

# Physical Activity and Exercise are key to our continent's health, well-being and competitiveness

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## A SECTORAL CALL FROM EUROPEAN FITNESS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STAKEHOLDERS TO SAFEGUARD EU FUNDING IN THE POST-2027 MFF

EuropeActive and its undersigned National Association Members call on the European Commission to safeguard and increase EU funding that enables physical activity and fitness providers to collaborate across borders in sight of making **more people, more active, more often**. The fitness sector represents 71,6 million members, 64 550 clubs, and €36 billion annual revenues (*European Health & Fitness Market Report 2025*).

**EU funding is key in supporting sector stakeholders** collaborate and learn from their peers, which directly benefits the general population by increasing the offer, quality, and relevance of our sector's fitness and physical activities. Physical activity is proven to be one of the most cost-effective tools to improve individual's health and social well-being, and their productivity- yet its potential to drastically diminish healthcare costs through integrated prevention remains untapped. The Commission's commitment to ensure a resilient and thriving future for all Europeans requires a paradigm shift towards healthier lifestyles for all, and cross-sectoral collaborations to do so.

We call on European policymakers to **safeguard and prioritise investments in fitness and physical activity in the upcoming MFF**, and recall the need to:

### GENERAL EU FUNDING REQUESTS


- **Increase EU funding and initiatives, and their accessibility**, that support multisectoral collaboration and coordination platforms dedicated to healthy lifestyles promotion and access;
- **Provide Health-Enhancing Physical Activity (HEPA) the financial resources and political attention** it deserves across policies and funding programmes to address physical inactivity, poor health projections, and their consequent economic outcomes.

## ERASMUS+ SPECIFIC REQUESTS

**Reconsider the current funding formats of activities, and beneficiary eligibility criteria**, that directly contribute to and serve the Commission's European Week of Sport (EWoS), though limit its potential. EWoS launched 10 years ago in response to growing physical inactivity rates, to enable and encourage more people to be active, EWoS benefits from a handful of topical and sectoral 'sub-campaigns', such as the #BEACTIVE DAY campaign, that are led by official EWoS partners and that significantly contribute to EWoS' outreach, impact and growing success. Said sub-campaigns would reach a new level should Erasmus+:

- **Align the eligibility criteria of beneficiaries** with that of EWoS participating countries, which was extended to the countries and regions of the Western Balkans and Eastern Partnerships in 2020 with the launch of the 'European week of Sport Beyond Borders', yet the latter are unable to participate in EWoS-related Erasmus+ funded Actions.
- **ELIGIBILITY: All Not-for-profit European Sport Event formats are limited to EU Member States or third countries associated to the Programme** (North Macedonia, Serbia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Turkey). The Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership countries and regions include Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova and Ukraine, and **yet none are eligible to benefit from EU funding under the Not-for-profit European Sport events**. We believe this discrepancy negatively impacts the potential of EWoS, and of contributing sub-campaigns who miss out on **further growing the visibility of the Erasmus+ sport actions**. Rendering these countries eligible would be a strategic and constructive step forward, in line with initiatives such as 'EWoS beyond borders' where physical activity and sport are recognised mediums to **disseminate and strengthen EU values, principles, and social cohesion across the continent**.
- Under the same line of thought, **reintegrating the United Kingdom** under such actions makes sense.
- **DURATION: Not-for-profit European Sport Event formats are limited to 12-18 months**. We believe EWoS' outreach, impact and growing success would be furthered by **enabling proven 'sub-campaigns' to apply for several campaign editions at once. A 24 or 36-month project duration** would allow beneficiaries and applicants to spend more resources on their campaign implementation and expansion, and less on administrative tasks (*proposal writing, Grant preparation, continuous and periodic reporting*) that are repetitively burdensome when done every 12 months to secure funding.
- This proposal would be closer to that of National Coordinating Bodies (NCBs), and could further correspond to a **Framework Contract for EWoS 'sub-campaigns'**.



-  **CATEGORIES:** as articulated above, a general revision of **Not-for-profit European Sport Event** will arguably make sense to support EWoS' impact. Currently divided between European local events (Type I and II), European-wide event (single sport), and Large-Scale European event (7 different sports and activities throughout the year), the latter two are granted substantially larger budgets under important restrictions: a single location or sport. Said constraints are somewhat in favour of organised sport and leave the broad variety of Health-Enhancing Physical Activities, for different target audiences, out of the equation. We believe these **categories could include HEPA events implemented simultaneously across several countries and under a single branding.**

EuropeActive and its undersigned National Association Members reaffirm their commitment to make more people, more active, more often, in sight of supporting and enabling an active, healthy, and prosperous continent. We are committed to strengthening and expanding our European fitness and physical activity sector's **#BEACTIVE DAY** campaign, taking place across +20 countries and involving +500 000 participants each year, thanks to its decentralised coordination through EuropeActive's National Association Members. The latter report their campaign outreach numbers to the National Coordinating Body of their respective country, hence directly contributing to a successful EWoS.

