

# Promotion of health-enhancing sports activities through European and international umbrella sports organisations: four examples of good practice

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## Abstract

The European Federation for Company Sport (EFCS), European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation (ENGSO), International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA), and The Association For International Sport for All (TAFISA) are international sports associations that play an important role in the European sports sector, particularly in the promotion of “sport for all”. In this book chapter we presented and analysed interviews conducted with representatives of EFCS, ENGSO, ISCA, and TAFISA about their commitment and activities to promote health-enhancing physical activity and the Sports Club for Health (SCforH) approach. We conducted interviews with the representatives of these organisations using a structured questionnaire including open-ended and multiple choice questions. We found that the commitment of all four organisations to the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity was substantially higher than their commitment to the promotion of elite sports. Some of the actions these organisations have taken to promote health-enhancing physical activity include: advocating for “sport for all” among policymakers; providing tools, expert knowledge, and other resources to their member organisations; and organising events for their members and wider public. Their main obstacles for the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity were limited funding, shortage of personnel, and lack of awareness of the importance of physical activity and healthy lifestyle among potential partners. All the organisations assisted in the dissemination of SCforH guidelines by sharing the news about them through their newsletters, distributing the printed book of guidelines among their members, and organising workshops and presentations about the guidelines. The representatives of the European and international umbrella organisations suggested that the guidelines could be improved by including more practical “how-to” examples, shortening the descriptions, using lay language, describing real-world experiences with their implementation, and including examples of good practice from sports clubs and associations. In the latest international SCforH project, we addressed these suggestions by publishing a textbook with SCforH guidelines presented in lay language and by creating a database of examples of good SCforH practice. The activities of EFCS, ENGSO, ISCA, and TAFISA described in this book chapter may inspire and help sports associations at all levels to focus more on the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity and adoption of the SCforH approach.

# 1. Introduction

European and international umbrella sports organisations, such as the European Federation for Company Sport (EFCS), European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation (ENGSO), European Olympic Committee (EOC), International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA), and The Association For International Sport for All (TAFISA) play an important role in the European sports sector (1). Some of these organisations are primarily focused on the promotion of “sport for all” and health-enhancing physical activity. They influence policies at the European Union level by advocating for sport and help their member organisations to build capacity to promote sport nationally. European and international umbrella sports organisations have been involved in a range of large international projects in which they contributed by sharing their knowledge about policies, expertise in sports promotion, and access to the wide network of their member organisations. With their activities, they have made invaluable contributions to the development of sport in general and “sport for all” specifically.

European and international umbrella sports organisations have also played a crucial role in the development of the Sports Club for Health (SCforH) movement since its foundation (2). The first public presentation of the SCforH concepts was held at a TAFISA's workshop in 2008 that was organised by the Finnish Sport for All Association (2). TAFISA contributed to the development of the SCforH approach as a partner institution in one international SCforH project funded by the European Union, EFCS contributed to two such projects, and ENGSO and ISCA contributed to all three such projects (2).

Actions taken by these organisation may set an example for the promotion of “sport for all” in Europe and inspire numerous sports clubs and associations within and outside their membership. Therefore, in this book chapter we presented and analysed interviews conducted with representatives of EFCS, ENGSO, ISCA, and TAFISA about their commitment and activities to promote health-enhancing physical activity and SCforH approach.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Participants

We conducted interviews with the representatives of EFCS, ENGSO, ISCA, and TAFISA who were nominated for this purpose by the Presidents of the organisations. The interviewees were Saška Benedičič Tomat from ISCA, Guy De Grauwe from EFCS, Heidi Pekkola from ENGSO, and Bae Schilling from TAFISA, who had leadership roles in these organisations at the time of the interviews. The interviews were conducted in November and December 2015, as part of the Work Package 2 of the European Union funded SCforH project “Promoting National Implementation for Sports Club for Health (SCforH) Programmes in EU Member States”; hence, all the responses refer to the period before 2016. All four interviews were conducted by Marija Rakovac, one of the authors of the book chapter. The interviewees voluntarily participated in the study. Before the interviews, they provided informed consent to participate in the study. Approval for the study was received from the Ethics Committee at the Faculty of Kinesiology, University of Zagreb.

