

# TARTU CALL FOR A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE



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## 2 YEARS LATER

Joint actions to promote healthy lifestyles

19 JUNE 2019  
Brussels,  
Belgium



## Where are we 2 years later?

The Tartu Call for a Healthy Lifestyle was launched during the opening of the 2017 European Week of Sport in Tartu (Estonia). Commissioners Navracsics (Education, Culture, Youth and Sport), Andriukaitis (Health and Food Safety) and Hogan (Agriculture and Rural Development) agreed on a list of joint actions to promote healthy lifestyles, showing their firm commitment to work across policy areas and to develop further cooperation across the health, sports, education and food sectors. Beyond strengthening internal cooperation in the European Commission, the Tartu Call sends a strong signal about the importance of healthy lifestyles, also inviting the civil society to contribute. This brochure takes stock of the progress made in implementing the 15 commitments from the Tartu Call over the last two years.

*"When we promote health, we make an investment in our future. The Tartu Call is a good example how we can do this, in all policies, bringing together health, research and environment. Let's keep this going."*

**Vytenis Povilas Andriukaitis - European Commissioner for Health & Food Safety**



*"The progress made is a strong signal to show that working together can bring great results. From balanced diets to regular physical activity, more needs to be done but I am confident that we are on the right track."*

**Phil Hogan - European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development**



*"2 years later, we can be very proud of the progress accomplished to promote healthy lifestyles. There is no silver bullet and this remains an important societal challenge to address, but by joining all our efforts we will make a difference."*

**Tibor Navracsics - European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport**



## REFERENCE AND USEFUL LINKS

**EU Sport policy:**  
<https://ec.europa.eu/sport/>

**EU Health policy:**  
<https://ec.europa.eu/health/>

**Common Agricultural Policy:**  
[https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy_en)

**EU Health Policy Platform:**  
<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/hpf/>



**1** Increasing funding for projects promoting physical activity under the Sport chapter of the Erasmus+ programme, with a possible focus on specific settings such as schools.

Following the Tartu Call, the budget allocated to projects promoting physical activity under the Sport chapter of the Erasmus+ programme has been substantially increased. 39 projects promoting health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA) with a total budget of about 15 million EUR were supported between 2014 and 2016. The budget allocated to HEPA in 2017 amounted 6 million EUR, this was increased substantially to 10.7 million EUR in 2019. The total amount spent on HEPA therefore equates to almost 30 million for 2014-2019, making it the topic receiving the biggest portion of the total sport-related funding of the programme. The proposal from the European Commission for the next period (2021-2027) is to double the budget allocated to sport, in the context of the proposal to double the funding for the future Erasmus programme. Moreover, 15 projects regarding schools and children were supported, including topics related to the creation of innovative curricula for physical education.

**2** Encouraging the Knowledge and Innovation Communities supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), EIT Health and EIT Food, to develop and boost innovative approaches to promote and raise awareness of the benefits of healthy lifestyles.

In 2018, the EIT granted a total of 84 million EUR to EIT Health (focusing on healthy living and active aging), and EIT Food (addressing a healthy and sustainable food system). The goal is to boost innovation in these sectors through the support of activities and collaborative projects bringing together education institutions, research organisations and businesses across the EU. The EIT runs many activities aimed at empowering citizens to embrace healthier lifestyle through better nutrition, more physical activity, and increased health awareness. E.g. one activity, Healthy Lifestyle Innovation Quarters for Cities and Citizens (HeaLIQs4Cities), targets neighbourhoods with low health literacy, allowing citizens to learn about healthy living by engaging in individualised lifestyle assessments, and testing and co-developing innovative products from local SMEs. The increase of the allocated budget by the EIT to EIT Health and EIT Food in 2019 (130 million EUR), ensures the European Commission is delivering on its Tartu Call commitments to promote and support healthier lifestyles for all European citizens.

**3** Using the European Week of Sport to promote healthy lifestyles, especially among children, older people, and people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Following the Tartu Call, the European Week of Sport has been expanded beyond physical activity to include the promotion of healthy lifestyles. For example, in Sweden, the Elderly School of Sport aims at improving the quality of life and wellbeing of the elderly, while instilling in them the sense that you are never too old to #BeActive. This approach will be reinforced in 2019 with more events promoting health. Moreover, new partner organisations related to sport nutrition were added to strengthen the healthy lifestyles approach. In 2018, 13 million people took part in almost 50,000 events across Europe. Pupils are one of the main targets of the Week, with a day focusing on education. The European School Sport Day, organised by European Week of Sport partners and supported by the Erasmus+ programme, is another useful tool to encourage schools to embrace and address the issue of physical inactivity. Over 7,000 schools across Europe and 2 million active children participated in 2018.

**4** Promoting healthy lifestyles among children and young people, notably by supporting schools and sport clubs in creating and developing partnerships.

