

## Detailed ISCA health and fitness program

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### **The societal and political background**

To keep, improve and regain one's health is, on one hand, a basic concern for every human being. On the other hand, it is also one of the main goals of society and social politics. Despite modern medical research, diagnostics and therapy, which have undoubtedly made great progress, it must still be underlined that ways of improving the health status of the population have not been exhausted, nor have they been fully developed in many areas. Due to adverse socio-economic conditions, loss-making health system structures and by and large unhealthy lifestyles of the general population, there are still serious, widespread health problems despite all the medical progress.

According to many researches, the central health issue of our time is the growing lack of physical activity among many population groups. This means many predominant diseases of today, for example heart-circulatory diseases, diabetes, bone-related and muscle and connective tissue deceases along with mental and psychosomatic illnesses are either directly or indirectly connected.

Over the past few years, the importance of sufficient physical activity has been put into focus by a number of public initiatives at national as well as international level. The "World Health Report 2002" lists the lack of physical activity as one of the main factors contributing to global chronic diseases, morbidity and mortality along with unhealthy diet and tobacco use. In 2004 the WHO adopted the "Global Strategy of Diet, Physical Activity and Health" and in 2010 WHO published updated "Global Recommendations on Physical activity for Health". The United Nations pointed out in their declaration on "Sport for Development and Peace" (2003) the importance of sport activities for health towards the "Millennium Development Goals".

[World Health Report 2002](#)

[Global Strategy of Diet, Physical Activity and Health](#)

[WHO Global recommendation on physical activity for health](#)

Two recently published European documents on physical activity for health can be recognized as pioneering for health enhancing physical activity concepts and programmes: “Steps to health. A European framework to promote physical activity for health” (WHO. Europe, 2007) and “EU Physical Activity Guidelines. Recommended policy actions in support of health enhancing physical activity” (European Commission, 2008). Following recommendations of the EU White Paper on Sport (2007) also some national governments have developed “National Action Plans”, to improve the level of people’s physical activity. Apart from programmes and actions undertaken by governments and public health systems, the past few years have also seen numerous national and international sport organisations, particularly in the area of “Sport for All”, which have taken up the societal challenge and have offered to contribute to the keeping and furthering of health.

[WHO Europe: Steps to Health](#)

[EU Physical Activity Guidelines](#)

[EU White Paper on Sport 2007](#)

### Definitions

For the basic subject of our program we use the term “Health Enhancing Physical Activities (HEPA)”. This subject is defined of the WHO as: “ Health enhancing physical activity is frequently used in relation to the health benefits gained from physical activity. It should be understood as any form of physical activity that benefits health and functional capacity without undue harm or risk. The main sources of health-enhancing physical activities encompass normal and simple activities such as walking, cycling, manual labour, swimming, skiing gardening, recreational sport, and dancing”.

The WHO document distinguishes further on between “physical activities” and “physical exercises”:  
“Exercise is a subset of physical activity, defined as planned, structured, and repetitive bodily movement to improve or maintain one or more components of physical fitness and health”.

This differentiation is based on the fact that any form of physical activity contributes to better health. But special, structured, goal orientated programmes can provide better and more stabilized health effects. The quoted documents give already reference to the 2 branches of subjects for health-enhancing activities in organised sport:

- The general health-enhancing physical activity approach: to improve the activity level of the population through promoting all kind of sportive activities, including activity promotion projects and campaigns.
- The health-enhancing physical exercises approach: with higher quality of structured, specific health related programs.

ISCA program follows this differentiation and will take up both with special intervention strategies.

### The overall aims:

The overall aims are long-term goals ISCA hopes to achieve together with its member organisations and partners. These are predominantly:

- To raise awareness, to motivate and to offer practical support for more ISCA members, to develop and improve their own national strategies for goal-oriented health promotion and prevention through sports and physical activities.
- To facilitate co-operation and partnership between member organisations working already strongly in this field of action.
- To improve the quality of activities according to universal standards for exercise programs, instructor education and campaigning in health promotion and health care.

