

ANNEX IV**Summary of main policy steps to promote HEPA at EU level**

While the most important efforts to promote physical activity are taking place in the Member States, HEPA is a topic that is receiving increasing attention by policy makers at EU level and, over the past years, has been addressed by the EU through a number of policies and instruments, in particular from the health and the sport side. The most important steps can be summarised as follows:

- The EU-funded study on young people's lifestyles and sedentariness (2004) ¹, which inter alia recommended the development at EU level of minimum standards for active living;
- The set-up of the informal EU Working Group on "Sport and Health" in September 2005 under the UK Presidency, to encourage cooperation and exchange between Member States regarding the promotion of HEPA;
- The 2007 White Paper on a Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related health issues² which aimed at encouraging co-operation between Member States and supporting them in their efforts to encourage healthier eating habits as well as health-enhancing physical activity. In this respect, the Commission set up in March 2005 the High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity (HLG) and launched the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health;
- The 2007 White Paper on Sport³ which highlighted the importance of physical activity, proposed the development of new physical activity guidelines by the end of 2008 and emphasised that the Commission will make HEPA a cornerstone of its sport-related activities;
- The EU Physical Activity Guidelines⁴, drafted by a group of 22 experts, approved by the EU Working Group «Sport and Health» and endorsed by EU Sport Ministers, meeting informally in November 2008. They consist of 41 guidelines of a non-binding nature, recommending how policies and practices can be used to make it easier for citizens to be physically active as part of their daily lives. The Guidelines provide concrete recommendations for each of the relevant sectors of society, such as sport, health, education, transport, urban planning, working environment and services for senior citizens. They also contain recommendations for policy implementation, which include developing concrete goals and target groups, setting up implementation milestones and systematically monitoring and evaluating the implementation phase.

¹ http://www.bso.or.at/fileadmin/Inhalte/Dokumente/Internationales/EU_Study_Young_Lifestyle.pdf

² European Commission White Paper "A Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related health issues", COM(2007) 279 final.

³ European Commission White Paper on Sport, COM(2007) 391final.

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/sport/library/documents/c1/eu-physical-activity-guidelines-2008_en.pdf

- The 2011 Communication on Developing the European Dimension in Sport⁵ which foresaw concrete action to develop further the implementation of national physical activity guidelines. In this respect, the Commission and the Member States were invited to ‘based on the EU Physical Activity Guidelines, continue progress towards the establishment of national guidelines, including a review and coordination process and consider proposing a Council Recommendation in this field’;
- The EU Work Plan for Sport (2011-2014)⁶ that includes the promotion of HEPA among the priorities and provides for concrete action to be achieved with the help of the Expert Group on Sport, Health and Participation;
- The work relating to physical activity in the Health Council, including the Council Conclusions on closing health gaps within the EU through concerted action to promote healthy lifestyle behaviours (December 2011);⁷
- the European Parliament’s Resolution on the European dimension in sport, (February 2012)⁸, which called on the Council to draw up a Recommendation along the lines of the EU Physical Activity Guidelines and on the EU to facilitate engagement in sport and to promote a healthy lifestyle;
- The policy debates on HEPA at the informal level, at meetings of EU Sport Ministers and EU Sport Directors in particular.

⁵ European Commission Communication “Developing the European Dimension in Sport”, COM(2011) 12 final.

⁶ Council Resolution on a European Union Work Plan for Sport (2011-2014); OJ C162/1, 1.6.2011.

⁷ Council Conclusions on closing health gaps within the EU through concerted action to promote healthy lifestyle behaviours, Brussels, 1 and 2 December 2011.

⁸ European Parliament Resolution of 2 February 2012 on the European dimension in sport (2011/2087(INI)).