

***“SENDING A MESSAGE TO CUSTOMERS” vs. “INVOLVING PEOPLE IN POSITIVE ACTIONS”:***

**UISP preventive strategy in response to the Green Paper**

UISP, Italian Association of Sport for All, is a democratic Association freely constituted in 1948 in order to assert sport like primary right of all the citizens. UISP struggles against every shape of inequality, proposes education to culture and to physical activity - from childhood to old age - in order to assert in the sport movement all the rights of the citizens and the values of human dignity: non violence and solidarity. Moreover it struggles for peace, international cooperation and it is for European Union. UISP is involve in European and world-wide networks as ISCA, CSIT, FISpT, TAFISA and CESS.

UISP is present in all the Italian National territory, with 160 local Committees and 20 Regional committees, and represents and works for more than 1.000.000 of individual members, also via its about 14.350 affiliated clubs.

It is officially recognised by the Italian Olympic Committee as Agency of Sport Promotion; by the Home Affairs Ministry as Assistance Agency; by the Ministry of Justice with Protocols for the realisation of activities towards convict and under social control measures people; by the Ministry of Welfare as Agency of Social Promotion.

In the framework of these public certifications, UISP promote social pilot projects with the capacity of reading the context and acting appropriated answers, as in 2005, when UISP submitted to the Ministry of Welfare the project “Let’s gives us a move: new active life styles for children and families”.

The fast social, economical and cultural changes in the Countries with the greatest industrial development have determined deep modifications in the "life style". Active life style, able to prevent obesity as well as other health risks, means, most of all, behaviours which privilege, in daily activities, the use of the body instead of the use of machines. For example, each time is possible to walk instead of using the car, make the steps instead of using the elevator, and so on. In the Western Countries, motorised means of transport, automation and technological progress have produced an increase of sedentariness both in adult and children, thus producing an illness rate increase. In the last years, overweight and obesity have increased with an high rhythm and, actually, obesity is a real menace for public health in the European Union.

The problem specifically regards children and youngsters. In Italy, the majority of children is really sedentary, spending, already at 6 years old, an average of more than 2 hours

watching TV; they play passive games and do not consider the outdoor ones which are more physically exacting. Moreover, we have to be aware that, progressively, free time activities, played in the park, in green spaces and in extemporised game fields, which, for years and years, have contributed to develop spontaneously the motricity, creativity and sociality of entire generations of children is going to disappear. Sport practice is not necessary able to cover this lack; in a lot of cases, families make a precocious choice, on behalf of their children, for a specific sport, that children may feel like a duty or even a sacrifice, with consequent high level of drop-out from sport practice, around 11 years old. Furthermore, the achievement of sports results is contrary to the pleasure of playing and moving.

The Green Paper affirms: *“...preventing overweight and obesity implies an integrated approach to fostering health, an approach which combines the promotion of healthy lifestyles with actions aimed at addressing social and economic inequalities and the physical environment, and with a commitment to pursue health objectives through other Community policies...”*. Here acts “Sport For All”, promoted by UISP, as well as by several Sport For All Organisations operating in all the 25 European Union Countries, as policy and tool able to consider sociality factor, promoting physical activities and active life styles via an integrated approach that, for an NGOs, means active involvement of several social actors, first of all the target group, like, in this case, girls, boys, their families as well as the social and educational context in which they live: schools, educational institution, local authorities. Sport For All is a social goal as well as is the constant research of new ways, new rules, new forms of activity to be effectively for all – nobody excludes.

Regarding youth, Sport For All is not based on suggestions, ideas and proposals to be suitable with the needs expressed by themselves and able to really act a social, educational and preventive role, able to join game, activity and relationships. Specifically, talking about social, educational and preventive role we refer to the capacity of accompanying the child in their growth in order to make themselves able to progressively develop their life styles: to be healthy, together with others, grow well, become old well, have fun, play, participate, win and lose, compete, be active and protagonist. It is impossible to realise these objectives without intervene also on people context: natural, social and educational one.

In this context, the project has been approved and funded by the Ministry of Welfare and it will start in October 2005 to end in September 2006. UISP is going to realise an information campaign on active life styles based on Sport For All as practice able to

promote well-being, health, fight against obesity, a campaign which foresees target as active protagonist. It is not focused on a simple transferring of information from experts to people, but wants to promote the perception of everyone like active subject as well as responsible of own choices, starting from the early evolutive times: *“...apart from the human suffering it causes, the economic consequences of the increasing incidence of obesity are of particular importance...”*: consequently, preventive approach and methodologies are the only possible to deal with this problem, if the objective is *also reduce the long-term costs to health services and stabilise economies by enabling citizens to lead productive lives well into old age...”*.

UISP means to mobilise families for the construction of “spaces” of activity outside the limits of structured sport; activities which will be based on games, movement and active life style, designed to involve children and parents.

In order to organise the campaign, UISP will work on the involvement, on local basis, of children, parents, schools and local authorities. We will proceed with the mapping of the local situation and needs analysis, defining the local working groups which will be composed by UISP local Committee representative, children and parents, teachers, local authorities representatives. This local groups, beside of participating in the national campaign, will organise activity at local/regional level.

The national campaign will be based on the ideation, elaboration and realisation of material easy to use and diffuse as leaflets and poster, but the most important one will be the “On Board Diary”: it will be organised in two different section. The first one will be informative and will be managed by the coordination group. The second one will be exactly a Diary in which participants may have the chance to tell and describe their experience in the project.

Another tool to involve people in the campaign will be the Event, called “Week-end of Sport in Family” where, in more than 50 different cities, all over the national territory, let different generations meet and play together, using sport as binding tie: the week end will foresee shows and activities valorising physical activity and sport practice in family, in its pure game dimension.

At the end of the project, a methodological handbook will be edited as further tool of dissemination: of the campaign, of its message, of its methodologies and results.

Finally, the project will end with the Closing Forum, open to public.

UISP believes that when we talk about diet, physical activities and active life style, Sport For All organisations all over Europe, with their expertise and experiences, their policies

and methodologies, has to be taken in strong consideration. Moreover, UISP foretells that its point of view will have a positive acceptance and consideration, because of its high educational and citizenship values.

This paper represents the views of its author on the subject. These views have not been adopted or in any way approved by the Commission and should not be relied upon as a statement of the Commission's or Health & Consumer Protection DG's views. The European Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this paper, nor does it accept responsibility for any use made thereof.