## 2.2. Measures

A structured questionnaire including open-ended and multiple choice questions was used to guide the interviews. The questions asked about: [i] the number of member organisations; [ii] commitment to the promotion of different types of physical activity; [iii] initiatives and actions taken by the organisation to promote the implementation of health-enhancing sports, exercise, and lifestyle physical activities; [iv] specific age groups that the initiatives were tailored to; [v] main obstacles and facilitators for the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity; [vi] policy documents of the organisation that focus on the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity; [vii] policy documents of the organisation that focus on wider health promotion; [viii] awareness of the SCforH guidelines (3-5); [ix] initiatives and actions taken by the organisation to promote the use of SCforH guidelines; [x] obstacles and facilitators for promoting the SCforH guidelines; [xi] and suggestions to improve the SCforH guidelines and their dissemination.

## 2.3. Data processing and analysis

The interviews were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim. The original transcripts were copyedited by Željko Pedišić, an author of the book chapter, to enable their presentation in a written format and improve their readability. The edited transcripts were then checked and verified by the interviewees. The responses to open-ended questions were imported to NVivo software (Release 1, QSR International, Burlington, MA, USA) to create a word cloud figure based on a word frequency analysis.

# 3. Interviews

## 3.1. Saška Benedičić Tomat, International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA)

**(1) Interviewer:** I would like to ask you some questions about the initiatives and actions taken by ISCA to promote recreational sports and health-enhancing physical activity among its member organisations. How many organisations from the European Union countries are members of ISCA?

**Respondent:** We have 106 member organisations in Europe.

**(2) Interviewer:** The following question will ask you to estimate the level of ISCA's commitment to the promotion of different types of sports and physical activities. I will ask you about competitive sports (i.e. top level sports focused on competition), health-enhancing sports (i.e. recreational sports or 'sport for all'), health-enhancing exercise (i.e. planned, structured and repetitive exercise aimed to improve or maintain one or more components of physical fitness and health), and other health-enhancing physical activities (i.e. non-sporting and non-structured activities such as gardening, walking or cycling for transport, and stair climbing). On the scale from 0-10, where zero stands for "not committed at all" and ten for "most highly committed," how much is ISCA committed to the promotion of: competitive sports; health-enhancing sports (recreational sports or 'sport for all'); health-enhancing exercise (e.g. Nordic walking, aerobics, gym workout); and other health-enhancing physical activities (e.g. gardening, walking or cycling for transport, stair climbing)?

**Respondent:** I would say “one” for the promotion of competitive sports and “ten” for the promotion of the remaining three types of physical activity.

**(3) Interviewer:** What do you think about the current level of commitment of ISCA to these types of sports, exercise, and physical activities? Is it fairly distributed? Should it be altered in the future?

**Respondent:** ISCA and its members are fully committed to the promotion of HEPA, and we have a good allocation of activities, as well as financial and human resources for this purpose. Of course, we would like to further advance our HEPA promotion activities, but what we are doing is the best we can do at the moment.

**(4) Interviewer:** If any, please describe the initiatives and actions that have been taken by ISCA to promote the implementation of health-enhancing sports (recreational sports or ‘sport for all’) among its member organisations (e.g. influencing policy change, organising workshops or training for the member organisations, providing guidelines and support, etc).

**Respondent:** The list of initiatives in this space would be very long, especially if we take into account all the activities of our members. We are committed to capacity building for our organisation and its members. This includes organising training, congresses, workshops, and meetings at the international and national levels, developing processes and improving their quality within ISCA and for our members, improving the transfer of knowledge and experience between our members, providing advocacy and guidance for HEPA promotion activities, and collecting examples of good practice. There are also many other projects and activities that we and our members carry out.

**(5) Interviewer:** If any, please describe the initiatives and actions that have been taken by ISCA to promote the implementation of health-enhancing exercise (e.g. Nordic walking, aerobics, gym workout) among its member organisations.

**Respondent:** The best example would be “Move Week”, that we have started in 2012 and that we organise annually. We help our national coordinators in all European countries to build capacity for the promotion of health-enhancing exercise, such as Nordic walking, aerobic and gym workout, and so on. We do not organise these activities, but we help our members to do it by teaching them and provide them necessary tools and guidelines. We also help our members by providing them financial and human resources, but, as I said earlier, ISCA members are the ones that actually implement the exercise programmes.

**(6) Interviewer:** If any, please describe the initiatives and actions that have been taken by ISCA to support its member organisations in the promotion of other health-enhancing physical activities (e.g. gardening, walking or cycling for transport, stair climbing).

**Respondent:** The answer would be the same as for the previous question; “Move Week” and all events connected to it, plus capacity building and providing guidance to our national coordinators.

**(7) Interviewer:** Were any of the initiatives and actions that have been taken by ISCA to support its member organisations in the promotion health-enhancing sports, health-enhancing

exercise or other health-enhancing physical activities tailored to a specific age group (e.g. children, adolescents, young adults, middle-aged adults, older adults)? If yes, please provide examples.

**Respondent:** Many of our activities and guidelines include different age groups: kids, teenagers, adults, and seniors. But, with some of our activities we also target specific population groups, such as women, people with disability, and refugees.

**(8) Interviewer:** What do you think were the main obstacles for ISCA in promoting health-enhancing sports, health-enhancing exercise, and other health-enhancing physical activities?

**Respondent:** I think initially it was a relatively low awareness of the importance of physical activity and healthy lifestyle among some of our potential partners. Stakeholders in the sports sector cannot do everything on their own; partnerships are very often needed for successful HEPA promotion. Obstacles in our work were sometimes a lack of willingness for partnership from other sectors and a lack of ongoing funding.

**(9) Interviewer:** What do you think would facilitate increased commitment of ISCA to the promotion of health-enhancing sports, health-enhancing exercise, and other health-enhancing physical activities?

**Respondent:** I covered some of this in my response to the previous question, but I think partnerships would come first, then understanding what is needed for successful HEPA promotion, understanding the risks associated with physical inactivity, and ongoing funding.

**(10) Interviewer:** If any, which policy documents of ISCA mention or focus on the promotion of health-enhancing sports, health-enhancing exercise, or other health-enhancing physical activities (e.g. mission statement, specific strategies, action plans)?

**Respondent:** These would include our mission, vision, and strategic action plan.

**(11) Interviewer:** If any, which policy documents of ISCA include a wider health promotion perspective (e.g. focusing on healthy lifestyle)?

**Respondent:** Physical activity and health promotion is our mission and vision, and it is mentioned in all our documents.

**(12) Interviewer:** Are any of these policies tailored to a specific age group? If yes, please provide examples.

**Respondent:** Yes, some of them are, especially to seniors, kids, and teenagers.

**(13) Interviewer:** Prior to this interview, as a representative of ISCA were you aware of the SCforH guidelines, recommended by the Council of the EU in 2013 for the implementation of health-enhancing physical activity programmes in sports clubs?

**Respondent:** Yes.

**(14) Interviewer:** When and how did you find out about the guidelines?

**Respondent:** We were actually involved in the first SCforH project from 2009 to 2011. As part of the project, we helped disseminate the guidelines among our members.

**(15) Interviewer:** How well are you informed about the SCforH guidelines?

**Respondent:** I took part in the development of the guidelines, read them, attended presentations about them, completed training about their implementation. Some of our member organisations have also used the guidelines.

**(16) Interviewer:** If any, please describe the initiatives and actions that have been taken by ISCA to promote the use or implementation of SCforH guidelines among its member organisations?

**Respondent:** As I mentioned earlier, we sent the SCforH guidelines to our member organisation. Our ex vice president, Herbert Hartmann, has been one of the key contributors to the SCforH projects. So, he was actually the key person in the dissemination of the guidelines in ISCA.

