

# Good practices in Promoting Physical Activity in Schools; Guimarães, Portugal

## Education

### Guimarães, Portugal

Socio-demographic indicators:

Municipality/City Population: 158 124

Gender ratio: Female 51%; Male 49%

Age distribution: The average age of the resident population is 40.6 years.

0-14 (14%), 15-64 (68%), +66 (18%)

Socio-economic indicators:

GDP per capita: 19,604 euro

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### Health and Physical Activity Issues

- Fighting physical inactivity among the population in general
- Involving more women in outdoor sports and physical activities
- Raising-awareness among the population to adopt daily practices that promote physical activity (walking, using the bicycle)
- Contributing to physical and sport activity for the over 45-year-old age group of the population
- Contributing to decrease the prevalence of diseases associated with physical inactivity (obesity, overweight, diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease and cancer).

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

School Sports in Portugal have not been able to obtain revealing results to counter original assumptions are. Unfortunately, Guimarães does not escape from this pattern in terms of developing sporting activities in schools. The impact of not having an effective strategy is reflected in the lack of results. School sports at primary level are non-existent in Portugal, having only a few examples of some schools that individually present projects of the kind.

Thus, our goal was to be the first municipality in the country to offer a School Sports project to all schools that cover this cycle of studies in Guimarães and, above all, to bring together with these sport activities that aim to foster sports practice as well as promote gender equality.

We understand that to meet the project objectives, we must foster a competitive spirit between schools through this model.

### What do you do?

Together with the teachers placed in the School Sports Activities program (AEC), we have developed an individual assessment system for all students of the primary level, differentiated by school year, where they must determine an individual classification by class. From there they move on to a second phase where the 3 best girls and the 3 best boys start playing as a team (playing with teams from other schools in the same area). In this phase the best teams of each school year are then determined to the following phases (Semi-Finals and Finals) until the winning school / group for each school year is awarded.

### How do you do it?

Within these activities we try to raise awareness among students and especially their parents about the importance of regular physical activity, but mainly we develop the principle of fostering 5 Commandments of Good Athletes:

1. I do my best;
2. I think of an answer to the Challenges;
3. I respect rules, judges and opponents;
4. I am a friend of my colleagues even when they fail;
5. I have team spirit.

We understand that these are fundamental to better promote the sport culture in our society.

### What are the activities and outputs?

There are several sport activities based on skill and manipulation, displacement and balance for 1st and 2nd primary years; athletics, handball, basketball and rugby for 3rd and 4th year of primary school. These activities were selected based on the national program addressed in the 1st cycle (primary school) under the program AEC - Physical and Sports Activity.

Each year we involve 5000 students, 14 school groups and their 62 schools as well as approximately 70 teachers.

The budget is approximately 5000 € per year, financed by the City Council through a program agreement that is concluded with the Sport Services of Tempo Livre by technical coordination of the sport manager. The partners include The Municipality of Guimarães and several sport associations and local clubs (Associação de Atletismo de Braga, GRUFC, Vitória SC - basquetebol, Xico Andebol e CCR Fermentões).

## What are the Challenges and Successes?

We have been able to promote to over 10,000 children different sport experiences as well as the possibility of having contact with modalities that are difficult to address in their schools.

The first major challenge was to get all school groups and their teachers involved in the same project and with the same goal. At present, the biggest challenge will be to improve and increase the experiences with new modalities.

To solve the first challenge, we decided to carry out the activities on the weekend without the presence of classroom teachers as well as their physical education teachers, leaving this work to the team of teachers of Tempo Libre. As for the second challenge, we will try to demonstrate the benefit for clubs and associations of different sports to be involved in this project.