

Policy recommendations for more active and inclusive communities in Europe

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Lead: SportDrenthe

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Make active living the easy, normal and inclusive choice — every day, for everyone.

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Evidence and participation informing the White Paper

EHLA was participatory at several levels. The Active Day evaluation collected perspectives from children, teachers/coaches and parents, with the emphasis varying by country. Local implementation also involved schools, community coaches, municipalities and project partners. Partner reflection, including the EHLA Outcomes process and webinars, added implementation learning on coordination, leadership, practical tools, digital support and sustainability.

This White Paper only names stakeholder groups that are documented in the EHLA materials. It does not yet claim a complete list of policymakers consulted. No

comprehensive consultation register was available; the White Paper does not invent contributors, dates or policy endorsements.

Executive Summary

Europe does not need another campaign that simply tells people to move more. The policy challenge is to create the conditions in which movement becomes possible, attractive, inclusive and normal in everyday life.

EHLA connected research, practical tools, capacity building and real-world implementation. D3.1 set out the evidence-informed principles - equity and inclusion, behaviour-change thinking, supportive environments, stakeholder action and RE-AIM. D3.2 explored how a digital tool could support participation and communication, while D3.3 focused on the people and organisational capacity required to make change happen. D4.1 and the country pilots then showed how these ideas worked when adapted to real settings. The EHLA Outcomes add a final layer: what helped implementation, what created friction, and what should change next.

The most important EHLA outcome is therefore not a single intervention. It is a way of working: create a shared ambition, build local ownership, equip the people who have to make change happen, adapt to context, learn during implementation and embed successful practice before temporary project support ends.

Stop treating physical activity as an extra activity. Start designing it into everyday life.

This White Paper translates that learning into policy. It argues that public administrations should move beyond isolated projects and create active ecosystems around schools, families, communities, sport, health, youth services, mobility and public space.

Updated D4.1 integration (Final editorial draft 0.6): The four recommendations in D4.1 Chapter 8 — start from existing strengths, adapt locally, invest in people and connected environments, and plan continuation from the beginning — are translated

into concrete policy instruments in Section 11A. The White Paper retains its ten overarching policy messages.

Ten policy messages

1. Make movement part of everyday life.
Physical activity policy should shape daily environments and routines, not only fund separate sport or exercise sessions.

2. Make schools an anchor for active communities.
Schools reach almost every child. Use that universal reach, then deliberately connect school, family, neighbourhood, sport, health and public space.

3. Design for those most likely to be missed.
Equity is not an add-on. Gender, disability, income, confidence, culture, access and safety must influence design from the start.

4. Share the ambition — localise the solution.
Transfer principles and outcomes, not rigid programmes. What works in one country or organisation must be adapted before it is adopted.

5. Make active living everybody's business.
Education, sport, health, youth, social policy, mobility and spatial planning should share responsibility and budgets where appropriate.

6. Appoint an Active School Day Coordinator in every school.
Change needs named ownership. Every school should designate a coordinator with mandate, time and support to connect people and keep implementation moving.

7. Invest in the people who make policy real.
Teachers, coaches, youth workers and community professionals need practical tools, training, peer support, time and confidence — not another document alone.

8. Use physical activity as a platform for wider development.
Movement can support learning, wellbeing, social connection, confidence, values and life skills when these aims are intentionally designed into delivery.

9. Use technology only when it removes a barrier.
Digital tools should support human relationships and implementation. If a tool creates confusion, workload or dependency, simplify, redesign or remove it.

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10. Fund the transition from pilot to normal practice.
Sustainability starts on day one: roles, leadership, policy, budgets, monitoring and organisational routines should be built before project funding ends.

The policy shift proposed by EHLA

Move away from	Move towards
Campaigns that ask individuals to change	Environments that make active choices easier
Short-term activities	Active everyday routines and systems
One-size-fits-all replication	Shared principles with local adaptation
Sport-sector ownership	Cross-sector responsibility
A project dependent on one enthusiast	Distributed ownership with named coordination
Digital tools as a goal	Technology as an optional enabler
Participation counts only	Reach, experience, equity, quality and maintenance
Funding pilots	Funding implementation, embedding and continuation

1. Why Europe Needs Active Everyday Environments

Physical inactivity is not simply a matter of individual motivation. Opportunities to move are shaped by school routines, family circumstances, neighbourhoods, transport, public space, affordability, accessibility, confidence and social norms. Policy therefore influences whether an active choice is a realistic choice.

EHLA approaches physical activity as a systems challenge. Its Guideline combines equity and inclusion, behaviour-change thinking, supportive environments, stakeholder action and monitoring. D3.3 adds a second layer: organisations need the capacity to turn good intentions into routine practice. This requires leadership, champions, communication, training, resources, coordination and institutionalisation.

> **Good policy creates permission. Good implementation creates practice. Sustainability requires both.**

1.1 Equity is a design question

Universal provision does not automatically produce equitable benefit. A programme can be open to everyone and still be difficult to access for families facing cost, transport, disability, language, cultural, safety or confidence barriers. Public administrations should therefore ask not only whether an activity exists, but who participates, who feels welcome, who benefits and who remains absent.