The different European Commission information channels under the EU Work Plan for Sport, e.g. Expert Groups, have been key in promoting healthy lifestyles among children and young people, and encouraging partnerships between schools and sport clubs. They also help reach out to the Member States and civil society. The Erasmus+ programme also supports developing valuable partnerships between schools and sport clubs. E.g. the project "Watersports Enhanced Together" developed partnerships between schools of Viana De Castelo in Portugal and clubs of the area with the objective of reconnecting younger generations with the sea and promoting physical activity. Since the adoption of the Tartu Call in 2017, six projects focusing on the creation of similar partnerships were funded.

**5** Promoting the EU school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme launched in August 2017, which contributes to shaping healthier diets through the distribution of agricultural products to schools, and a series of accompanying educational activities such as a Teachers' Resource pack.

Besides providing support to Member States authorities in implementing the EU school scheme, the European Commission increased communication efforts to potential applicants and the public, through news items, media activities at key moments of the year, and a completely revamped dedicated webpage. In October 2018, the public authorities and stakeholders in the agriculture, health and education sector met in Brussels to take stock of progress and exchange good practices on the EU school scheme, such as the choice by some Member States to provide only dairy products with no added sugar. Practical and successful examples of cross-sector cooperation were discussed. In addition, a "Teachers' pack" has been developed in collaboration with teachers and educational experts. It is a collection of ready-to-use teaching and learning resources, which aims to raise awareness among young Europeans of the importance of food, environment and the countryside.

**6** Supporting campaigns to promote healthy dietary practices and increasing the consumption of fruit and vegetables (e.g. the "eat 5 a day campaign") through the annual calls on the Promotion of Agricultural Products.

The EU policy on the promotion of agricultural products makes available a specific budget for nutritional and health aspects. In the Work Programme 2019, projects involving nutritional and health aspects total 79.1 million EUR. In addition, encouraging healthy eating habits for children and adults has been included in the information measures relating to the common agricultural policy (CAP) that provide 4 million EUR. Examples of information projects include: Facebook live on the EU school scheme, healthy recipes preparation in primary schools, training on healthy food for children etc. Following the Tartu Call, an online network was established on the EU Health Policy Platform to stimulate fresh fruit and vegetable consumptions. A Joint Statement, supported by 42 European and national organisations, calls for continued and improved work on this, for best practice identification and for a focus on disadvantaged groups.

**7** Pursuing co-operation among relevant Commission services to coordinate actions to promote healthy lifestyles and related funding.

Recognising the importance of internal co-operation among European Commission services to promote healthy lifestyles and coordination between related actions and funding, an inter-service group on promoting healthy lifestyles was established. The group met for the first time in January 2019. Meeting twice per year, this group aims at further strengthening cooperation between different European Commission departments and improving coordination in the promotion of healthy lifestyles through, notably, education, transport, health, sports, food, and urban planning.

**8** Enhancing dialogue across health and sport networks, for example through joint meetings of the network of National Physical Activity Focal Points and of the High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical activity, and encouraging other relevant Commission services to take part.

The European Commission took action to enhance dialogue across health and sport networks and to create synergies between both networks. A joint meeting was organised in October 2018 between the sport network of National Physical Activity Focal Points and the High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity. National experts exchanged views and informed each other on their respective activities on various topics, including: how to make schools healthier, how to strengthen cross-sector cooperation, and how to generate necessary economic evidence to drive policy-making. Following the meeting, an online network on healthy lifestyles was created on the Health Policy Platform to facilitate the continuation of the debate and exchange of information between national experts.

A second joint meeting took place in June 2019, in which Member States' representatives for the EU school scheme participated. The discussion focused on cross-sector cooperation and opportunities for cross-sector and cross-border collaboration in the health and food "clusters" of the future research programme "Horizon Europe".

**9** Promoting healthy lifestyles through events and conferences organised by the Commission, such as the European Week of Sport, the Cluster Meeting on Health-Enhancing Physical Activity foreseen in the EU Work Plan for Sport 2017-2020, the EU Sport Forum, the Berlin International Green Week and the Paris International Agricultural Show.

The EU Sport Forum in Sofia in 2018 was an opportunity to promote the Tartu Call and to explore the perspectives from different organisations and sectors that have a role to play in promoting healthy lifestyles (employers, municipalities, and the food industry). A session of the 2019 Forum in Bucharest focused on the role of schools to promote healthy lifestyles, covering physical activity at school, but also healthy eating and food education. In December 2017, the European Commission organised a Cluster Meeting on health-enhancing physical activity, bringing together all related projects co-funded by the EU from 2014 to 2016 and other relevant stakeholders, to identify policy-relevant outcomes, and their possible use beyond the lifetime of the projects. In addition, the theme "from farm to fork, sustainable agriculture for a healthy life style" has been promoted through stands exhibited in several fairs attended by thousands of citizens: the Salon International de l'Agriculture (Paris, France), the International Green Week (Berlin, Germany), the Salone del Gusto (Turin, Italy), the EU Open Days (Brussels, Belgium), Welsner Messe (Wels, Austria), Agrobalt (Lithuania), etc. The first European Public Health Week (13-17 May 2019), funded through the EU Health Programme, enabled professionals and citizens to discuss healthy populations, with days that specifically addressed physical activity, healthy environments, and sustainable and healthy diets.

