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## **Response from International Sport and Culture Association – ISCA to Green Paper – “Promoting healthy diets and Physical activities a European dimension for the prevention of overweight, obesity and chronic diseases”**

### **1. Short introduction of ISCA**

International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA) is an international association with at present 146 member organisations, totalling some 39 million individual members from five continents, hereof are 65 member organisations based in Europe with a total membership of 30 million individual members.

ISCA is open to youth, sport and culture entities, primarily non-governmental organisations working for development of civil society, health and education through sports and physical activities.

In other words ISCA is about using physical activities and recreational sports as tools for individual and societal development - and not about highly competitive sport and winning medals.

ISCA coordinate international and European projects such as:

- International Academy for Sport for All (non-formal leadership education for NGO leaders, employees and trainers)
- International youth leadership training (a three year programme supported by the European Commission YOUTH programme)
- Healthcare and health promotion programme for NGO's

ISCA is recognised as NGO consultative body to the WHO in the preparation of the WHO European Ministerial conference on counteracting obesity in November 2006.

### **2. Response to the Green Paper**

ISCA has with interest followed the initiatives on the public health programme and the EU Platform for action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health.

Our response to this Green Paper will focus on the existing opportunities and the need of a stronger involvement of the existing structures in the future initiatives to promote healthy diet and physical activities, as well as it will include an invitation for private public partnerships in order to reach the common goals.

### **Health and physical activities settings**

The overall theme, the inter-relation between health, diet and physical activities, has for several years been high on the agenda of the civil society organisations, especially the NGO's in the field of recreational sport / "Sport for All" and it has resulted in many programmes, campaigns and projects at local and national levels.

The organisational structure of the "Sport for All" organisation in Europe are in many EU countries the most widespread civil society organisations with the biggest number of directly reached citizens. Approximately 70 millions individual citizens are directly member of a NGO for sport and physical activities, and the vast majority of these citizens motivation are to increase their social and physical well-being.

The "Sport for All" civil society structure is an efficient means of both conveying health messages and initiating health promotion programmes to a large number of citizens.

Over the last years the healthcare and health promoting activities has received and increased attention by the "Sport for All" organisations. More specific health oriented programmes and activities have been offered and reached different target groups: such as children with overweight problems, people with cardio-vascular diseases, Diabetes II, etc.

Especially, the last few years the development of specific health improving programmes and activities has accelerated. Many different programmes targeting selected target groups has been developed and implemented. These activities run by "Sport for All" organisations are an on-going process and to give an impression of some of current examples you will in the following see three short presentation of initiatives in Italy, France and Germany:

#### ***Unione Italiana Sport Per tutti (UISP) – "Let's give us a move: new active life styles for children and families"***

*The Sports for All Union in Italy, USIP, is developing a national campaign for the promotion of healthy lifestyles through physical activity. Engaging 17 regions, 50 cities and 160 local communities, the campaign aims at involving entire families in physical activities. Local clubs, schools and communities plan physical activities with children and families so that all from infants to grandparents can participate. The campaign will cumulate in a national "Weekend of sport in the Family", where the planned physical activities will take place in each community, city and region.*

#### ***Union Sportive de l'Enseignement du Premier degré (USEP)***

*USEP has launched a national initiative aimed at educating educators of children on the importance of a healthy diet along with physical activities. Additionally, USEP has organised the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of a national "Week of Sport for Youth" involving 100.000 young people across 70 different USEP departments in France. The objective of the week is to promote sport and physical activities as a way to understand functions of the body, experiment, have fun and express emotions.*

**Plattform ernährung und beweging e.v. (PEB)** –*The German Strategy for the Prevention of Obesity Among Children and Young People*  
*On the initiative of the Federal Ministry for Nutrition, Agriculture and Consumer a platform for the promotion of healthy lifestyles comprising of balanced nutrition and exercise. The platform is made up of experts within key areas such as, but not limited to, child nutrition, sports science, public health and education. Peb concentrates on the prevention of excess weight children and youths in 4 areas, determining causes and developing good practice, transfer of knowledge and training, informing the public and new approaches. The German Youth Sport organisation (Deutscher Sport Jugend) is one of the three members of the Acting Managing Committee.*

The strength of the "Sport for All" is the capability to combine the overall campaign messages about "health" with motivation and activities in local settings, which give the general campaigns much more effect.

### **More balanced partnership cooperation**

Following the communication from the platform for action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, and studying the Green Paper, we feel that the group of stakeholders should be better balanced.

Stakeholders such as active operational national and European NGO's working with physical activities and health promotion as there main activity, should be taken into account in order to reach the European citizens with the health enhancing messages and programmes.

We are aware of that food producers have strong influence on the food consumption and the energy intake of the Europeans and thereby the current situation of public health. However, we feel that there might be a possibility of a conflict of interest, when it comes to reduction of consume and directing food consumption to more healthy products.

We therefore strongly recommend, that the European Commission in its future work and initiatives to improve public health, involve stakeholders from the organised "Sport for All" structures – in other word; put more emphasis on multi-disciplinary partnerships including operational NGO's within the sport for all sector.

## **ISCA Health care and Health promotion programme – an invitation for a partnership.**

ISCA is right now launching an international Healthcare and Health promotion programme. The programme provides services to national sport for all organisations and supports these organisations to develop national quality health enhancing activities and programmes.

The programme focus on the following support and services to the national sport for all organisations:

- Consultancy Services
- Educational Services
- Network and Information Sharing
- Lobbying and Fundraising

ISCA see itself as an operational and competent partner for future European initiatives on health enhancing activities and projects. We have the experience in international project management and we would like to invite to future cooperation with the European Commission.

On behalf of ISCA

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