1.2 From awareness to conditions

Communication can raise awareness and invite participation, but awareness alone cannot overcome structural barriers. EHLA's capacity-building work emphasises positive, audience-specific and two-way communication, but it also shows that communication works best when it points to an opportunity that is genuinely accessible, welcoming and well organized.

1.3 A life-course perspective — with honest limits

The formal D4.2 description refers to engagement from childhood to older age. EHLA's strongest direct project evidence is child-focused, particularly around primary-school age. D3.3 nevertheless captures practical learning on older adults, including the importance of appropriate activities, social connection, accessibility, functional benefits and integration with community and healthcare structures. This White Paper therefore uses a life-course policy lens where relevant, while clearly distinguishing broader capacity-building lessons from the child-focused EHLA pilot evidence.

Life stage	Policy translation	EHLA evidence status
Children (approx. 6–12)	Use schools as universal anchors; integrate movement into learning, play, travel and community links; involve families and local services.	Strongest direct EHLA basis: D3.1 and the three WP4 pilot settings.
Young people / adolescents	Maintain inclusive, enjoyable opportunities; connect school, youth work and sport; strengthen autonomy, belonging, confidence and life skills.	Broader EHLA guidance and capacity-building learning; not a dedicated WP4 pilot population.
Adults	Make activity easier through community settings, public space, active travel, workplaces and family routines; reduce cost and access barriers.	Policy extrapolation from EHLA systems principles; limited direct pilot evidence.
Older adults	Prioritise accessible and appropriate activities, social connection, confidence, functional independence, transport solutions and links with health/community services.	Supported by D3.3 practice guidance; not directly tested in the WP4 child-focused pilots.

From D2.1: Why these interventions were selected

The State of the Art Analysis Report (D2.1, 2025) gives EHLA a documented selection process, rather than a retrospective justification for the pilots. Partners catalogued candidate innovative measures through a common template covering target groups, delivery environments, costs, inclusion, barriers and feasibility. Nominated partner representatives then rated the measures on applicability, innovation, barriers and practicality, with an additional preference score used for tie-breaking (D2.1, pp. 10–12).

The three highest-ranked measures were Finnish Schools on the Move (10.93), BASE (9.07) and Parchi in movimento (8.655). These figures are partner-assessment scores, not estimates of intervention impact. Their policy value is that practical feasibility and barriers were considered alongside innovation. The subsequent national implementations should therefore be understood as locally adapted expressions of the selected approaches, not identical replication (D2.1, p. 13; D4.1).

D2.1 also situates the work within the EU health-enhancing physical activity monitoring framework. It reports that the average share of 23 policy indicators achieved by EU Member States rose from 64.7% in 2015 to 81.8% in 2024, while insufficient activity remained widespread. These figures concern policy implementation and population-level activity, respectively; they must not be read as a causal evaluation of EHLA (D2.1, pp. 4–6, drawing on WHO/European Commission monitoring).

A practical policy conclusion follows: assess candidate interventions against the setting, inclusion barriers, staff capacity and likely continuity before deciding what to transfer. EHLA recommends transferring tested principles and implementation know-how rather than exporting a fixed programme without local adaptation.

2. From Evidence to Practice: What EHLA Did

EHLA was designed as a bridge from knowledge to implementation. WP2 identified promising practices and enabled knowledge exchange. WP3 translated learning into the Guideline, digital resources and a Capacity Building Programme. WP4 then moved into practical implementation and awareness through the EHLA Active Day.

D3.3 describes this journey explicitly as moving from research and exchange to staff capability and then to day-to-day practice. Its central contribution to D4.2 is important: an intervention does not become sustainable merely because it is evidence informed. Organizations must be able to adopt it, adapt it, resource it and make it part of normal operations.

> **The EHLA policy question is not only 'What works?' It is also 'What does an organization need in order to make it work here — and keep it working?'**

2.1 From theory to practice: what the pilots tested

The pilots did not test the Guideline as a single fixed intervention. They tested whether its core principles could be translated into workable local practice. The table below makes that connection explicit. D3.2 is included as an implementation tool rather than as a theoretical framework: its intended value was to support communication, participation and process data, while the later outcomes show that digital support only adds value when it is simple and useful in practice.

EHLA principle / challenge	What happened in implementation	Policy implication
Supportive environments: movement should be built into daily settings.	Netherlands: four primary schools used the Dynamic School Day and active learning; teachers received training and practical tools; about 900 children were reached.	Treat active learning as whole-school implementation, not an optional classroom extra. Fund teacher support and coordination. Source: D3.1, pp. 6–7 & 69–70; D4.1/Christel report, §3.3.
Local adaptation: common principles must fit context.	Italy: Parchi in Movimento linked schools, public parks, community coaches and the Municipality of Verona; more than 600 children participated.	Municipalities can turn public space into an active-living asset by connecting education, family and community provision. Source: D4.1/Christel report, §3.3–3.4.
Physical activity can support wider development when intentionally designed.	Türkiye: after-school sport was combined with child-protection / values and life-skills content; 676 and 808 programme participations were reported across two terms.	Equip coaches with structured materials and training; evaluate developmental outcomes cautiously and distinguish participation from impact. Source: D4.1/Christel report, §3.3–3.4.
Implementation science: change requires capability, opportunity, motivation and organizational support.	Across EHLA, partner reflections emphasized coordination, phased introduction, practical materials, leadership and long-term follow-up.	Fund implementation capacity — people, time, training and ownership — alongside activities. Source: D3.1 implementation roadmap; D3.3 capacity-building/change-management sections; EHLA Outcomes.

