



POLICY NOTE

ON THE BEACTIVE BEACH GAMES

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PREFACE

The BeActive Beach Games (hereinafter referred to as the Games) is a unique event concept promoting physical activity and sport on beaches and waterside areas. It aims to increase multigenerational family participation and targets the different segments of the population through sports, promoting social inclusion, sustainability and a healthy lifestyle. The approach has been developed in response to a number of challenges faced by society over recent decades, as outlined below.

The physical inactivity pandemic¹ is global in scale and Europe is no exception.² Nearly half of Europeans never exercise or play sports, and the proportion has increased gradually in recent years.³

The prevalence of overweight and obesity, responsible for 5% of global mortality⁴ are considered as major contributors to non-communicable diseases such as cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, which have more than doubled since 1980 and today are one of the most common health problems. The main reasons behind this trend are a changing diet and an increasingly sedentary and inactive lifestyle across all age groups. In direct relation to the Games objectives, evidence has shown that the levels of physical fitness markers in children decrease during the summer holidays up to 80%.⁵

Besides the direct impact on the lifespan and healthy life expectancy, stagnating levels of physical activity have an adverse effect on people's health and wellbeing, leading to economic costs (physical inactivity costs Europe 80 bn EUR per year)⁶ such as increased health care expenditure, decreased employability and productivity.

Several initiatives and policies, such as the "European Commission's European Week of Sport", "European Commission's Tartu Call for Healthy Lifestyle" and "World Health Organisation Global Action Plan on Physical Activity" have been developed to address the inactivity crisis on the global and European level, emphasising the importance and urgency to tackle this pandemic. Nevertheless, the declining trend in physical activity levels still persists.

Current policies and solutions are not sufficiently addressing both the lack of space and their adjustment for sports and physical activity in the urban outdoor setting and initiatives to incorporate movement into daily life. Public spaces near water, both in urban and rural areas, can be also used to encourage people to be active and offer a unique value for awareness-raising events with an impact on healthy lifestyles, environmental sustainability, social inclusion, tourism and economy. We need to do more, by implementing low-barrier, innovative and cost-effective solutions to increase participation levels in sport and physical activity across different multigenerational families and among all segments of the population.

1 [thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(16\)30960-6/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(16)30960-6/fulltext)

2 ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/82432

3 Special Eurobarometer 472, Sport and Physical Activity (2018)

4 WHO Global Recommendations on Physical Activity for Health (2010)

5 The feasibility, scalability and outcomes of cardiorespiratory fitness testing in primary school children. Domone, S., Mann, S., Wade, M., & Beedie, C. (Journal ACSM, 2016)

6 ISCA's Inactivity Time Bomb Report [inactivity-time-bomb.nowwemove.com/](https://www.nowwemove.com/inactivity-time-bomb-report)

1 | BEACTIVE BEACH GAMES CONCEPT AND OBJECTIVES

The BeActive Beach Games is a simple, yet effective approach to address the inactivity crisis in the outdoor nature and urban settings. The model, along with the toolkits, is developed to be an easy-to-use support material for municipalities, sports clubs, organisations, groups of individuals and families aiming to stimulate sports and physical activity in beach settings and organise their own edition of the Games on real or artificial beaches.

The BeActive Beach Games concept gathers experience from two tested events organised in an urban beach in the capital of Latvia, and at an ocean side beach in Portugal. The model includes practical information on how to organise an event and a methodological toolkit for each individual stakeholder which are available on the website beactivebeachgames.com.

The model was developed to be flexible and easy to implement in various locations and settings depending on the local event organisers' and stakeholders' needs and objectives. We have gathered the knowledge, developed all the tools to organise an event and tested it in a real life setting. Based on this work, we hope to contribute to promote more opportunities for European citizens to BeActive while supporting the European Commission's initiative "European Week of Sport" (ec.europa.eu/sport/week_en).



2 | BENEFITS OF BEACTIVE BEACH GAMES

The BeActive Beach Games model presents several benefits:

- ▶ **Promotion of healthy lifestyles:** The Games provide accessible alternatives to mainstream sports in an informal setting that can better appeal to families and the physically inactive, enabling them to experience the fun of being active and include it as part of their daily life. Especially within families the Games, highlight the importance of exercise at a young age planting the early seeds for a lifetime of meaningful physical activity.
- ▶ **Innovative use of public and natural spaces for sports and physical activity:** The Games can be organised in existing environments such as natural or artificial beaches, riverbanks, public parks, etc. They cater to the general preference for outdoor and nature⁷ activities, while being unaffected by the frequent shortage and high cost of traditional sport facilities.
- ▶ **Social inclusion:** The Games allow for families and citizens from all segments to meet and engage in sports and physical activity together while experiencing activities that are focused on play and participation instead of competition. The model fosters social cohesion and the sense of community notably among parents and grandparents connecting them with peers outside of work or their usual social circles.
- ▶ **Environmental awareness and sustainability:** The Games promote respectful and sustainable use of resources and raise awareness of the need to preserve the natural environment. They provide a ready-to-use opportunity to engage in a natural environment at a minimal cost. The concept is designed according to the Green Guidelines⁸ and the Manual of Good Environmental Practices in Sport⁹ to organise an environmentally-friendly low-impact event with a focus on effective resource use, waste minimization and recycling.
- ▶ **Tourism:** The Games are an attractive event for tourism promotion and to boost the numbers of national and international visitors in a specific area. The Games can be a high-value fixture in the event calendar to foster economic growth supported by sustainable development.
- ▶ **Values and ethics:** The Games are based on sport values such as fair play, respect, cooperation, tolerance, inclusion, gender equality, and friendship. They promote non-violence and non-use of alcohol and drugs.
- ▶ **Legacy:** The Games can be a relevant event to promote local cultural identity and to disseminate it among citizens contributing to increase the cultural and sporting legacy for future generations. In this regard, traditional sports and games can assume a relevant role when included in the programme.



