

Physical activity as health promoting factor in the European Union. Community vision and politics (I)

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Abstract

Nowadays the problems of health cannot be approached and solved without full and permanent involvement of both governments and individuals. And this because we have not only to fight for defending and maintaining health, but also for promoting it, taking into consideration all its determinants and especially physical activity. Though apparently more and more people regularly take part in sport and physical activities, those who do not – and, unfortunately, they are still too numerous – are getting less and less fit to the severe detriment of their health and quality of life. This is why the problem of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer and other chronic lifestyle related diseases are currently considered a really challenging one for the population health. To counter the enormous waste of human potential for health and well-being evident in the functional incapacities, disease, disability and premature death that are due to the prevalent inactivity and unfitness, the EU decision makers initiated a number of programmes, which address and involve all those who work or who have direct or indirect responsibilities in health; whether they come from public health, sport or education. The aim of the present and of a currently in preparation paper is to provide the Romanian professionals and decision makers with a broad perspective of the most important and effective EU actions in the field of health promotion through sport, and for counteracting unhealthy lifestyle. And, as for better understanding the vision and strategy of European Commission and Council of Europe in these directions one has to firstly have a clear image of the Community Action Programmes, after a short review of the statistics concerning prevalence and costs of the sedentary lifestyle related pathology, a relative comprehensive presentation of the *Programme of Community action in the field of public health (2003-2008)* and *Programme of Community action in the field of health (2007-2013)* will be offered.

Keywords: physical activity benefits, chronic lifestyle related diseases, community action programmes in the field of public health