Guideline / tool	What EHLA proposed	What the pilots/outcomes showed	Policy implication
D3.1: Equity & inclusion	Design for unequal barriers and monitor who is reached.	Universal settings such as schools increase reach, but local barriers still require adaptation.	Use universal platforms + targeted barrier removal; monitor who is missing.
D3.1: COM-B / behavior change	Capability, opportunity and motivation all matter.	Training, practical materials, supportive routines and enjoyable experiences helped implementation.	Fund professional capability and enabling environments, not awareness alone.
D3.1: Supportive environments	Make active choices easier in everyday settings.	Movement worked through learning, parks/community and organized sport rather than one standard activity.	Design movement into ordinary settings and routines.
D3.1: RE-AIM	Assess reach, effectiveness, adoption, implementation and maintenance.	Participation figures were useful but did not explain adoption, workload, digital friction or sustainability.	Evaluate implementation quality, equity and maintenance as well as participation.
D3.2: Digital support	Use the app for communication, challenges and process support.	The outcomes reported time costs and confusion and limited added value in practice.	Technology must earn its place: pilot, simplify and retain only what solves a real problem.
D3.3: Capacity building	Leadership, champions, training, resources and institutionalization enable change.	Coordination, step-by-step introduction, usable materials and broad commitment repeatedly emerged as success factors.	Fund implementation capacity and named coordination alongside activities.

2.2 Three settings, one ambition

Country	Primary setting	EHLA expression	Policy lens
Netherlands	Primary schools	Dynamic School Day / active learning	Movement × Education
Italy	Schools, parks and community	Parchi in Movimento	Movement × Community
Türkiye	Organised sport / child development	Sport + values / life skills	Movement × Personal Development

These approaches are deliberately different. Their value for policy lies precisely in that difference: EHLA did not discover one European activity to copy. It demonstrated the importance of common principles combined with local design.

2.3 Capacity building was not a side activity

D3.3 positions capacity building as a mechanism for sustainability. It identifies a clear vision, leadership backing, champions, communication, training, resources, institutionalisation, monitoring and reinforcement as conditions for organisational change. It also recommends phasing substantial change, assigning coordination, embedding responsibilities in normal roles and budgets, and building peer support so that no professional has to 'figure it out alone'.

3. What EHLA Learned: From Outcomes to Policy

The EHLA Outcomes notes add an important layer to the formal deliverables: implementation reflection. They capture what partners observed while trying to make the project work in real organizations. These observations should not all be presented as scientific findings. They are implementation lessons — and that makes them highly relevant to a policy White Paper.

- **Local difference is normal; cooperation builds value.**
  Countries and organizations differ. European added value comes from learning across those differences, not eliminating them.
- **Coordination is a condition for implementation.**
  The outcomes explicitly identify coordination as a major success factor. D3.3 independently reinforces the need for assigned coordination, leadership and champions.
- **Enthusiasm matters — but systems must outlive enthusiasm.**
  Children, teachers and parents can create momentum, but lasting change requires roles, policy and organizational ownership.
- **Active learning should be introduced as a change process.**
  The outcomes argue for step-by-step implementation at the pace of schools and teachers. D3.3 similarly recommends phasing substantial change and supporting staff through training, feedback and early wins.
- **Practical materials make change easier.**
  The Turkish cards and Dutch boxes illustrate a broader point: professionals adopt change more easily when ideas are translated into usable tools.
- **An active school day is bigger than PE.**
  Movement can be integrated into learning, breaks, play, travel, outdoor activity and school culture. It should complement quality PE, not be reduced to it.
- **Leadership and broad consent matter.**
  School boards, directors, teachers, parents and children all influence whether an ambition becomes normal practice.
- **Active-school policy should connect to wider public policy.**
  Sport policy alone is insufficient. Education, health, youth, mobility and local spatial policy all shape opportunities to move.

- **Long-term follow-up is essential.**
  EHLA outcomes call explicitly for continuation. D3.3 shows how to institutionalise change through plans, job roles, budgets, routines and continuous capacity building.
- **Digital tools are not automatically useful.**
  The outcomes report that the EHLA app created time costs and confusion in practice. This should be treated as valuable learning: technology must solve an implementation problem, not become another problem to implement.



4. Policy Principle 1 — Make Movement Part of Everyday Life

A physically active society cannot be created through sport programmes alone. People spend most of their time in ordinary settings: schools, streets, workplaces, homes, neighbourhoods and public spaces. Policy should therefore increase opportunities to move within those settings.

For children, the strongest EHLA expression of this principle is the active school day. This means more than PE and more than occasional energisers. Movement can be integrated into academic learning, breaks, play, outdoor education, active travel and the physical and social environment of the school.

> **Do not add movement only to the timetable. Build movement into the way the day works.**

Policy actions

- Review school and municipal routines for avoidable sedentary time.
- Support physically active learning alongside quality physical education.
- Include active travel, play and outdoor learning in school and municipal strategies.
- Use existing settings and routines before creating parallel programmes.
- Connect active-school policy with health, youth, sport, mobility and spatial policy.