7 ec.europa.eu/sport/news/2018/new-eurobarometer-sport-and-physical-activity_en

8 sforae.eu/pdf/2018_SFORAE_GREEN_GUIDELINES.pdf

9 pned.pt/media/48955/manual_web_eng.pdf

3 | CLOSING REMARKS

No single solution can change the tide of physical inactivity, and we will need the involvement and support of policymakers, municipalities, clubs, associations, and other stakeholders to help curb this deadly trend.

The BeActive Beach Games model brings a fresh approach and ties inactivity into related societal challenges to provide a concept of high value, which is easy to implement and has a long-lasting legacy. The Games represent an opportunity to activate existing public and open spaces for sports and physical activity, promote an active and healthy lifestyle for people, bring the local community together around a regular event connecting families internally and externally with other citizens and with their living environment.

Following the success of the Games in Latvia and Portugal, we hope to see the BeActive Beach Games replicated across Europe and beyond to enable more citizens to live happier and healthier lives.

For further information please refer to the Games' website (beactivebeachgames.com), which offers the Manual for Organisation of BeActive Beach Games Events and Beach Sports and Physical Activity Guide for All comprised of short promotional videos and practical guidance material on certain sports and physical activities that can be practiced on the beach by anybody regardless of age, health, physical capabilities or skills.



REFERENCES:

International policy papers & reference documents that support the BeActive Beach Games Model:

European Union:

- ▶ White Paper on Sport
eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52007DC0391
- ▶ Council Recommendation on Health-Enhancing Physical Activity
ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/2013_hepa_en.pdf
- ▶ Tartu Call for a Healthy Lifestyle
ec.europa.eu/sport/sites/sport/files/ewos-tartu-call_en.pdf
- ▶ European Week of Sport
ec.europa.eu/sport/week_en

UN agencies:

- ▶ WHO Global Action Plan on Physical Activity
who.int/ncds/prevention/physical-activity/gappa
- ▶ WHO Europe Physical Activity Strategy
euro.who.int/en/publications/abstracts/physical-activity-strategy-for-the-who-european-region-20162025
- ▶ Kazan Action Plan
en.unesco.org/mineps6/kazan-action-plan

Non-Governmental Organisations

- ▶ TAFISA Mission 2030
tafisa.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2018/TAFISA_Mission2030.pdf
- ▶ ISCA's Economic Cost of Physical Inactivity
inactivity-time-bomb.nowwemove.com/

POLICY NOTE ON THE BEACTIVE BEACH GAMES

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Project partners:

Portuguese Institute of Sports and Youth
The International Sports for All Association (TAFISA)
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Lithuanian Union of Sports Federations
Estonian Beach Sport Federation
Union of Sports Federations in Catalunya

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THE NEW MODEL OF THE **BEACTIVE BEACH GAMES**

A unique event concept to promote using artificial and natural beaches for sport and physical activity focusing on multigenerational families, youngsters, adults and senior citizens with different socio-economic backgrounds, persons with disabilities, at-risk teenagers, immigrants and socially excluded groups.

PROJECT OUTCOMES



MANUAL FOR ORGANISATION OF THE BEACTIVE BEACH GAMES



METHODOLOGICAL BEACH SPORTS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDE FOR ALL



POLICY NOTE ON BEACTIVE BEACH GAMES

THE MODEL TESTED ON

1. Urban beach in Riga with 23 sports activities
2. Natural beach in Portimao with 21 sports activities

INVOLVING

Children, Youngsters, Adults, Seniors, Families, Friends, Athletes, Persons with Disabilities



BEACTIVE
**BEACH
GAMES**

BENEFITS OF **BEACTIVE BEACH GAMES**



SUSTAINABILITY

to promote respectful and sustainable use of resources



LEGACY

to promote local cultural identity and increase the sport legacy for future generations



SOCIAL INCLUSION

to engage in sports that are focused on participation instead of competition



TOURISM

an attractive event to promote tourism



ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

the concept is designed according to the Green Guidelines and the Manual of Good Environmental Practices in Sport



PROMOTION OF HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

to decrease the European inactivity trend and increase the practice of physical activity on the beach



VALUES AND ETHICS

to promote fair play, respect, cooperation, tolerance, inclusion and friendship



INNOVATIVE USE OF SPACES

simple approach to address the inactivity crisis in the outdoor nature and urban setting

Let us BeActive on the beach regardless of the age, physical fitness or skills!

BeActive Beach Games is an easy-to-use resource for municipalities, sports clubs, organisations and groups of individuals aiming to stimulate sports and physical activity in beach settings and organise their own edition of the Games on real or artificial beaches.

WWW.BEACTIVEBEACHGAMES.COM

Project coordinator



Project partners



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