



September 2019

The World Health Organization identifies **physical inactivity** as the fourth risk factor for global mortality, provoking 6 % of cases of coronary heart disease, 7 % of type 2 diabetes, 10 % of breast cancer and 10 % of colon cancer – causing an estimated **3.2 million deaths globally**. Worryingly, the results of the 2018 Eurobarometer survey on sport and physical activity show that nearly half of respondents **in the EU (46 %) never exercise or play sport**.

The **European week of sport** is part of the **EU's response to physical inactivity**. The idea originated in the 2012 European Parliament resolution on the European dimension in sport, which recommended the creation of a large-scale annual event to raise awareness about the role and benefits of sport and physical activity.

Since its launch five years ago, the European week of sport has drawn over **40 million Europeans to more than 100 000 events in 38 countries** and its popularity continues to grow. It is the largest public-funded sports initiative worldwide. In 2019, countries in the Western Balkans and from the Eastern Partnership will also be organising national events under the umbrella of the week of sport, **officially inaugurated on 23 September in Espoo (Finland)**.

The **#BeActive Night**, a new feature first introduced in 2018, will take place on **28 September 2019**, enabling participants to discover the different sports activities available in their area.

[EU sports policy: Going faster, aiming higher, reaching further](#)

Briefing by Ivana Katsarova, September 2019

Sport has a growing impact both on the European Union economy and on society as a whole. Over 7 million people work in sport-related jobs, and sport-related goods and services amount to nearly 3 % of total EU gross value added. It was not until 2009, however, with the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, that the Union received a clear mandate to build up and implement an EU-coordinated sports policy supported by a specific budget, and to develop cooperation with international bodies in the area of sport.

[Gender equality in sport: Getting closer every day](#)

Briefing by Ivana Katsarova, March 2019

Traditionally, sport has been dominated by men, in terms of both participation and governance. Women were excluded from the first modern Olympic Games, held in Athens in 1896, and were only gradually allowed to start joining in four years later. Even though women's presence and involvement in the Olympic Movement have progressively evolved, girls and women across the world still get fewer opportunities and less investment, training and corporate attention when they play sport. Today, women's participation in sports governance structures has improved only slightly.

[Physical education in EU schools](#)

Briefing by Ivana Katsarova, November 2016

The low levels of physical activity among children and adolescents in the European Union are alarming and have become a matter of great concern for policy-makers, since physical inactivity is responsible for over 500 000 deaths per year and accounts for economic costs of over €80 billion per year. Physical education is part of all central curricula in the EU, and is compulsory in primary and secondary education. However, on average, just under 70 hours per year are dedicated to the subject.

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Infographic by Ivana Katsarova, EPRS, September 2019

[Sportspeople](#)

What Europe does for you series, EPRS blog, September 2018

[Watersports enthusiasts](#)

What Europe does for you series, EPRS blog, December 2018

[People who exercise to keep fit](#)

What Europe does for you series, EPRS blog, August 2018

[People who exercise outdoors](#)

What Europe does for you series, EPRS blog, July 2018

[Sport and physical activity in the EU](#)

Infographic by Ivana Katsarova, EPRS, September 2017

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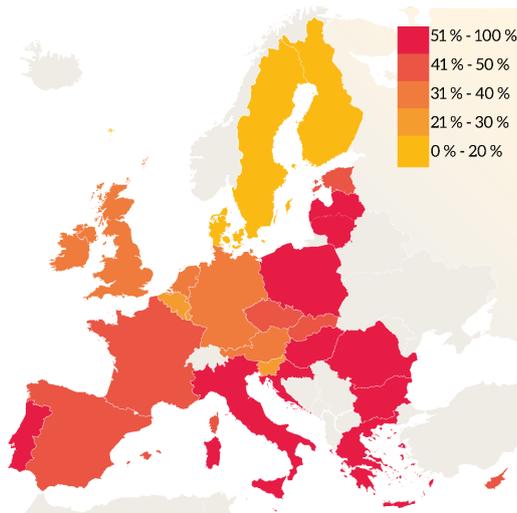
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[Match-fixing: Issues and policy responses](#)

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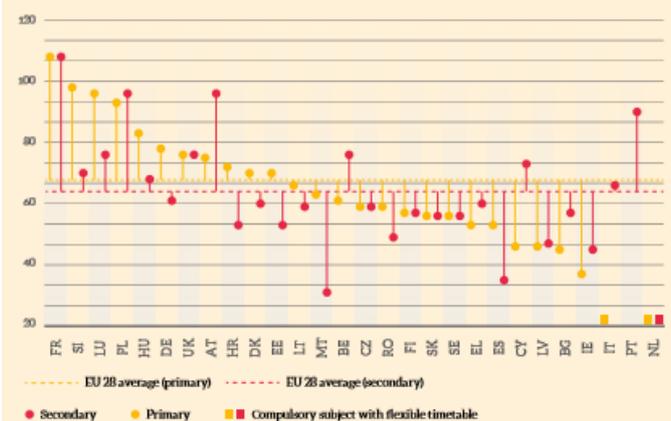
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Map of physical inactivity in the EU



Data source: [Sport and physical activity](#), Special Eurobarometer 472, TNS opinion & social, 2018.

RECOMMENDED MINIMUM HOURS OF COMPULSORY PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY PER YEAR (2011-2012)



Data source: Eurydice, [Physical Education and Sport at School in Europe](#), 2013.

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