5. Policy Principle 2 — Reach Everyone

EHLA's strongest equity opportunity is universal settings. School is especially important because it reaches children who may never enter a sports club or structured activity programme. But universal reach must be paired with inclusive design.

D3.3's knowledge-exchange lessons reinforce the importance of low barriers to entry: free or affordable provision, familiar and accessible settings, simple registration and practical solutions for transport or equipment. For older adults, the same principle appears in a different form: appropriate intensity, reassurance, social connection and links with trusted community or healthcare structures.

Policy actions

- Include equity objectives and indicators in funding criteria.
- Design with less-active and under-served groups, not only for them.
- Keep participation low-cost or free where possible and provide equipment when needed.
- Use safe, familiar and accessible settings.
- Monitor who is missing and adapt delivery accordingly.

6. Policy Principle 3 — Make Schools Anchors for Active Communities

Schools offer an exceptional public-policy platform because they reach children across social backgrounds. EHLA's Dutch experience illustrates how movement can be incorporated into learning rather than added as a separate programme. Italy demonstrates how school engagement can open routes into family and community.

The policy opportunity is therefore larger than ‘more PE’. A school can become an anchor in an active local ecosystem — connected with families, sport, public space, health, youth services and municipal policy.

EHLA recommendation: an Active School Day Coordinator in every school

The EHLA Outcomes propose one Active School Day coordinator at each school and suggest that this role should not automatically sit with the physical education teacher. This is a strong policy idea because the active school day concerns the whole organization, not one subject. D3.3 supports the underlying mechanism: assign coordination, create a change team, protect time, and prevent the work from remaining one person's informal passion.

For final D4.2, EHLA could recommend that national or regional education policy encourages every school to identify a named Active School Day coordinator or equivalent function, adapted to national school systems. This does not necessarily require a new post. Coordination may sit within an existing role — for example a teacher, school-health lead, wellbeing coordinator, senior leader or other staff member — provided that the person has a clear mandate, protected time, access to leadership and the ability to connect colleagues and external partners. The role should coordinate the system, not personally deliver all activity.

Policy actions

- Develop whole-school approaches rather than isolated activities.
- Give school leadership explicit responsibility for the ambition.
- Identify a named coordinator with time and mandate.
- Involve teachers, pupils, parents and school governance in design and review.
- Connect the school with community sport, health, youth and neighborhood partners.

The Active School Day Coordinator: minimum policy standard

Every school should identify an Active School Day Coordinator. This may be a designated existing staff member rather than a new job title. The school leadership should provide a written mandate, protected coordination time, access to professional development and a clear connection to municipal or community partners. The coordinator supports teachers, links school routines with physical education, active breaks and journeys, addresses inclusion barriers, monitors participation and reports progress. The recommendation concerns a function that can fit different national governance arrangements; it does not prescribe one employment model.

Implementation test: Is a named person accountable? Do they have time and authority? Can staff and families find them? Are there agreed routines, partnerships and measures of reach? If not, the coordinator exists only on paper.

7. Policy Principle 4 — Share the Ambition, Localize the Solution

EHLA's three national approaches differed substantially yet worked from common objectives and principles. D3.3's knowledge-exchange findings reach the same conclusion from a different direction: successful transfer requires cultural adaptation and local feedback.

Transferability should therefore not be confused with replication. Public administrations can define the destination — inclusion, daily movement, quality, sustainability — without prescribing every activity.

> **Keep the core. Change the form.**

Policy actions

- Co-create with the people who will implement and experience the action.
- Define common principles and intended outcomes before selecting activities.
- Pilot transferred approaches locally before scaling.
- Allow adaptation to culture, infrastructure, institutional roles and resources.
- Create structured learning between organisations and countries.

A coordinator in every school

01 — Secure leadership mandate

A clear responsibility and authority to convene staff.

02 — Connect partners

Link school, families, municipality and local sport.

03 — Equip professionals

Provide tools, training and peer support.

04 — Embed daily routines

Integrate movement into learning, breaks and travel.

05 — Monitor inclusion and reach

Notice who participates and who is missing.

06 — Protect continuity

Build the role into normal plans and budgets.

A named function • mandate • time • training • support

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8. Policy Principle 5 — Invest in People, Coordination and Change Capacity

Implementation depends on people. D3.3 is particularly strong here: change requires a compelling vision, visible leadership, champions, transparent communication, practical training, resources, support systems, early wins and institutionalisation.

This strengthens Draft 0.1's recommendation to ‘invest in people, not only programmes’. The policy implication is broader: funding physical activity without funding implementation capacity is incomplete.

What public administrations should fund

- Named coordination at school, municipal or programme level.
- Professional development in active learning, inclusive delivery and behaviour change.
- Practical starter materials and adaptable resources.
- Peer-learning networks and communities of practice.
- Protected implementation time for professionals.
- Local knowledge exchange and mentoring between experienced and new sites.
- Change-management support where new routines affect whole organisations.

D3.3 also warns against personality-dependent change. Knowledge and responsibility should be distributed so that staff turnover or the departure of one champion does not end the initiative.

9. Policy Principle 6 — Technology Must Earn Its Place

D3.3 describes the potential of apps, online communities, tracking and digital communication, while warning against novelty for its own sake. D3.1 also positioned the Active for Health app as one element of a broader implementation toolkit. The intended role of digital support was therefore legitimate: to facilitate communication, coordination and engagement where it added value.