**(17) Interviewer:** What do you think were the main obstacles for ISCA in the promotion of SCforH guidelines?

**Respondent:** In the work we did to disseminate the guidelines, there were no particular obstacles.

**(18) Interviewer:** What do you think would facilitate increased commitment of ISCA to the promotion of SCforH guidelines?

**Respondent:** Maybe if we would receive more printed books of guidelines. Maybe the authors of the guidelines could consider providing recommendations for a more structured approach to their dissemination. It would be helpful to better understand who is doing what, when, and how. Getting feedback from the member organisation and sports clubs would also be helpful. The guidelines have been available for so many years now, so it would be good to know how much they mean to sports clubs, how are they used, and what benefits did sports clubs have from using them.

**(19) Interviewer:** Our project aims to update the SCforH guidelines. Would you have any suggestions that would help us improve the guidelines?

**Respondent:** More emphasis could be put on evaluation. The guidelines could include recommendations on how the monitoring is done. This would improve our understanding of how the sports clubs use the guidelines and what were the improvements in their processes. Such feedback from sports clubs and associations could actually inform future refinement of the guidelines.

**(20) Interviewer:** One of our project aims is to disseminate the SCforH guidelines among umbrella and national sport organisations and sports clubs in the European Union. Would you have any suggestions that would help us broaden the reach of dissemination?

**Respondent:** It would be important to get good examples and feedback from sports clubs and associations. Having success stories and examples of good practice would be helpful. Knowing what has been done so far and what were the outcomes of using the guidelines would also help us in the future promotion of the guidelines. Just sending out the guidelines and saying “This is how the promotion of health-enhancing sports should be done” is definitely not enough. We would definitely benefit from real-world examples of their use in practice.

### **3.2. Guy De Grauwe, European Federation for Company Sport (EFCS)**

**(1) Interviewer:** I would like to ask you some questions about the initiatives and actions taken by EFCS to promote recreational sports and health-enhancing physical activity among its member organisations. How many organisations from the European Union countries are members of EFCS?

**Respondent:** At this moment, 40.

**(2) Interviewer:** The following question will ask you to estimate the level of commitment of EFCS to the promotion of different types of sports and physical activities. I will ask you about competitive sports (i.e. top level sports focused on competition), health-enhancing sports (i.e. recreational sports or ‘sport for all’), health-enhancing exercise (i.e. planned, structured and repetitive exercise aimed to improve or maintain one or more components of physical fitness and health), and other health-enhancing physical activities (i.e. non-sporting and non-structured activities such as gardening, walking or cycling for transport, and stair climbing). On the scale from 0-10, where zero stands for “not committed at all” and ten for “most highly committed,” how much is EFCS committed to the promotion of: competitive sports; health-enhancing sports (recreational sports or ‘sport for all’); health-enhancing exercise (e.g. Nordic walking, aerobics, gym workout); and other health-enhancing physical activities (e.g. gardening, walking or cycling for transport, stair climbing)?

**Respondent:** I would say “zero” for the promotion of competitive sports, “ten” for the promotion of health-enhancing sports and health-enhancing exercise, and “seven” for the promotion of other health-enhancing physical activities.

**(3) Interviewer:** What do you think about the current level of commitment of EFCS to these types of sports, exercise, and physical activities? Is it fairly distributed? Should it be altered in the future?

**Respondent:** Our main focus is on recreational physical activity, and we do not aim to increase our commitment to top level sports. But, on all the other aspects, we want to maintain our high score. And, for the last category, we would like to increase the rate of our commitment to that.

**(4) Interviewer:** If any, please describe the initiatives and actions that have been taken by EFCS to promote the implementation of health-enhancing sports (recreational sports or ‘sport for all’) among its member organisations (e.g. influencing policy change, organising workshops or training for the member organisations, providing guidelines and support, etc).



