



Partnering Researchers, Practitioners, and Policymakers: Advancing Sport for All Together

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Advancing Sport for All Together:

Political relevance

Sport for All | Physical Activity Promotion

LIVE WEBINAR

PARTNERING RESEARCHERS,
PRACTITIONERS, AND POLICYMAKERS:
ADVANCING SPORT FOR ALL TOGETHER

25 FEBRUARY 2026
11:00 - 12:30 (UTC+1/CET)

TAFISA
OLYMPISM
365

TAFISA
Mission
2030

This webinar is organised in partnership with **ISPAH**

Sport for All
(TAFISA & ISPAH Webinar)



Physical activity promotion
(ISPAH Eight Best Investments)

Physical inactivity as a global problem

7-9%

Premature deaths per year
due to physical inactivity

27,5%

Inactive adults
Percentage of adults that do not meet
recommended levels of physical activity

81,0%

Inactive adolescents
Percentage of adolescents that do not meet
recommended levels of physical activity

Health
problem

Social
problem

Economic
problem

Environmental
problem

Ekelund, et al. (2026): Deaths potentially averted by small changes in physical activity and sedentary time..., Lancet

Guthold R., et al. (2020): Global trends in insufficient physical activity among adolescents ..., Lancet

Guthold R., et al (2018): Worldwide trends in insufficient physical activity from 2001 to 2016 ..., Lancet

Impact of sport policies on physical activity

Results of a systematic review

Policy action	Positive effect	Unclear	Negative effect
Build multipurpose sport infrastructure and facilities	+++	?	
Provide free access for identified target groups	+	???	-
Provide a voucher programme subsidising structured PA and sports	+		
Fund programmes to increase sport participation in hard-to-reach groups		?	
Promote shared-use agreements	+		
Combine free access with outreach measures	+		
Leverage sporting mega-events to promote physical activity		?	

Similar reviews have been conducted for other policy domains (e.g., school, transport, childcare, mass media)

Unintended consequences of policies

Canada: Children's Fitness Tax Credit



- *Purpose:* Reduces financial burden associated with registering a child in organized physical activity (including sport)
- *Budget:* \$ 200 million
- *Non-refundable tax credit:* Reduces the amount of income tax a person pays

Spence et al. *BMC Public Health* 2010, **10**:356
<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2458/10/356>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Open Access

Uptake and effectiveness of the Children's Fitness Tax Credit in Canada: the rich get richer

John C Spence*¹, Nicholas L Holt¹, Julia K Dutove¹ and Valerie Carson²

COMMENTARY

Non-refundable Tax Credits Are an Inequitable Policy Instrument for Promoting Physical Activity Among Canadian Children

John C. Spence, PhD,¹ Nicholas L. Holt, PhD,¹ Christopher J. Sprysak, LLM,² Nancy Spencer-Cavaliere, PhD,¹ Timothy Caulfield, LLM²

Spence et al (2010): Uptake and effectiveness of the Children's Fitness Tax Credit in Canada
Spence et al (2012): Non-refundable Tax Credits Are an Inequitable Policy Instrument...



Partnering Researchers, Practitioners, and Policymakers

Three examples

Example 1: Co-creating a physical activity policy toolkit

Purpose

Support the evaluation of public policies from a physical activity promotion perspective



Funded by the
European Union

Collaboration

- Transdisciplinary research team of researchers, practitioners, and policymakers
- Secondments at Sport Ireland, WHO Europe and German Ministry of Health

Methodological aspects

- Semi-structured expert interviews with researchers and policymakers (n=27)
- Focus group with 25 policymakers (n=1)
- Systematic literature search

Example 1: Challenges of evaluation use

Scientific perspective (International)

- Unit of analysis: Country
- Importance of data comparability
- Limited capacity / mandate for engaging in the national policy process
- 'Useability' of evaluation outputs differs

Preliminary results

Example 1: Challenges of evaluation use

Scientific perspective (International)

- Unit of analysis: Country
- Importance of data comparability
- Limited capacity / mandate for engaging in the national policy process
- 'Useability' of evaluation outputs differs

Policymaker perspective (National)

- Unit of analysis: Policy
- Importance of national context

Preliminary results

Example 1: Challenges of evaluation use

**“What’s a value to us is
– rather than comparing ourselves to other nations –
is to compare ourselves to ourselves.”**

Expert interview PLATO, 2025

Example 1: Challenges of evaluation use

Scientific perspective (International)

- Unit of analysis: Country
- Importance of data comparability
- Limited capacity / mandate for engaging in the national policy process
- ‘Useability’ of evaluation outputs differs

Policymaker perspective (National)

- Unit of analysis: Policy
- Importance of national context
- Limited capacity to address physical activity in policy evaluation

Preliminary results

Example 1: Challenges of evaluation use

**“We could be better at using the same approaches
– or as close as the same approaches as the health sector uses –
but we don’t have any expertise right now.”**

Expert interview PLATO, 2025

Example 2: Program evaluation by Sport Ireland

Purpose

Evaluate the impact of Irish Sport for All programs on physical activity levels of sport participants



Pragmatic approach to program evaluation

- Use of a single-item question to assess physical activity levels of sport participants (registration, end of program, three-month follow-up)
- Data collection by local sport partnerships

Collaboration with scientists

- Selection of single-item question
- Analysis and interpretation of data

Example 3: Co-creating policy recommendations

Purpose

Develop recommendations to strengthen physical activity policy in 6 EU countries



Research component

- Use of the Physical Activity Environment Policy Index
- Creation of an evidence document with country-specific results (100+ pages)

Policy component

- Involvement of researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to develop policy recommendations (n=95 in Germany)
- Systematic process to prioritize the 10 most relevant and feasible policy recommendations

Take-home messages

- 1. Knowledge on effective policy approaches is important for advancing Sport for All**
- 2. Researchers, practitioners, and policymakers have different – but complementary – perspectives**
Bringing those perspectives together is crucial for developing impactful solutions
- 3. The intended use of outputs should guide a co-creation process**
Taking into account available resources, intended users, and contextual factors

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