The EHLA Outcomes add a more cautious implementation perspective. Project-partner reflections reported that use of the EHLA app could be time-consuming and confusing and that its added value was limited in the settings in which it was implemented. These observations should not be read as a formal end-user effectiveness evaluation of the app. Implementation conditions were themselves suboptimal, which likely affected uptake and user experience. The appropriate policy lesson is therefore conditional: digital tools should be tested under realistic conditions, supported properly, and judged on whether they reduce barriers or create additional ones.

> **Digital is not automatically innovative. A tool is innovative only when it improves the experience, reach, quality or efficiency of the intervention.**

Policy actions

- Start with the user and implementation problem, not with the technology.
- Pilot digital tools with a small group before making them central to delivery.
- Provide basic technical support and protect data privacy.
- Avoid digital dependency where the same function can be delivered more simply.
- Measure whether the tool reduces or increases workload and exclusion.
- Keep human relationships, professional judgement and programme quality at the centre.

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10. Policy Principle 7 — Connect Movement to Wider Development

Physical activity has value in itself, but EHLA also shows why it can be a platform for wider development. In the Netherlands, active learning connected movement with education. In Italy, activity connected school, family and community. In Türkiye, sport was combined with values education, wellbeing and life skills.

This does not mean that every physical activity programme should claim every possible outcome. It means that policy can intentionally connect movement with complementary objectives where the design supports them.

Policy actions

- Align programme objectives with the setting: learning in schools, connection in communities, life skills in youth sport.
- Train professionals for the wider developmental role expected of them.
- Use positive, inclusive experiences rather than performance-only models.
- Avoid overclaiming outcomes that were not measured.
- Use qualitative feedback and implementation evidence alongside quantitative indicators.

11. Policy Principle 8 — Build for the Long Term

Pilot projects are useful when they generate learning. They are wasteful when promising practice disappears as soon as temporary funding ends. Both the EHLA Outcomes and D3.3 make sustainability a central concern.

D3.3 recommends institutionalising change through annual plans, job descriptions, recurring budget lines, standard routines, onboarding and continuous professional learning. This is exactly the transition D4.2 should ask policy makers to support.

> **A pilot proves possibility. Policy must create continuity.**

Policy actions

- Require a sustainability pathway at the start of funded pilots.
- Embed successful components in annual plans, roles and organisational routines.
- Create recurring budget lines for coordination, training and essential materials.
- Include active-living expectations in onboarding and professional development.
- Review maintenance 6–12 months after implementation and beyond.
- Use evidence of implementation and equity — not enthusiasm alone — when deciding what to scale.

11a. Translating the Updated D4.1 Recommendations into Policy

The updated D4.1 Awareness Campaign report now contains an explicit set of recommendations (Chapter 8, pp. 29–31). These do not replace the ten policy messages of this White Paper. They strengthen their implementation basis. D4.1 documents what the partners recommend following three locally adapted pilots; D4.2 specifies which policy and funding decisions can make those lessons transferable and sustainable.

11a1 Start with clear objectives and existing local strengths

D4.1 recommendation 8.1 asks implementers to begin with a shared ambition, examine what already exists, identify gaps and improve established structures rather than automatically build parallel programmes. Italy offers a particularly clear example: EHLA connected schools to the established Parchi in Movimento initiative and Verona's public parks. The policy implication is to require a local asset-and-barrier assessment before public funding supports a new physical activity intervention. Municipalities and education authorities should identify existing provision, available spaces, trusted organisations and underserved groups; they should then justify whether the appropriate response is to strengthen, connect, adapt or create provision.

Suggested policy instrument: a short "local active-environment assessment" in municipal plans and school partnership agreements, with explicit objectives, baseline opportunities, equity gaps and accountable partners. [D4.1, §§4.2, 8.1; pp. 17–19, 29.]

11a2 Transfer effective components, not fixed national programmes

D4.1 recommendation 8.2 and its European Added Value chapter stress that the three national interventions are building blocks, not ready-made models for exact replication. The Dutch active-learning approach, Italian school–park connection and Turkish sport-and-values materials represent different mechanisms that may be adapted to other settings. The policy implication is to fund adaptation and structured peer learning, while specifying shared objectives and safeguarding inclusion, implementation quality and evaluation.

Suggested policy instrument: small adaptation grants or cross-municipality learning partnerships that require applicants to describe which EHLA principle they are transferring, what must be adapted, who is involved and how the change will be assessed. [D4.1, §§8.2, 9.1–9.2; pp. 29–33.]

11a3 Equip implementers and connect the child's environments

D4.1 recommendation 8.3 links professional capacity with the settings around a child. In the Netherlands, teachers were supported with a short practical workshop, ready-to-use Beweegbox materials and local encouragement. In Italy, school participation was linked to family and public-space opportunities. In Türkiye, coaches used structured materials to connect sport with values and healthy lifestyle themes. The policy implication is that investment in activities alone is insufficient: fund training, materials, coordination and cross-setting relationships together.

Suggested policy instrument: a minimum implementation-support package for schools and community providers, consisting of named responsibility (which may be within an existing role), protected time, accessible materials, a practical introduction and a connection to local partners. [D4.1, §§3.3, 4.1–4.3, 8.3; pp. 12, 15–20, 30.]

11a4 Make continuation a funding condition from the beginning

D4.1 recommendation 8.4 explicitly states that sustainability should not be postponed until the pilot ends. Local ownership, coordination, resources, evaluation and continuation must be part of initial design. This reinforces D3.3's capacity-building emphasis and the White Paper's tenth policy message. A public grant should therefore require a plausible route from externally supported pilot to everyday practice, without assuming that all activities must continue unchanged.

Suggested policy instrument: a proportionate continuation plan at application stage, followed by a six- or twelve-month maintenance review assessing adoption, workload, inclusion, routine integration, responsibilities and budget. [D4.1, §8.4; pp. 30–31; D3.3 Capacity Building Programme.]

11a5 The four decisions policymakers can take now

- **Map before funding —**
  Municipality / education authority. Within 30 days, convene schools, sport, health and community partners to map existing assets and underserved groups.

- **Resource the people —**
  School leader / provider / funder. Name a coordinator or existing role with a mandate; agree a brief training and practical-tool package.

- **Enable adaptation —**
  Regional / national programme manager. Invite proposals that transfer an EHLA principle, not a prescribed programme; require a local rationale.

- **Plan maintenance —**
  Funding body / institutional leader. Agree responsibilities, review indicators and a continuation decision before the pilot begins.

These are proposed policy actions derived from the updated D4.1 recommendations, not measures already enacted or independently proven effective. Their feasibility and resource implications should be discussed with the relevant administrations.

11a6 Evidence-to-policy traceability

Netherlands | supportive school routines

Challenge: movement was often separate from everyday teaching. Experience: active learning in four primary schools, with teacher training and the Beweegbox; pupil, teacher and parent perspectives were collected. Recommendation: embed active learning through whole-school plans and practical teacher support. [D4.1, §§3.3, 4.1, 8.3; pp. 12, 15–16, 30.]

Italy | school-to-community bridge

Challenge: school activity does not automatically continue outside school hours. Experience: schools introduced children to an existing public-park programme with municipal and community partners. Recommendation: use public space as an active-living resource and fund school–family–community links. [D4.1, §§4.2, 8.1–8.3; p17–19, 29–30.]

Türkiye | sport as a wider learning setting

Challenge: translating values and wellbeing objectives into usable sport sessions. Experience: coaches used cards and game-based materials in after-school sport; the final parent survey had 36 valid responses and a 2.5% response rate. Recommendation: provide structured coach resources and assess developmental claims cautiously, without treating limited feedback as representative. [D4.1, §4.3; p. 20.]

12. EHLA Policy Recommendations by Stakeholder

European and national policy makers

Set coherent cross-sector objectives; support active-school and active-community policy; make equity, implementation capacity and sustainability explicit in funding; encourage named coordination; fund learning and continuation as well as pilots.

Municipalities and regional authorities

Act as conveners across education, sport, health, youth, mobility and spatial planning; map barriers and assets; protect accessible public space; connect schools to community opportunities; support local coordinators and long-term budgets.

Schools and education authorities

Treat movement as part of the whole school day and learning environment; protect quality PE while extending movement beyond PE; appoint coordination; train staff; involve pupils and parents; phase implementation at a pace the school can absorb.

Sport organisations

Provide accessible and welcoming opportunities; connect with schools and communities; develop coaches in communication, inclusion and wider youth development; offer routes for children who do not identify with competitive sport.

Health and youth-care organisations

Recognise movement as part of prevention and wellbeing; help identify barriers; refer and connect families to suitable local opportunities; work upstream with schools and municipalities rather than only with individuals.

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Families, children and communities

Co-design programmes and school approaches; identify barriers and what makes participation enjoyable; contribute to feedback and improvement; help connect school activity with everyday family and community routines.

Funders and programme designers

Fund coordination, training and implementation support; require realistic sustainability plans; avoid imposing technology without demonstrated value; allow local adaptation while protecting core principles.

From pilot to lasting policy

01 PREPARE

Agree objectives; map needs and existing strengths.

OUTPUT: baseline and shared mandate

02 DESIGN

Co-create accessible activities; assign coordinator.

OUTPUT: local implementation plan

03 LEARN

Test, listen, adapt; monitor reach and workload.

OUTPUT: improvement decisions

04 EMBED

Allocate budget; train staff; secure partnerships.

OUTPUT: permanent routines and ownership

A practical sequence for schools, municipalities and partners

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13. From Pilot to Policy: The EHLA Implementation Roadmap

Five priority actions for the first 90 days

Priority action	Primary responsible actor	Practical first step
Name ownership	School / municipality / programme lead	Assign a coordinator within an existing or new role and agree mandate, time and reporting line.
Map the local system	Municipality with schools/community partners	Create a one-page map of existing initiatives, barriers, underserved groups and relevant departments/organisations.
Agree one shared outcome	Local coalition / leadership	Choose one measurable priority (for example more movement during the school day or better access for an underserved group).
Equip implementers	School leaders, sport/community organisations, funders	Select or create a small practical starter set and schedule the first training/peer-learning session.
Plan continuation before launch	Funder + implementing organisation	Identify which role, budget line or routine could carry the action after pilot funding and set a review date.

These actions are intentionally modest. EHLA experience suggests that early clarity on ownership, context, support and continuation is more useful than launching a large programme before the local system is ready.