**Respondent:** We have started in the 1977 with the organisation of the European company sport games. They take place every two years and gather around 5000 people. We organise around 20 sport disciplines during five days. So, that's one program, if I may say so, to make the workers more active, because our target group are workers and companies. Besides the Company sports games, for several years now we have also organised our health congress in which we present examples of good practice and relevant scientific topics related to company sports. Additionally, several national federations, and not the EFCS as a whole, organise training for their members. EFCS also actively participated in the European week of sport this year. We have also been awarded funding from the European Commission for our program called "Active Workplace, Healthy Workplace".

**(5) Interviewer:** If any, please describe the initiatives and actions that have been taken by EFCS to promote the implementation of health-enhancing exercise (e.g. Nordic walking, aerobics, gym workout) among its member organisations.

**Respondent:** For several years we have successfully organised the "10,000 Steps" campaign in several countries. We also organised Nordic walking this year during the European week of sports.

**(6) Interviewer:** If any, please describe the initiatives and actions that have been taken by EFCS to support its member organisations in the promotion of other health-enhancing physical activities (e.g. gardening, walking or cycling for transport, stair climbing).

**Respondent:** The only thing that we do in this regard at the moment is that during our meetings, such as general assembly and executive meetings of our commissions, we emphasise the physical activity aspect and we try to motivate the participants to be active, but no broader action is currently being taken.

**(7) Interviewer:** Were any of the initiatives and actions that have been taken by EFCS to support its member organisations in the promotion health-enhancing sports, health-enhancing exercise, or other health-enhancing physical activities tailored to a specific age group (e.g. children, adolescents, young adults, middle-aged adults, older adults)? If yes, please provide examples.

**Respondent:** Yes, absolutely. If they belong to a company, they are a part of our target group. Our member federations organise specific activities for this population group.

**(8) Interviewer:** What do you think were the main obstacles for EFCS in promoting health-enhancing sports, health-enhancing exercise, and other health-enhancing physical activities?

**Respondent:** In EFCS, we have limited financial resources. That is one of the main obstacles. We therefore have to rely on the work done by volunteers, which can sometimes be challenging. And, sometimes we also lack coaches, animators, and trainers.

**(9) Interviewer:** What do you think would facilitate increased commitment of EFCS to the promotion of health-enhancing sports, health-enhancing exercise, and other health-enhancing physical activities?

**Respondent:** I think more financial resources would help us a lot. Also, some of our member federations have good contact with the Olympic committees in their countries, but that is not the case everywhere. The federations that have a good connection with the Olympic committee may have better possibilities. A recognition by governmental bodies may help in this regard as well.

**(10) Interviewer:** If any, which policy documents of EFCS mention or focus on the promotion of health-enhancing sports, health-enhancing exercise, or other health-enhancing physical activities (e.g. mission statement, specific strategies, action plans)?

**Respondent:** We have our mission statement, of course. Our statute clearly says that we will promote recreational activity among workers, that we will try to promote the physical activity, and make people more active people. We are currently working on a new strategy. We emphasise quite strongly the fact that we need physical activity in companies, because it is beneficial for both the workers and the employers. We also have action plans and the partnership in the European week of sports. We will try to increase the number of member federations in EFCS. We are also part of the Healthy Work Place program from the European Commission. So, these are different kinds of platforms we use to emphasise the importance of physical activity in companies. Yesterday and the day before, I was at the meeting regarding the European observatory for sport and employment. That could be interesting for us also because, as I said before, we need more trainers and qualified people. So, maybe our partnerships with the European observatory will be helpful. And, a few years ago, we have created the Health Commission in the EFCS, where Jorma Savola is the head chairman. So, in that Commission we try to promote programs to make the people aware that physical activity is very much needed.

**(11) Interviewer:** If any, which policy documents of EFCS include a wider health promotion perspective (e.g. focusing on healthy lifestyle)?

**Respondent:** For now, we do not have such policy documents.

**(12) Interviewer:** Prior to this interview, as a representative of EFCS were you aware of the SCforH guidelines, recommended by the Council of the EU in 2013 for the implementation of health-enhancing physical activity programmes in sports clubs?

