

# CZECH REPUBLIC

PREVALENCE (%) OF ADOLESCENTS REACHING THE WHO  
RECOMMENDED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS, 2010

%	ADOLESCENTS		
	11 YEARS	13 YEARS	15 YEARS
MALES	28	30	25
FEMALES	23	19	14

Total population: 10 538 275

Median age: 40.8 years

Life expectancy at birth males: 75.2 years

Life expectancy at birth females: 81.3 years

GDP per capita: €11 300

GDP spent on health: 7.6% (1)



# Monitoring and surveillance

## Physical activity in adults

The Czech Republic is currently developing its national recommendations on physical activity, which will feature in the forthcoming "Action plan to promote physical activity in Czech Republic for the years 2016–2020".<sup>1</sup> The recommendations are expected to be based on WHO's *Global recommendations on physical activity for health* (2010) (2), the European Union (EU) (3) and Canadian guidelines (4).

National data on the prevalence of physical activity (5) are disaggregated for adults (aged 18–64 years) and older adults (aged 65+ years), measuring 70.0% and 68.0%, respectively, for these age groups.

The WHO Global Health Observatory (GHO) 2010 estimates for Czech adults (aged 18+ years) (6) show that 73.8% meet the WHO recommended physical activity levels, with the proportion of males and females physically active at the recommended level being 75.9% and 71.8%.

## Physical activity in children and adolescents

Physical activity levels in Czech children and adolescents (aged 6–15 years) are assessed through the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study (7), and led and reported on by Palacký University in Olomouc (8). Data are collected every 4 years, and physical activity measurements include frequency and duration of physical activity, sedentary behaviour in different age groups, and socioeconomic indicators.

The Czech Republic uses the cut-off point for children and adolescents reaching the recommended physical activity levels, as specified in WHO's *Global recommendations on physical activity for health* (2010) (2).

Children and adolescents are reported together, and according to a report on the data from the 2010 round of the HBSC study (9), adolescent girls (aged 11, 13 and 15 years) are less likely to meet the physical activity recommendations than boys across all age groups (see Table 1). This difference is more noticeable the older they become: among 15-year-olds the figure for males is almost twice as high (25%) as that for girls (14%).

Table 1. Prevalence (%) of adolescents reaching the WHO recommended physical activity levels, 2010

%	ADOLESCENTS		
	11 YEARS	13 YEARS	15 YEARS
MALES	28	30	25
FEMALES	23	19	14

Source: Kalman et al., 2011 (9).

According to the WHO GHO 2010 estimates for Czech adolescents (defined as aged 11–17 years in relation to WHO data), 23.1% meet the recommended physical activity level (27.1% males and 19.4% females).

<sup>1</sup> Unpublished document in draft form at the time of writing (*Akční plán podpory pohybové aktivity České republiky na léta 2016–2020*).

# Policy response

## Major policy documents adopted by government bodies

The Ministry of Health is in the process of drafting an action plan to promote physical activity in Czech Republic for the years 2016–2020 (*Akční plán podpory pohybové aktivity České republiky na léta 2016–2020*). This document is envisaged to be adopted during 2015 and covers policy areas such as promoting healthy lifestyles as part of daily life. It aims to function as a dedicated Sports for All policy, specifically addressing Sports for All promotion. The target groups in particular need of specific physical activity promotion, addressed by this policy, include individuals of low socioeconomic status, people with low physical activity levels, older people, ethnic minorities, and women before and during pregnancy.

The so-called White Book on Sports was produced by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in 2007. It covers issues such as promoting sports education and training, improving volunteering in sports and non-profit-making sports organizations, and social inclusion in and through sports (10). The Ministry of Health has also produced *Health 2020 – national strategy for health protection and promotion and disease prevention* (11). Physical activity is included in the first strategic objective for improving health for all and reducing health inequalities by addressing social inequalities, which contribute significantly to health and well-being, and in particular provision for multi-level physical activity support throughout the curriculum at all levels. The goals of the forthcoming action plan to promote physical activity in Czech Republic for the years 2016–2020 are also reinforced by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports' *Lifelong learning strategies* (2007–2015), providing approaches to incorporate physical activity into organized leisure-time activities (12).

