



Success story

Sport-Health Centres (Maisons Sport-Santé)



Initiative type: Health-system | Community programme

Sector: Health | Education | Sport | Children & Youth | Ageing | Community

Target group: Whole population

Implementation stage: Scaling up

Transferability: Yes

About the initiative

The Sport-Health Centres (Maisons Sport-Santé) programme was launched in 2019 by the French Ministry of Sport and the Ministry of Health and has undergone significant development and expansion since 2024.

The centres bring together health and sport professionals to help people find and maintain physical activity that is appropriate to their needs and circumstances.

Through personalised sport-health programmes, the centres support people in moving towards sustainable physical activity and help connect them with suitable opportunities in their communities.

The network includes a wide range of organisations and delivery settings, including:

- Hospitals and healthcare organisations
- Local authorities and public institutions
- Sports associations and clubs
- Digital platforms
- Mobile units

There are currently 581 Sport-Health Centres across all mainland French departments and almost all overseas territories and local authorities.

What is making it successful?

A major strength of the model is its flexibility.

Sport-Health Centres do not require a single type of organisation or building. They can be integrated into existing healthcare, sport and community structures, allowing the model to adapt to different local contexts.

The national network also creates a common framework while enabling delivery through local organisations that are already connected to their communities.

The programme combines national coordination, local delivery, health and sport expertise.

What could other countries learn?

The French experience suggests that a national network does not necessarily require a single delivery model. Instead, countries can establish a common framework while allowing Sport-Health Centres or equivalent services to operate through different local settings.





Key challenges to promote HEPA

France's wider challenge for physical activity promotion

A key challenge is raising awareness of the multiple benefits of physical activity across the life course. Physical activity can contribute to physical and mental health, prevention, healthy ageing and social wellbeing, but its benefits are not always fully recognised or translated into everyday behaviour.

Country-level barriers to advancing HEPA

The following barriers are most persistent to advancing HEPA policy in the country.



BARRIER

IMPACT

Weak intersectoral coordination	MAJOR
Political prioritisation	MODERATE
Lack of workforce capacity	MODERATE
Public engagement challenges	MODERATE
Limited funding/resources	MINOR
Regional/local implementation gaps	MINOR
Inequities in participation/access	MINOR
Insufficient monitoring/data	NO IMPACT
Limited research translation into policy	NO IMPACT
Other	NO IMPACT

What is needed?

France's National Sport-Health Strategy 2025–2030 provides a framework for addressing this challenge through 12 measures and five main objectives.

Key priorities include:

- Accessible physical activity: Creating conditions in which everyone can be active.
- Youth activity: Increasing physical activity among children and young people in schools and universities.
- Workplace physical activity: Raising awareness and supporting activity in professional settings.
- Adapted physical activity: Expanding tailored programmes for people living with chronic conditions and for older adults.
- Mental health and sedentary behaviour: Strengthening recognition of the links between physical activity, mental health and sedentary lifestyles.



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