**Respondent:** Yes, I was aware of them.

**(13) Interviewer:** When and how did you find out about the guidelines?

**Respondent:** The first time I heard about them was when Jorma Savola talked about them at our Executive Committee meeting. I was later present at several meetings of ISCA and TAFISA where the guidelines were debated.

**(14) Interviewer:** How well are you informed about the SCforH guidelines?

**Respondent:** I listened to presentations about the guidelines, I read them, and I attended a workshop about the guidelines.

**(15) Interviewer:** If any, please describe the initiatives and actions that have been taken by EFCS to promote the use or implementation of SCforH guidelines among its member organisations?

**Respondent:** Jorma Savola presented the guidelines at the meetings of our Executive Committee meetings and Health Commission. So, people in our Commission and our Executive Committee are aware of the guidelines. We have also participated in a funded SCforH project.

**(16) Interviewer:** What do you think were the main obstacles for EFCS in the promotion of SCforH guidelines?

**Respondent:** A lack of financial resources to get involved and participate. Also, at the beginning, our management, our Executive Committee board, was not 100% convinced about the guidelines, because the guidelines seemed potentially too theoretical and because our focus is on companies. While there are sports clubs in companies, they are commonly different from standard sport clubs. For these reasons, in the beginning, we did not clearly see how EFCS would benefit from the guidelines.

**(17) Interviewer:** What do you think would facilitate increased commitment of EFCS to the promotion of SCforH guidelines?

**Respondent:** I think if someone could present us some practical examples, some examples of good practice. The guidelines would then be more accessible and comprehensible for our members, I think. We are dealing with sports and we want people to be active. You have to have theory at the basis but most of the people, they want to be practical, pragmatic. If we get good practical examples, that could help raise the awareness and understanding of the guidelines.

**(18) Interviewer:** Our project aims to update the SCforH guidelines. Would you have any suggestions that would help us improve the guidelines?

**Respondent:** As I mentioned in the response to the previous question, adding more practical examples would definitely be useful.

**(19) Interviewer:** One of our project aims is to disseminate the SCforH guidelines among umbrella and national sport organisations and sports clubs in the European Union. Would you have any suggestions that would help us broaden the reach of dissemination?

**Respondent:** Maybe by participating in the European week of sports. For example here in Brussels, this year there are quite a few, about 10 to 12 international federations that presented themselves. It could be interesting to have a promotion stand here. It could be also interesting to use our European Company Sport Games that are held every second year to inform people about it. Maybe having presentations during the general assembly of EFCS and then trying to go down to the clubs may also help.

**(20) Interviewer:** That was my last question. Would you like to add anything that we did not mention in this interview?

**Respondent:** Most of our member federations are company sport federations, but there are also Sport for all federations. So, each of them has specific needs and objectives. While all of us try to get people moving and be more active, every country has its own way of doing it. The federations are also differently structured. Some of them are NGOs, while others are private organisations. But, we all have same objective, that is for sure. In EFCS we have a range of programs, but then it is up to the national federations to implement them and adapt them to their own needs.

### 3.3. Heidi Pekkola, European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation (ENGSO)

**(1) Interviewer:** I would like to ask you some questions about the initiatives and actions taken by ENGSO to promote recreational sports and health-enhancing physical activity among its member organisations. How many organisations from the European Union countries are members of ENGSO?

**Respondent:** We currently have 26 members.

**(2) Interviewer:** The following question will ask you to estimate the level of ENGSO's commitment to the promotion of different types of sports and physical activities. I will ask you about competitive sports (i.e. top level sports focused on competition), health-enhancing sports (i.e. recreational sports or 'sport for all'), health-enhancing exercise (i.e. planned, structured and repetitive exercise aimed to improve or maintain one or more components of physical fitness and health), and other health-enhancing physical activities (i.e. non-sporting and non-structured activities such as gardening, walking or cycling for transport, and stair climbing). On the scale from 0-10, where zero stands for "not committed at all" and ten for "most highly committed," how much is ENGSO committed to the promotion of: competitive sports; health-enhancing sports (recreational sports or 'sport for all'); health-enhancing exercise (e.g. Nordic walking, aerobics, gym workout); and other health-enhancing physical activities (e.g. gardening, walking or cycling for transport, stair climbing)?