1. Understand —

Map local activity patterns, inequalities, settings, assets, organisational readiness and barriers. Listen before designing.

2. Build the coalition —

Secure leadership commitment and create a guiding group that includes implementers and intended users.

3. Set the shared ambition —

Define what should change and why. Connect it to education, health, community and organisational goals.

4. Design locally —

Select evidence-informed components that fit local routines, resources and culture. Decide what must remain constant and what can adapt.

5. Prepare people and settings —

Appoint coordination, train professionals, provide practical materials, adjust schedules and remove barriers.

6. Start manageable and learn —

Phase substantial change. Create early wins, gather feedback and adjust without losing the core ambition.

7. Evaluate what matters —

Assess reach, equity, experience, adoption, implementation quality, outcomes and unintended effects — including the usefulness of digital tools.

8. Institutionalise —

Embed successful practice in plans, roles, budgets, routines, onboarding and professional development.

9. Scale with support —

Expand gradually, maintaining training, coordination and learning between sites.

10. Revisit and renew —

Check maintenance after funding ends and continue learning as staff, communities and circumstances change.

Three countries. One ambition.

NETHERLANDS

Movement × Education

Dynamic School Day and active learning; four primary schools; approximately 900 children.

POLICY LESSON Make movement a whole-school routine.

ITALY

Movement × Community

Parchi in Movimento links schools, parks, families and local partners; more than 600 children.

POLICY LESSON Connect school activity to public space.

TÜRKIYE

Movement × Development

After-school sport with values and life skills; 676 and 808 unique children in respective terms.

POLICY LESSON Combine physical activity with intentional developmental goals.

Shared principles • distinct national implementation settings

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14. Three Countries — Three Policy Lessons

14.1 Netherlands — Movement × Education

The Dutch pilot used the Dynamic School Day and active learning in four primary schools, reaching approximately 900 children. The implementation experience reinforces the importance of introducing active learning step by step, respecting the pace and confidence of teachers, and providing practical materials.

Policy lesson: active learning is not a classroom trick. It is an organisational change process. Education policy should support whole-school implementation, teacher development, practical tools and named coordination.

14.2 Italy — Movement × Community

Parchi in Movimento connected schools with public parks, community coaches and municipal structures and involved more than 600 children. D3.3 also uses Verona as a case for communication, accessibility, multi-stakeholder cooperation and policy alignment.

Policy lesson: public space becomes a health asset when municipalities connect it deliberately with schools, families, communication and community organisations. Free or low-barrier access is part of the intervention, not merely a promotional detail.

14.3 Türkiye — Movement × Personal Development

The Turkish intervention combined sport and physical activity with Sports Culture and Values Education. The use of structured cards and practical materials is itself an implementation lesson: values and healthy-lifestyle themes become easier for coaches to use when translated into concrete session resources.

Policy lesson: organised sport can be a setting for wider child development when coaches are equipped and the developmental goals are intentional. Positive parent feedback is encouraging, but the low response rate means these results should remain indicative rather than representative.

Movement across the life course

CHILDREN

Active learning, play, active journeys, family links.

EVIDENCE: Direct EHLA pilot basis

ADOLESCENTS

Choice, belonging, youth work and accessible sport.

EVIDENCE: Broader EHLA guidance

ADULTS

Workplaces, active travel, neighbourhood opportunity.

EVIDENCE: Policy extrapolation

OLDER ADULTS

Accessible activity, social connection, independence.

EVIDENCE: D3.3 capacity-building guidance

Policy translation with transparent evidence limits

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15. Beyond Childhood: What EHLA Can Responsibly Say

The D4.2 task description asks for policy recommendations from childhood to older age. EHLA should meet that ambition without pretending that its pilot evidence is equally strong across the life course.

D3.3 provides useful practice-based guidance for older adults: tailor intensity and activity type; make social connection part of the design; address fear, transport and health barriers; emphasise functional benefits such as independence; and connect community programmes with healthcare and trusted local institutions.

These lessons support a broader EHLA policy principle: active living policy should be life-course sensitive. The mechanisms — accessible settings, social support, trusted professionals, low barriers, local ownership and continuity — remain relevant, but delivery should be adapted to age, capability, motivation and context.

One policy ambition can span the life course. The intervention should not.

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Measure what matters

REACH

Who takes part? Who is missing? Equity breakdown.

EFFECTIVENESS

Enjoyment, wellbeing and meaningful outcomes.

ADOPTION

Which schools and partners adopt the approach?

IMPLEMENTATION

Quality, adaptation, resources and staff workload.

MAINTENANCE

Which routines and budgets remain after the pilot?

RE-AIM-informed learning beyond headline participation totals

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16. Measuring What Matters

Policy makers need more than participation totals. EHLA recommends a pragmatic evaluation approach inspired by RE-AIM: Reach, Effectiveness, Adoption, Implementation and Maintenance. D3.3 adds an organisational perspective: monitoring should also help manage change, demonstrate early wins and identify where staff need support.