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- To take a stand and improve the image of ISCA as a recognised, competent and powerful partner with regard to health promotion and healthcare inside and outside the sports system.
- To enforce partnership and co-operating with other international “Sport for All” organisations and cross-sectoral stakeholders to develop and carry out programmes and projects within “health and sport”.
- To use the outcomes of ISCA projects.

### **ISCA Actions and Services**

ISCA has developed its first health promotion program in 2007 and since that time carried out many events and measures in this field of action, such as thematic seminars, projects and congresses.

Here are some examples:

PATHE - Physical Activity Towards a Healthier Europe ([PATHE](#))

SANTE - Sport Action NeTwork of Europe ([SANTE](#))

MOVE - We Move You ([We MOVE You](#))

ISCA is partner of and actively involved in activities of different cross-border and cross-sector networks and platforms, committed to physical activity and health, such as:

The European Platform for Action Diet, Physical Activity and Health. The Platform include +30 stakeholders from health, food, medical and physical activity sectors. [EU Platform Diet, Physical Activity and Health](#)

The EU Expert Group “Sport, Health and Participation” has the mandate to explore ways to promote health-enhancing physical activity and participation in grassroots sport and to identify respective measures by mid-2013. It consist of EU members states and four observers. ISCA is one of the four observers. [EU Expert Group](#)

HEPA Europe a European network for the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity. HEPA Europe is a collaborative project which works for better health through physical activity among all people in the WHO European Region, by strengthening and supporting efforts to increase participation and improve the conditions for healthy lifestyles. WHO/Europe closely collaborates with the network, consistently with the goals of its programme on transport and health that include the promotion of physical activity as a healthy means for sustainable transport. [HEPA Europe WHO](#).

Also a number of ISCA members have focused on activities related to health promotion and some of them have gained a strong position in this field of action. However, despite rather good progress, it seems still to be necessary to encourage more associations to become strongly involved, to build more capacity for this subject and to develop a more systematic approach with a conclusive and consistent strategy. Beside this the constant changes in this field of action suggests a continuously revision of existing concepts.

### **Knowledge, data and information sharing**

- Collection and documentation of good practises in regard to HEPA strategies in organised sport.
- Compilation of important national and international political documents about HEPA strategies.
- Provision of newest findings in researches and literature on this topic.

### **Networking and consultancy**

- Enlarging partnership to other stakeholders committed to HEPA strategies, programs and projects (e.g. “Sport Club for Health” working group;.)

- Strengthening and consolidation of the ISCA Health Enhancing Sport Exercise (HESE) Network
- Making expert consultants available to member organisations to assist in the development of national strategies, programs and projects in the area of physical activities and sport for health.
- Assisting member organisations with little or no experience in developing their own original campaigns, programmes and projects.

#### **Planning guidelines, tools and education**

- Guidelines for strategic planning of HEPA and HESE programs in Sport for All organisations.
- Inventory of HESE programs.
- Quality standards for HESE programs.
- Dissemination of products, produced within the ISCA projects PATHE, SANTE and MOVE
- Implementation of the topic sport and health into educational events like congresses, conferences and seminars.
- Compilation of a catalogue with current topics and competent experts and speakers for the education and training of instructors.
- Carrying out of specific seminars and workshops for instructors.
- Drawing up of common qualification standards for instructors in this field of action
- Negotiating study tours.

#### **Political lobby and fundraising**

- Presentation of the ISCA position and programmes to umbrella organisations that consider the importance and promotion of physical activity and sport in particular UN, WHO, EU and to foundations committed to the goal of the programme.
- Fundraising for projects in coordination with the member organisations of ISCA.
- Partnerships and agreements with other stakeholders committed to the topic in order to co-operate and coordinate initiatives

#### **Implementation of the mission and program**

This mission paper aims to operate as a draft concept for a long-term program. ISCA see itself as an initiator, moderator and supporter of actions taken to improve physical activity and sport for health promotion and health care. The program needs high commitment of ISCA members as well.

The Executive Committee will appoint a working group of experienced people to develop the program and its measures step by step, according to available resources. A certain budget will be allocated yearly to the program.

A member of the Executive Committee will be in charge of the program and the working group. He/she reports on the working plans and the progress regularly to the Committee and the General Assembly. The ISCA office will support the work and allocate a staff person to the program