**Respondent:** Before answering your question, it is important to highlight that we mainly focus on policy work and grassroots sport, so I would say our commitment to competitive sports would probably be "three" out of ten, our commitment to health-enhancing sports "nine" out of ten, and our commitment to health-enhancing exercise and lifestyle physical activities around "five" out of ten.

**(3) Interviewer:** What do you think about the current level of commitment of ENGSO to these types of sports, exercise, and physical activities? Is it fairly distributed? Should it be altered in the future?

**Respondent:** ENGSO is primarily advocating for grassroots sport, but some of our members are national Olympic committees, so we do some work in regard to competitive sports as well. Our aim is to make people more physically active, and sports clubs may certainly help in this endeavour by focusing more on health-related matters. The current levels of our commitment to the promotion of different types of physical activity are likely to remain more or less the same. Maybe we could consider placing more focus on health-enhancing exercise and lifestyle physical activities, but organised sport will definitely remain our priority.

**(4) Interviewer:** If any, please describe the initiatives and actions that have been taken by ENGSO to promote the implementation of health-enhancing sports (recreational sports or 'sport for all') among its member organisations (e.g. influencing policy change, organising workshops or training for the member organisations, providing guidelines and support, etc).

**Respondent:** As I mentioned earlier, we are quite policy focused. We closely follow and aim to influence the developments in the EU sports policy, with HEPA promotion as one of its main priorities. ENGSO actually contributes to an expert group on HEPA. As one of the partners in the European week of sport, we signed a partnership agreement with the European Commission and organised our annual forum during the week, where we discussed the future role of sports clubs in making people more active. The forum included presentations of research findings and examples of good practice, as well as excellent discussions with policymakers from the European Commission. As part of that event, we also organised sports activities at the European sport village in which the participants of ENGSO forum and other people could participate. It is also good to mention that we take a cross-sectoral approach. For example, we contribute to the platform for health, diet, and physical activity.

**(5) Interviewer:** If any, please describe the initiatives and actions that have been taken by ENGSO to promote the implementation of health-enhancing exercise (e.g. Nordic walking, aerobics, gym workout) among its member organisations.

**Respondent:** For example, in our ENGSO forum, we had active breaks during which representatives of ENGSO Youth organised stretching and other exercise. We generally try to include more physical activity in our seminars. Also, some of the activities that we organised at the European sports village could be classified as health-enhancing exercise as well.

**(6) Interviewer:** If any, please describe the initiatives and actions that have been taken by ENGSO to support its member organisations in the promotion of other health-enhancing physical activities (e.g. gardening, walking or cycling for transport, stair climbing).

**Respondent:** We still focus more on organised sport, but we discuss about such activities as well. Such topics are often included in our workshops and seminars.

**(7) Interviewer:** Were any of the initiatives and actions that have been taken by ENGSO to support its member organisations in the promotion health-enhancing sports, health-enhancing exercise or other health-enhancing physical activities tailored to a specific age group (e.g. children, adolescents, young adults, middle-aged adults, older adults)? If yes, please provide examples.

**Respondent:** We have ENGSO Youth, which is a part of ENGSO, with people under the age of 35 years. They, for example, contributed to the project called "Healthy Children in Sound Communities" which was financed by the European Commission, as part of the preparatory actions in the field of sport. Also, last year, the topic of ENGSO forum was related to school activities. At the forum, our member organisations from Denmark presented examples of good practice and an example of policy change where they had been successful in influencing the government to support promoting more physical activity in schools.

**(8) Interviewer:** What do you think were the main obstacles for ENGSO in promoting health-enhancing sports, health-enhancing exercise, and other health-enhancing physical activities?