**10** Including physical activity as a priority for the High Level Group of government representatives on Nutrition and Physical activity and of the EU Platform for Diet, Physical Activity and Health.

Following the Tartu Call, the focus on physical activity promotion in both the High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity and the EU Platform for action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, has been increased, with several fruitful discussions and presentations. Since 2005, members of the Platform have developed 40 voluntary commitments on physical activity. These actions, several of them ongoing, address a wide variety of topics (such as promoting walking and cycling, keeping children moving or further improving the role and knowledge of health professionals) and address different target groups, such as children or elderly.

**11** Maintaining a regular dialogue on healthy lifestyles with the European Parliament, in particular with the Committee on Culture and Education, the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and with the Sport intergroup.

The European Commission has maintained permanent dialogue with the European Parliament, in particular with the Committees on Culture and Education, and on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety. Both have been very active in promoting healthy lifestyles, for instance through a number of Pilot Projects, including on the promotion of physical activity among refugees and other disadvantaged groups. Another example is the number of events organised by the Sport Intergroup, such as a conference on sport, health, nutrition - benefits and risks.

**12** Identifying, within the relevant Commission forums, appropriate mechanisms to improve the existing collection of data on health indicators, as well as data on interventions and actions, in particular those related to physical activity, unhealthy diets, obesity and health outcomes.

Eurostat, the European Commission and the Member States worked together to agree on and possibly enhance relevant survey instruments, such as the European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) and the Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC). This work will continue, in particular in view of the fourth round of the EHIS survey to be conducted in 2025.

In addition, the EU-funded Joint Action on Health Information (InfAct) was launched in 2018, to streamline health information activities across Europe. It builds towards a sustainable and solid infrastructure on EU health information and strengthens its core elements based on capacity building, health information tools and political support.

**13** Deepen research and gather new knowledge on people's attitudes and habits regarding health, as well as on what drives their lifestyle choices and how these affect social outcomes for different socio-economic groups.

Following the Tartu Call, the Joint Research Centre has published a dedicated chapter on health inequalities focusing on diet and physical activity on the European Commission Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Knowledge Gateway. In addition, the EU-funded Joint Action "Health Equity Europe" (JAHEE) started in 2018 to address health inequalities and to achieve greater equity in health outcomes across all groups in society. The European Commission also implemented the Health Equity Pilot Project (HEPP), which provided support for knowledge sharing and policy development to reduce health inequalities in the EU, with a focus on lifestyle determinants such as alcohol consumption, nutrition, and physical activity. HEPP developed country factsheets with profiles of socio-economic inequalities in alcohol, nutrition and physical activity.

**14** Promoting the publication of up-to-date country factsheets on health-enhancing physical activity, and the collection, sharing and implementation of good practices (such as the initiative to allow and encourage general practitioners to prescribe physical activity). In particular, identifying good practices for cost-effective health promotion and disease prevention measures (addressing physical inactivity), relaying this information to the Steering Group on Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Management of Non-Communicable Diseases and helping Member States to implement these practices.

The European Commission cooperated with the World Health Organization and the Member States to prepare new country factsheets on physical activity, in the context of the Council Recommendation on promoting health-enhancing physical activity across sectors. They provide country-specific overviews on physical activity levels and promotion policies in the EU, to support evidence-based policies and help ensure policy makers can rely on solid evidence. Through the Steering Group for Promotion and Prevention, the European Commission supported the Member States in identifying, prioritising and transferring best practices across countries. It also launched specific calls for best practices on healthy and sustainable food systems and on reaching the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages) via the best practice portal. Country representatives participated in an interactive marketplace for best practices workshop (March 2018). EU funded initiatives to transfer best practices prioritised by a number of countries are starting in 2019 (e.g. the Swedish 'physical activity on prescription', the Danish 'whole grain consumption').

**15** Carrying out a study on physical activity at the workplace to contribute to health promotion at the workplace.

Following the Tartu Call, the European Commission undertook a study on physical activity at the workplace. The study gives insights into the workplace physical activity promotion activities that are most effective in changing overall employee physical activity behaviour across different workforce sectors and types of workplaces. The study identifies best practices and provides examples of different physical activity corporate challenges and how to implement them. The study shows that some of the most successful examples of workplace interventions are those which allow physical activity to become embedded in the company's culture. Managers and leaders in such companies emphasise the importance of physical activity and provide a variety of participation opportunities, tailored to meet the needs of different groups and levels of fitness.