, diseases and disabilities. It promotes healthier choices through information campaigns to increase physical inactivity and reduce sedentary habits. National and local governments are required to make healthy choices easier by providing information, regulations, cross-sectoral strategies to change living environments and specific investment of resources to accelerate changes in people's health, well-being and the local living environment.
- 3 Sports Class Notebooks (Sport di Classe).** This project ensures the continuity of physical activity and sports education for primary school children (6–10 years) during the COVID-19 health emergency. It supports educational institutions in providing activities to guarantee compliance with safety regulations at school and training in digital technology. It also provides activities for the whole family to encourage physical movement and games. The programme is promoted and led by the Ministry of Sports and Health and the Ministry of Education.

▶ <https://www.sportosalute.eu/sportdiclasse.html>

Sports clubs for health

Italy has not adopted the Guidelines for sports clubs for health, but an action plan was created by the National Olympic Committee, which involves participation of 14 national sports organizations.









SUCCESS STORY

The aim of the **SportHabile Project** is to promote amateur competitive sports among people with disabilities to improve rehabilitation outcomes and strengthen their socialization and integration in the community. "InformHabile" is an independent programme that provides information on sports opportunities and awareness campaigns to advance the practice of sports in this group.

Counselling on physical activity and exercise prescription

The National prevention plans (2014–2019 and new 2020–2025) support physical activity promotion by implementing the "Essential levels of assistance" in the National Health System. The "Essential levels" promote counselling on physical activity by health professionals and implement programmes to increase physical activity in the general population, groups at risk and in various settings (schools, workplaces, local communities).

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WHO ARE TRAINED IN HEALTH-ENHANCING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

	 Medical doctors	 Physiotherapists	 Nurses	 Nutritionists/ dieticians	 Psychologists	 Other health professionals
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Postgraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>




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Physical education in schools

PRIMARY SCHOOLS:	HOURS PER WEEK
	2 recommended Mandatory

SECONDARY SCHOOLS:	HOURS PER WEEK
	2 Mandatory



Physical activity and health effects, their determinants and effective interventions is a mandatory subject in the curriculum of physical education teachers.



Promotion of physical activity in schools

The National Prevention plan 2014–2019 developed in all the Italian Regions several actions to promote physical activity in schools. The new National prevention plan 2020–2025 provides a specific programme “Health promoting schools”, based on the WHO health promoting schools approach, that includes school policies, life skills interventions, “pedibus” and active travel, sport activities, “active breaks in class” etc. and the intersectoral cooperation with local Associations for sports and PA promotions.

National travel survey

PASSI is a public health surveillance study based on continuous collection of information on the Italian adult population (18–69 years) on lifestyles and behavioural risk factors related to the onset of chronic noncommunicable diseases and their knowledge of and adherence to national intervention programmes. PASSI contributes to evaluation of the National Prevention Plan. Since 2014, PASSI has been collecting information on active mobility and use of bicycles or walking to go to work, school or usual trips and the time taken to do so. This information enables estimates of the proportion of people who reach the levels of physical activity recommended by WHO through active mobility, regardless of the physical activity practised in their free time or during work.

	PERSON PER DAY
	> 25.6 min
WALKING	

	PERSON PER DAY
	> 20.6 min
CYCLING	

Infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity

The European guidelines for improving infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity are included in general ministerial information kits and infographics.




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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**

 Yes

To promote physical activity, companies can choose actions appropriate for the work context and their economic resources. The activities may include promoting use of stairs instead of lifts; promoting use of bicycles for the home-work route; agreements for discounts on the purchase and/or offer of material related to use of bicycles; organization of company walking groups with walking leader training; organization of corporate sports initiatives and provision of corporate spaces accessible to all employees for physical activity (e.g., playground, gym).


Promotion of physical activity in the workplace was one objective of the National Prevention Plan 2014–2019 and also the Plan for 2020–2025, adopted on 6 August 2020. Several Italian regions have developed programmes to promote health in workplaces, and the new Plan 2020–2025 includes a mandatory programme for all regions, with the main objective of promoting organizational change to provide working environments for the adoption of healthy lifestyles, including the practice of physical activity.

SUCCESS STORY




The programme “Workplace health promotion – Lombardy network” is part of the Regional Prevention Plan for the Lombardy Region 2014–2019. It promotes health in the workplace and in particular monitors the prevention of behavioural risk factors for chronic and degenerative conditions. The most efficient, proven practices indicate that the main aim should be to promote organizational changes in the workplace to establish working environments that foster educated, aware choices for a healthy lifestyle among workers. Good practices in promoting opportunities for physical exercise are provided. Businesses that wish to register for the programme must meet specific criteria.

Community-based interventions for older adults



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

 Yes

Community interventions to promote physical activity among older adults are referred to in the “Recommendations on physical activity 2019 and are main objectives of the National Prevention Plan. The National Olympic Committee and the Associations for Sports and PA promotion (as the Italian Union for Sports for All) propose a number of programmes for physical activity for adults and older adults.



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National awareness-raising campaign on physical activity

The Department for Sport, in collaboration with the Sport and Health Office of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, is the national coordinator of the European Week of Sport campaign, co-financed by the European Commission. Among the many initiatives, the campaign provides information on promoting sports, encourages workouts, training sports and flashmobs throughout the country. The campaign was broadcast on the RAI networks (TV sports).

MEDIA USED IN NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS

