



Success story

Updating National Recommendations for Physical Activity and Physical Activity Promotion



Initiative type: National policy and recommendations

Sectors: Health | Education | Sport | Transport | Urban planning | Environment | Workplace/employment | Social affairs | Children/Youth | Ageing | Civil society/community organizations

Target population: All age groups, including people with specific needs, as well as decision-makers, professionals and organisations involved in physical activity promotion

Implementation stage: Early implementation

Transferability: Yes

About the initiative

Germany is updating its National Recommendations for Physical Activity and Physical Activity Promotion (NEBB), originally published in 2016.

The update combines the latest scientific evidence with contributions from around 120 stakeholders from policy, research and practice. Recommendations cover physical activity promotion across health, education, work, sport and leisure, transport and urban planning, as well as cross-sectoral action. It also addresses health equity, planetary health, crises and movement quality across sectors.

The process is a key outcome of Germany's Round Table on Physical Activity and Health, which ran from October 2022 to August 2023. Publication of the updated recommendations is planned for 2027, with the Federal Centre for Health Education (BfÖG) supporting dissemination to professionals and the wider public.

What is making it successful?

The Round Table helped create a foundation for intersectoral cooperation and demonstrated that stakeholders across sectors are willing to work together.

The NEBB process combines:

- Systematic evidence review
- Input from around 120 stakeholders
- National and international expertise
- Practice-oriented perspectives
- Advisory boards supporting the development process

The involvement of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Physical Activity and Public Health at FAU also connects the process with international evidence and experience in policy development, implementation and monitoring.

What could other countries learn?

The practice is considered transferable to other countries.

Successful transfer would require:

- Political support
- A strong evidence base
- Transparent methods
- Scientific and coordination capacity
- An existing intersectoral network, where possible
- Clear responsibilities
- Adequate resources for coordination, dissemination, implementation and monitoring





Key challenges to promote HEPA

► Germany's wider challenge for physical activity promotion

A key challenge is translating national recommendations into sustained action across sectors and levels of government. Responsibilities are distributed across federal, state and municipal levels, as well as across different policy sectors.

Although there is strong willingness among stakeholders to cooperate, Germany currently lacks a permanent and adequately resourced national coordinating body for physical activity promotion.

There is also no coherent monitoring framework covering structures, capacities, implementation, reach, equity and impact. This limits continuity, priority-setting, knowledge translation and support for regional and local implementation.

► Country-level barriers to advancing HEPA

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



BARRIER	IMPACT
Limited funding/resources	MAJOR
Weak intersectoral coordination	EXTREME
Political prioritisation	MODERATE
Lack of workforce capacity	MAJOR
Insufficient monitoring/data	MODERATE
Limited research translation into policy	EXTREME
Regional/local implementation gaps	EXTREME
Inequities in participation/access	EXTREME
Public engagement challenges	MODERATE
Other	EXTREME

► What is needed?

Germany identifies the need for a permanent, adequately resourced coordination structure connecting federal, state and local actors.

This structure should have:

- A clear mandate and governance
- Defined priorities and responsibilities
- Adequate resources
- Strong networking and communication functions
- Support for implementation at local and regional levels
- Coherent monitoring

Priorities should be guided by impact, equity and feasibility



► How can the HEPA Europe Network help?

HEPA Europe could support Germany through interdisciplinary exchange and practice-oriented research on governance and implementation.

In particular, the Network could help explore:

- What makes intersectoral networks sustainable
- Which governance structures work best
- How to engage partners with different priorities
- How shared benefits and synergies can strengthen collaboration
- How policy windows and opportunities can be identified and used.

