

Good practices in Promoting Physical Activity in Schools; Ljubljana, Slovenia

Workplace

Ljubljana, Slovenia

Socio-demographic indicators:

- Municipality/City Population: 273.195 residents (on January 1, 2019)
- Gender ratio: Men - 131.566 - 48,2 %; Women - 141.629 - 51,8 %
- Age distribution: 0-9 (10.4%), 10-19 (8.7%), 20-29 (8.9%), 30-39 (14.5), 40-49 (14.9%), 50-59 (14.4%), 60-69 (13.2%), 70-79 (8.7%), 80-89 (5.2%), 90+ (1.1%)

Socio-economic indicators:

- GNI coefficient: Slovenia (total economy), 2018 - 45.033,5 in mio EUR

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Why did you start an activity / a project?

Firemen do not run into a burning building wearing a swimsuit. Likewise, civil servants need the right equipment for their work: good physical and mental fitness. We should take care of our health everywhere, including at work.

In 2014, an internal Health Promotion Plan was created in the City Administration of the City Municipality of Ljubljana, which implements several measures for the promotion of physical activity.

The afternoon recreational activity of the city's staff is provided through a contractual relationship with the city's Workers' Union. City has a contract with the said union to implement a program of cultural, sports and recreational activities of city's employees. As part of this program, staff can participate in various activities - e.g. football, basketball, yoga, tennis and cycling. Furthermore, city's Recreation Society, consisting of city's staff, has been active for many years and its members regularly participate in various recreational activities (running, mountaineering, skiing, etc.).

We organize lectures for our colleagues in the field of health on the topic of movement, nutrition health, addiction, etc. Our colleagues are provided with bicycles for business trips around the city, and we send weekly updates on current recreational events. There are many walking trails around the administrative premises, so we invite our colleagues to take a walk

during the break. In 2018, we began with short active breaks. This is a 15-minute stretching exercise session led city's staff.

Why did you start a strategy / an activity / a project?

People are the most important part of our organization. We want our colleagues to be healthy and content in the workplace, so we want to provide them with a healthy supportive environment.

Sedentary work is a risk factor for a healthy life and is negatively associated with a range of illnesses and conditions. No matter how active an individual is in their spare time, a large part of the work day is spent sitting.

The promotion is aimed at all City's employees.

How do you do it?

Recreational activities take place in the afternoon.

Notifications are made every Thursday via e-mail notifier.

Daily active break takes place in the administrative buildings every day at the previously agreed hour in the work time, e.g. at 10am for 15 minutes.

Afternoon recreational activities and week-end excursions (football, basketball, yoga, tennis, cycling, running, hiking, skiing, etc.).

Activities are intended for all City's employees, so they can attend at their own choice. Mostly, one person is in charge of each activity, but there are also occasional guest lecturers, coaches, etc..

Health promotion does not have a fixed budget, since the activities are mostly free of charge. The majority of the funds spent are intended for the organization of lectures and the contractual relationship with the city's Union.

Although Slovenia's Health and Safety at Work Act stipulates that the employer must carry out the promotion of health at work and provide the necessary resources for it, we carried out the promotion of health at work before this legal obligation. The Health Promotion Plan was developed and implemented by the Health Promotion Work Group, comprising of civil servants from different city departments (human resources, health, security, etc..

Activities are mostly organized and carried out by civil servants themselves, while in lectures we most often cooperate with public institutions of the City of Ljubljana (e.g. Community Health Centre Ljubljana).

What are the Challenges and Successes?

The achievement is, above all, in the constant offering of a quality and wide range of recreational activities and the continuity of daily active breaks, and the fact that employees have been engaged in the activities for many years.

The activities are already well-established, and there are no major delays in implementation. Potential organizational problems are being addressed on time, and the experience of the past years has also shown which activities need more attention (i.e., where participation will be greater and therefore more organizational issues will be involved). This has been achieved through good communication, timely planning and good informing of the participants.