## Guidelines and goals

The draft action plan to promote physical activity in Czech Republic for the years 2016–2020 also contains recommendations for young people, adults and older adults. The recommendations are based on WHO's *Global recommendations on physical activity for health* (2010) (2) as well as the EU and Canadian guidelines on physical activity (3, 4).

Table 2 summarizes the key physical activity initiatives in the Czech Republic.

Table 2. Summary of key physical activity initiatives in the Czech Republic

HEALTH	SPORTS	EDUCATION	TRANSPORT	MONITORING	GUIDELINES
Counselling on physical activity as part of primary health care services	Existence of a national Sports for All policy(ies)	Mandatory physical activity in primary and secondary schools	National or subnational schemes promoting active travel to school and/or workplace	Physical activity included in the national health monitoring system or separate routine survey	Existence of national recommendation on physical activity
NO <sup>a</sup>	YES	YES	YES	NO <sup>b</sup>	NO <sup>c</sup>

Notes. <sup>a</sup> Counselling, <sup>b</sup> monitoring and <sup>c</sup> recommendations are expected to be included within the action plan to promote physical activity in Czech Republic for the years 2016–2020, by the year 2017.

## Additional information on action in key areas

### Physical activity among older adults

The National Action Plan to Promote Positive Ageing for the period 2013–2017 was passed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in 2013 (13). It includes sections dedicated to lifelong learning, focusing in particular on physical activity. The Czech Association Sports for All (Česká asociace sportu pro všechny) (14), established by the Czech Sports Union, aims to ensure that older adults have opportunities to keep active and healthy.

### Physical activity in the workplace

The National Strategy for Cycling Development (2013–2020) includes measures to make cycling safer and outlines investment in the development and financing of the Czech cycling infrastructure designed to increase the ability for adults to cycle to work across the country (15). Physical activity in the workplace is envisaged to be promoted through the action plan to promote physical activity in Czech Republic for the years 2016–2020, due to be implemented during 2015.

### Physical activity in schools

It is mandatory for schools to provide 2 hours of physical education (PE) in primary schools, with the suggestion to increase this to 3 hours currently under discussion at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. An additional 3 hours of PE can be included in the school curriculum, but this is left to the discretion of individual schools. In secondary schools, it is also mandatory to offer 2 hours of PE and up to another 4 hours can be included in the school curriculum (again, at the discretion of individual schools). Active school breaks during and between lessons are envisaged to be implemented when the action plan to promote physical activity in Czech Republic for the years 2016–2020 is implemented in the coming months.

The Czech Republic also has an after-school health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA) promotion scheme entitled “Leisure time and prevention for children and youth” (*Volný čas a prevence u dětí a mládeže*), which was issued and published by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in 2002 (16). The document deals with active use of free time and rest; the psychosocial function of physical activities; recreational sport and doping; and provision of suitable sports opportunities. It emphasizes creativity and inventiveness and respecting the emotional needs of children. It also deals with engaging municipalities and nongovernmental organizations, financing leisure activities for civic associations and the community, and support from the EU.

The National Strategy for Cycling Development (2013–2020) (15) includes measures to make cycling safer, as well as plans to start cycling academies in order to increase the ability for children and students across the country to cycle to school (12).

### Transport and the built environment

The Czech Republic is part of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network (17), the Schools for Health in Europe (SHE) network (18), the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (19) and the European Network for Workplace Health Promotion (20).

The Ministry of Regional Development created a document entitled *Principles of urban policy* (21). Through sports activities, partnerships and cooperation between towns and rural areas are used to encourage people to identify with their local areas, helping to improve relations between an area and its surrounding neighbourhoods.

## Successful approaches

The action plan to promote physical activity in Czech Republic for the years 2016–2020 (currently being finalized).

The National Strategy for Cycling Development (2013–2020) (15)

The National Programme for the Development of Sports for All (implemented by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in the year 2000) (22).

2000 km of cycle paths built since early 2010.

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