

Sports Club for Health movement: terminology and definitions

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Abstract

The Sports Club for Health (SCforH) movement has been growing and advancing since its establishment in 2008. In parallel with the constantly growing team and scope of SCforH activities, there has also been an increase in the number of specialised terms used in our verbal communication, written correspondence, and publications. To help standardise the use of such specialised terms, as part of the SCforH 2015-17 project, through a range of discussions within the project team and consultations with project partners, we reached a consensus on the classification and definitions of physical activities. However, some of the specialised terms used in SCforH-related are also related to the structure, activities, outputs, and partners of the SCforH movement, as well as to the structure of the European and national sports systems. Therefore, as part of the SCforH 2020-22 project, we developed this comprehensive glossary of SCforH-related terms with the aim to facilitate their conceptual understanding and standardised use. The terms were identified by searching through the published documents and web content identified in a systematic scoping review of SCforH-related publications. The draft list of terms and their definitions were reviewed by 10 SCforH experts. A revised list was then reviewed and approved by 32 SCforH experts. Overall, we listed and defined 46 specialised SCforH-related terms. The glossary may help new members of the SCforH consortium to gain understanding of the common SCforH terminology and provide clarity to the readers of our publications. It may also facilitate a standardised use of the terms in the SCforH context. Where suitable, the members of the SCforH consortium should be encouraged to use these definitions, to improve the clarity of future SCforH communications.

1. Introduction

The Sports Club for Health (SCforH) movement has been growing and advancing since its establishment in 2008 (1-4). The development of the SCforH movement has been facilitated by numerous activities that were largely carried out within three international projects funded by the European Union (5). The initial activities included a small expert group from Finland, but the team has quickly expanded. Overall, there have been more than 50 contributors to the SCforH projects, from a total of 18 countries (1).

In parallel with the constantly growing team and scope of SCforH activities, there has also been an increase in the number of specialised terms used in our verbal communication, written correspondence, and publications. The specialised terms are related to the structure, activities, outputs, and partners of the SCforH movement. Some terms are also related to the European and national sports systems and classification of physical activities. To help standardise the use of such specialised terms, as part of the SCforH 2015-17 project, through a range of discussions within the project team and consultations with project partners, we reached a consensus on the classification and definitions of physical activities. The definitions are available in the SCforH guidelines (3).

However, within the SCforH 2015-17 project, we did not attempt to define terms related to the sports system, as well as the terms related to the structure, activities, outputs, and partners of the SCforH consortium. In addition, the list of specialised terms that we use has kept on expanding. This means there is now a need to update the list of terms provided in the SCforH guidelines by identifying and defining the specialised terms that are currently used in the

context of SCforH activities. This glossary was, therefore, developed to facilitate conceptual understanding and standardised use of key specialised terms related to SCforH.

2. Methods

The initial list of terms was created by reviewing the terms defined in the SCforH guidelines (3) and by searching through the published documents and web content identified in a systematic scoping review of SCforH-related publications (6). Details on the search process are provided elsewhere (6). This was performed by three authors (Hrvoje Podnar, Željko Pedišić, and Ivan Radman). One author (Željko Pedišić) then developed the initial definitions of the terms, and 10 SCforH experts (Pavel Háp, Stjepan Heimer, Danijel Jurakić, Matleena Livson, Pekka Oja, Heidi Pekkola, Hrvoje Podnar, Ivan Radman, Marija Rakovac, Jorma Savola) were invited to provide their feedback via email. The list was updated in December 2022, to capture the most recent relevant SCforH-related terms. Finally, a draft book chapter including the list of terms and their definitions was sent to 32 authors for their revision and approval.

3. Glossary

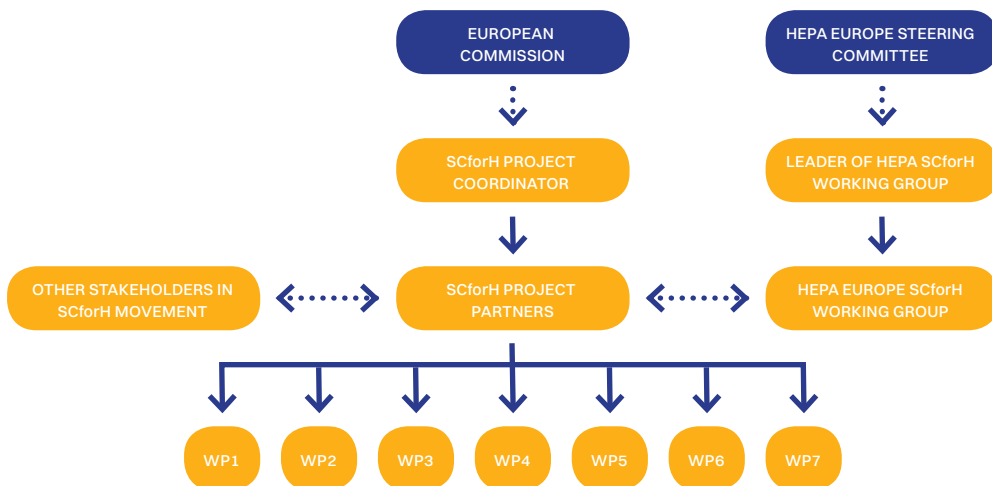
3.1. Structure

While it is important to acknowledge that there is no formal organisational structure of the SCforH movement, here we define the terms related to the structure of the SCforH movement (Figure 1) that have been frequently used in the SCforH-related communications:

- '*SCforH movement*' encompasses all formal and informal initiatives, activities and actions taken by organisations or individuals to provide a direct basis for, promote, or facilitate the implementation of SCforH initiatives and programmes in sports clubs.
- '*SCforH project*' is a funded collaborative enterprise that is planned and executed with the ultimate aim to provide a direct basis for, promote, or facilitate the implementation of SCforH initiatives and programmes in sports clubs.
- '*SCforH consortium*' is a team of experts who have been involved in planning and realisation of international SCforH projects funded by the European Union. The consortium does not have formal leadership, membership, and organisational structure.
- '*SCforH project partners*' are partner institutions involved in a funded SCforH project. Please note that the list of SCforH project partners often changes between the funded SCforH projects.
- '*SCforH project coordinator*' is an institution that leads a funded SCforH project. Please note that the SCforH project coordinator may change between the funded SCforH projects.
- '*Leader of the SCforH project*' is a person that manages a funded SCforH project on behalf of the SCforH project coordinator. Although leaders of the SCforH projects often provide guidance to the SCforH consortium during the funded international SCforH projects, they do not have a formal leadership role in the SCforH consortium.
- '*Work package (WP)*' is an operational unit within a SCforH project that is in charge of specific tasks and activities. It usually includes several SCforH project partners.
- '*Work package leader*' is a SCforH project partner that is in charge of managing a work package.

- 'HEPA Europe SCforH working group' is a working group that operates as part of the HEPA Europe network and contributes to the SCforH movement. It has been established by the Steering Committee of the HEPA Europe network, and it is a part of the organisational structure of the network.
- 'Leader of the HEPA Europe SCforH working group' is a person in charge of coordinating the HEPA Europe SCforH working group. The leader is elected by the members of the working group.

FIGURE 1. BASIC STRUCTURE OF THE SPORTS CLUB FOR HEALTH (SCFORH) MOVEMENT



Note: blue boxes = supporters of the SCforH movement; orange boxes = direct contributors to the SCforH-related activities; WP = work package; The number of work packages may vary

3.2. Activities

Numerous activities have been undertaken as part of the SCforH movement. Here we define several SCforH-related activities that have been commonly mentioned in the literature:

- 'SCforH 2009-11 project' is the SCforH project titled "Sports Club for Health" that was carried out from 01/12/2009 to 31/03/2011 and funded by the European Commission (ref: EAC/21/2009/100).
- 'SCforH 2015-17 project' is the SCforH project titled "Promoting National Implementation for Sport Club for Health (SCforH) Programmes in EU Member States" that was carried out from 01/01/2015 to 30/06/2017 and funded by the European Commission (ref: 556953-EPP-1-2014-1-FI-SPO-SCP).
- 'SCforH 2020-22 project' is the SCforH project titled "Creating Mechanisms for Continuous Implementation of the Sports Club for Health Guidelines in the European Union" that was carried out from 01/01/2020 to 31/12/2022 and funded by the European Commission (ref: 613434-EPP-1-2019-1-HR-SPO-SCP).

- ‘*SCforH initiative*’ is a set of planned actions, usually taken by sports clubs and associations, to improve the availability and/or quality of health-enhancing sports activities according to the SCforH guidelines.
- ‘*SCforH programme*’ is a set of planned and structured sports activities, usually offered by a sports club, that have been designed and implemented according to the SCforH guidelines. SCforH programmes are a specific type of SCforH initiatives.

3.3. Outputs

Over the years, the SCforH consortium has produced a number of publications and other outputs. Here we define some of the key outputs of the SCforH consortium:

- ‘*Database of SCforH and other related initiatives*’ is a comprehensive list and description of more than 70 SCforH and similar initiatives that can be found on the SCforH website
- ‘*SCforH country cards*’ (7) is a report published in 2022 that includes data relevant to the awareness and use of SCforH guidelines in 36 European countries.
- ‘*SCforH Electronic Toolkit*’ is a practical and interactive guide for sports clubs and associations on the implementation of SCforH initiatives that is available on the SCforH website (www.scforh.info/how-to/sports-associations/introduction/).
- ‘*SCforH guidelines*’ is a book of guidelines for the implementation of SCforH programmes in sports clubs, first published in 2009 (4) and then updated in 2011 (2) and 2017 (3).
- ‘*SCforH principles*’ are seven guiding principles of the SCforH approach defined in the SCforH guidelines.
- ‘*SCforH application model*’ is a recommended four-stage model for the implementation of SCforH described in the SCforH guidelines.
- ‘*SCforH textbook*’ (8) is a book containing an overview of SCforH guidelines that was written in lay language, intended for a wide audience, and published in 2022.
- ‘*SCforH website*’ is the official website of the SCforH consortium that is available at www.scforh.info.

3.4. Partners

The SCforH movement has been supported by numerous organisations and institutions. Here we provide a list of large international organisations that either took part in the SCforH projects or supported the work of SCforH consortium:

- ‘*European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)*’ is an executive agency of the European Commission in charge of funding programmes for audiovisual media, citizenship, culture, education, sport, and volunteering.
- ‘*European Federation for Company Sport (EFCS)*’ is an umbrella association of national federations for company sport and ‘sport for all’, established to promote sport activity in the occupational setting.
- ‘*European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation (ENGSO)*’ is an umbrella association of Olympic Committees and national umbrella sports organisations from 33 countries, established to lead the advocacy for voluntary-based sports in Europe.

- *'European Union Physical Activity Focal Points Network'* is a network of public health researchers and practitioners established by the European Commission and WHO to provide and validate national data needed to assess the progress against 23 indicators proposed by the Council of the European Union to monitor physical activity levels and policies.
- *'HEPA Europe'* is a European network for the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity, established as a forum for the improvement of physical activity research, policy, and practice and supported by the World Health Organization.
- *'International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA)'* is an umbrella association including more than 130 member organisations from 65 countries, established to help its members to build capacity for the promotion of physical activity and recreational sports.
- *'The Association For International Sport for All (TAFISA)'* is an umbrella sport-for-all association including more than 380 members from 170 countries, established to promote 'sport for all' and physical activity.

3.5. Sports system

Here we provide definitions of key organisational units of the European and national sports systems:

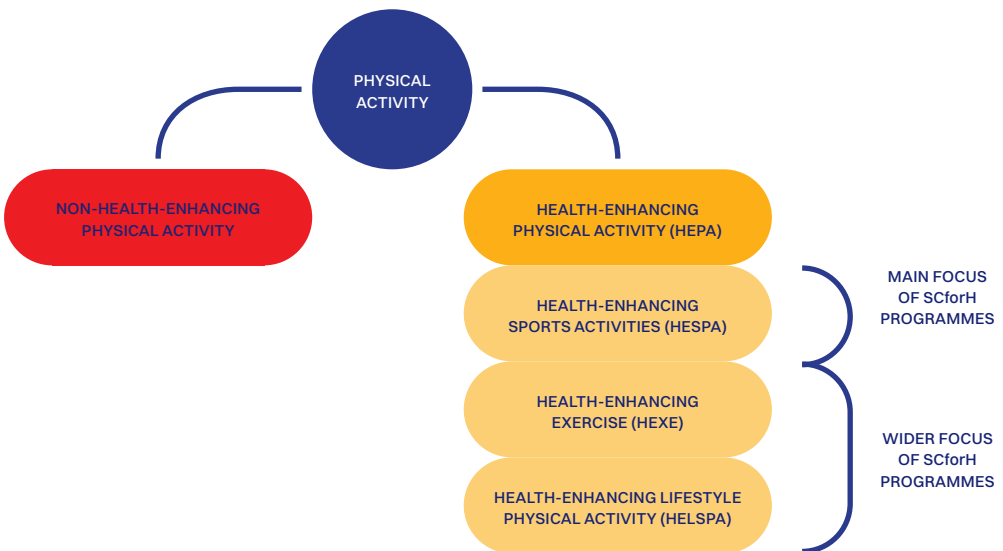
- *'Sports club'* (e.g. Ethio-Fin Sport Club, Bayern Munich) is a basic organisational unit of the sports system that provides opportunities for its members to actively participate in one or more organised sporting activities, commonly through the provision of services from coaches and exercise professionals, facilities, equipment, and/or programmes.
- *'National sport association'*¹ (e.g. Croatian Tennis Association) is a nationwide association of regional/local sport associations and/or sports clubs in a given sport.
- *'National sport-for-all organisation'* (e.g. Romanian Federation Sport for All) is a nationwide association of regional/local sport associations and/or sports clubs focused on recreational sports or 'sport for all'.
- *'National umbrella sports organisation'* (e.g. Lithuanian Union of Sports Federations) is a nationwide umbrella organisation whose membership usually includes national sports associations and national sport-for-all organisations but can also include regional/local sport associations and individual sports clubs.
- *'National Olympic committee'* is a national constituent unit of the Olympic movement whose membership usually includes national sport associations.
- *'European sport federation'* (e.g. European Gymnastics union) is a Europe-wide sport association whose membership includes national sport associations in a given sport.
- *'European umbrella sports organisation'* (e.g. European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation) is a Europe-wide sports federation whose membership usually includes national sport associations and/or national Olympic committees but it may also include other relevant institutions in the sports sector, such as ministries of sport.
- *'International sports organisation'* (e.g. International Sport and Culture Association) is a sports federation with international membership that may not necessarily be limited to European countries and that usually includes national sport organisations and/or national Olympic committees but may also include other relevant institutions in the sports sector, such as ministries of sport.