Question	What to examine	Examples
Who did we reach?	Reach and equity	Gender, socioeconomic groups, disability, local areas, less-active groups
What did people experience?	Acceptability and engagement	Enjoyment, confidence, belonging, perceived relevance
What changed?	Outcome signals	Movement, learning, wellbeing, social connection, functional outcomes where relevant
Who adopted it?	Organisational adoption	Schools, teams, departments, community organisations
Was it delivered well?	Implementation	Training, coordinator role, workload, materials, adaptations, barriers
Did technology help?	Digital added value	Usefulness, confusion, workload, inclusion, data quality
Did it last?	Maintenance	Continuation, staff turnover resilience, routines, policy, budgets after 6–12 months

A central equity question should accompany every stage: who is not benefiting yet, and what needs to change?

Source hierarchy and evidence boundaries

EHLA direct evidence: D4.1 implementation and evaluation in the Netherlands, Italy and Türkiye, supported by EHLA Outcomes. EHLA design and capacity-building evidence: D2.1, D3.1, D3.2 and D3.3. External policy alignment: WHO and EU frameworks listed below. The Active School Day Coordinator in every school is a consortium-endorsed policy recommendation, not an outcome tested as a universal staffing intervention.

Türkiye reporting clarification: the 676 and 808 figures are confirmed by the consortium as counts of unique children within their respective terms. Without a verified cross-term deduplication, they must not be summed as unique children across the full programme.

Digital implementation qualification: EHLA identified friction and limited perceived added value under suboptimal conditions. The findings justify better onboarding, appropriate resourcing and evaluation before scaling; they do not prove that digital tools cannot be effective in better-supported contexts. Country- and respondent-specific conclusions require a verified evidence breakdown.

D2.2 status: this deliverable was not available when D4.2 was finalised. No findings or quotations are attributed to D2.2. The White Paper can be updated by addendum if D2.2 subsequently provides relevant verified evidence.

Selected policy and project references

EHLA (2025). D2.1 State of the Art Analysis Report, v1.0. Surpass Sport Systems. In particular pp. 4–6, 10–13, 18–27.

EHLA. D3.1 Guideline; D3.2 Mobile Application – Active for Health; D3.3 Capacity Building Programme; D4.1 Awareness Campaign; EHLA Outcomes. Refer to the project deliverables for methodology and country-level detail.

World Health Organization (2018). Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018–2030: More Active People for a Healthier World. https://www.who.int/initiatives/gappa/action-plan

World Health Organization (2020). WHO Guidelines on Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour. https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240015128

European Commission (2008). EU Physical Activity Guidelines. https://health.ec.europa.eu/publications/eu-physical-activity-guidelines_en

Council of the European Union (2013). Council Recommendation on promoting health-enhancing physical activity across sectors. https://health.ec.europa.eu/publications/council-recommendation-promoting-health-enhancing-physical-activity-across-sectors_en

WHO Regional Office for Europe and European Commission (2024). Health-enhancing physical activity in the European Union, 2024. Discussed in EHLA D2.1, pp. 4–6.



17. The EHLA Call to Action

17.1 How stakeholder input is reflected in the recommendations

The recommendations in this draw on three types of stakeholder input already documented within EHLA: (1) evaluation feedback from children, teachers/coaches and parents in the Active Day work; (2) implementation experience from schools, community coaches, municipal collaboration and project partners; and (3) consortium reflection captured through EHLA Outcomes and project learning activities, including webinars.

This input is visible in concrete changes to the policy recommendations. Teacher and implementation experience supports the emphasis on practical tools and phased change; local partnership experience supports cross-sector coordination and adaptation; parent/child perspectives reinforce accessibility and positive experience; and partner reflection strengthens the recommendations on coordination, sustainability and cautious use of digital tools.

EHLA began with a practical challenge: how can knowledge about healthy, active lifestyles become action in the places where people live, learn, play and connect?

The project experience points away from the search for one perfect intervention. Lasting change comes from systems that make active living easier: schools that integrate movement into the day; public spaces that invite participation; sport that develops the whole person; professionals who have the skills and tools to act; and public administrations that connect sectors rather than treating physical activity as somebody else's responsibility.

> **The next step is not another campaign telling people to move. The next step is to make movement easier to choose — and harder for systems to ignore.**

EHLA therefore calls on public authorities to move from temporary activities to lasting active environments: share the ambition, design for inclusion, localise the solution, coordinate the change, equip professionals, use technology only where it adds value, measure what matters and fund continuation.

Every move counts. Every stakeholder matters. And every policy choice can help make active living more normal, more inclusive and more sustainable.

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Evidence base	What existing evidence and EHLA research support	D3.1; State of the Art; external EU/WHO sources
Capacity-building knowledge	What organisations need to implement change	D3.3; knowledge exchange; training materials
Pilot evidence	What happened in EHLA implementation	D4.1; country evaluations
Implementation outcomes	What partners learned while making it work	EHLA Outcomes notes; stakeholder feedback; webinar reflections
Policy recommendation	What decision-makers should do with that combined learning	D4.2 recommendations and roadmap

Priority	Accountable actor	First practical step
Name an Active School Day Coordinator	School leader / education authority	Assign role, protected hours and a short mandate
Map barriers to participation	Municipality + school + families	Review access, cost, disability, safety and transport
Agree cross-sector partners	Local public administration	Convene education, sport, health and community partners
Select simple measures	Coordinator + evaluation lead	Choose reach, experience, equity and maintenance indicators
Plan continuation	School board / municipality / funder	Add responsibilities and resources to annual planning