¹ In the sports context, the terms "association" and "federation" are often used interchangeably.

3.6. Classification of physical activity

According to its impact on health, physical activity can be classified as *'health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA)'* and *'non-health enhancing physical activity'* (Figure 1). Research shows that physical activity is generally beneficial to health (9, 10), but there may be some specific types, intensities, durations and volumes of physical activity that are detrimental to health or produce no health benefits (11-14). It is important to note that the evidence base on non-health-enhancing physical activities is still much smaller than the well-established evidence-base on health-enhancing physical activity. Furthermore, physical activity can be categorized by type into: *'sports activity'*; *'exercise'*; and *'lifestyle physical activity'*. Physical activity is also commonly categorised by intensity into: *'light-intensity physical activity'*; *'moderate-intensity physical activity'*; and *'vigorous-intensity physical activity'*. As shown in Figure 1, the main focus of SCforH programmes is on utilizing the potential of sports clubs to promote *'health-enhancing sports activity'*, whilst its wider scope also includes the promotion of *'health-enhancing exercise'* and *'health-enhancing lifestyle physical activity'* through sports clubs. These activities can be performed at any intensity, but greater health benefits are generally associated with physical activities of higher intensity (15).

FIGURE 2. CLASSIFICATION OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BY TYPE AND IMPACT ON HEALTH



Note: SCforH = Sports Club for Health

Here we provide definitions of physical activity categories that may be relevant in the SCforH context and that are in accordance with the definitions provided in the SCforH guidelines (3):

- *'Physical activity'* is “any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that results in energy expenditure” (16).
- *'Health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA)'* encompasses all forms of physical activity that are beneficial to health.
- *'Non-health-enhancing physical activity'* encompasses all forms of physical activity that are detrimental to health or produce no health benefits.
- *'Sport'* includes “all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels” (17), commonly performed according to specific rules. Common examples include basketball, beach volleyball, football, gymnastics, karate, skateboarding, surfing, tennis, etc.
- *'Exercise'* is “physical activity that is planned, structured, repetitive, and purposive in the sense that improvement or maintenance of one or more components of physical fitness is an objective” (16). Common examples include aerobics, gym workout, Nordic walking, etc.
- *'Lifestyle physical activity'* denotes physical activities other than sports and exercise that may be performed in work, transport, domestic or leisure-time domains. Common examples include walking at work, bicycling for transport, gardening, stair climbing, dancing in a club, etc.
- *'Light-intensity physical activity (LPA or LIPA)'*, often referred to as *'light physical activity'*, encompasses all forms of physical activity that require energy expenditure of more than 1.5 and less than 3 metabolic equivalents (METs) (18, 19).
- *'Moderate-intensity physical activity (MPA)'*, often referred to as *'moderate physical activity'*, encompasses all forms of physical activity that require energy expenditure of at least 3 but less than 6 METs (19).
- *'Vigorous-intensity physical activity (VPA)'*, often referred to as *'vigorous physical activity'*, encompasses all forms of physical activity that require energy expenditure of at least 6 METs (19).
- *'Moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity (MVPA)'*, often referred to as *'moderate-to-vigorous physical activity'*, encompasses all forms of physical activity that require energy expenditure of at least 3 METs.

4. Conclusion

In this chapter, we listed and defined 46 specialised terms that are commonly used in SCforH publications and other communications. The list may help new members of the SCforH consortium to gain understanding of the common SCforH terminology and provide clarity to the readers of our publications. Importantly, this may also facilitate a standardised use of the terms in the SCforH context.

These definitions have been conceived to suit the needs of the SCforH movement. However, it should be noted that some classifications, definitions, and explanations presented here may not necessarily be applicable to other contexts. In addition, despite the general nature of the definitions, it may be that some of them do not fit the specific context of each European country. Importantly, some of the definitions provided in this book chapter may not be fully aligned with previously proposed definitions of the same concepts. Despite these limitations, where suitable, the members of the SCforH consortium should be encouraged to use these definitions, to improve the clarity of future SCforH communications.

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