**Respondent:** The situation is very different in different countries. The examples of good practice that we present at our events are maybe sometimes out of the scope for some of our member organisations, as they are not necessarily relevant for the specific context in all countries. The second is in relation to the importance of a cross-sectoral approach. What we see at both EU and national levels is that policymakers in the area of sport agree on the importance of sport for health. But, I think that stakeholders in the sports sector still have to do a lot to really convince the decision makers in other sectors, for example in health, transportation, and infrastructure sectors, about the benefits of sport. Here at the EU level we have to try to encourage the European Commission to support more cross-sectoral actions, and I know that many of our member organisations face the same challenge at the national level.

**(9) Interviewer:** What do you think would facilitate increased commitment of ENGSO to the promotion of health-enhancing sports, health-enhancing exercise, and other health-enhancing physical activities?

**Respondent:** I think we do as much as we can at the moment. For increased commitment, we would probably need to expand the organisation. We are already highly committed to the promotion of HEPA, so I would say it is more about the available resources.

**(10) Interviewer:** If any, which policy documents of ENGSO mention or focus on the promotion of health-enhancing sports, health-enhancing exercise, or other health-enhancing physical activities (e.g. mission statement, specific strategies, action plans)?

**Respondent:** We have a Position paper on participation in health-enhancing physical activity. We also have a Position paper on the Council work plan from two years ago when the Council started to discuss about HEPA participation as one of the main priorities. Last year, we also wrote a Position paper manifest of priorities for grassroots sport after the EU election, and distributed it to the new members of the European Parliament.

**(11) Interviewer:** If any, which policy documents of ENGSO include a wider health promotion perspective (e.g. focusing on healthy lifestyle)?

**Respondent:** The documents primarily focus on HEPA as an important element of a healthy lifestyle.

**(12) Interviewer:** Are any of these policies tailored to a specific age group? If yes, please provide examples.

**Respondent:** Yes. For example, in some of the documents, we mention HEPA promotion in schools; hence focusing on school-aged children. And, this does not only refer to physical education but more broadly to the whole school setting, because we know that school is the place where you can reach almost all children, regardless of their background.

**(13) Interviewer:** Prior to this interview, as a representative of ENGSO were you aware of the SCforH guidelines, recommended by the Council of the EU in 2013 for the implementation of health-enhancing physical activity programmes in sports clubs?

**Respondent:** Yes.

**(14) Interviewer:** When and how did you find out about the guidelines?

**Respondent:** ENGSO was a partner in the previous project, so that is how I learned about the guidelines.

**(15) Interviewer:** How well are you informed about the SCforH guidelines?

**Respondent:** ENGSO took part in the development of the guidelines, I listened to presentations about the guidelines, read them, attended a seminar or workshop about them, and also promoted them among our member organisations.

**(16) Interviewer:** If any, please describe the initiatives and actions that have been taken by ENGSO to promote the use or implementation of SCforH guidelines among its member organisations?

**Respondent:** It was Romana Caput-Jogunica who participated as a representative of ENGSO in the first SCforH project, so she would probably be the right person to ask this question. But, I think we presented the guidelines to our member organisations either at a forum or at a general assembly. We also spread the news about the guidelines through our newsletter and website.

**(17) Interviewer:** What do you think were the main obstacles for ENGSO in the promotion of SCforH guidelines?

**Respondent:** I could not think of any at the moment.

**(18) Interviewer:** What do you think would facilitate increased commitment of ENGSO to the promotion of SCforH guidelines?

**Respondent:** Including more practical examples would help, because our members are often practice oriented.

**(19) Interviewer:** Our project aims to update the SCforH guidelines. Would you have any suggestions that would help us improve the guidelines?

**Respondent:** I generally think the guidelines are very useful, but some parts are maybe a bit too scientific and theoretical. More practical examples would improve their usefulness.

**(20) Interviewer:** One of our project aims is to disseminate the SCforH guidelines among umbrella and national sport organisations and sports clubs in the European Union. Would you have any suggestions that would help us broaden the reach of dissemination?

**Respondent:** Making the guidelines more practical would help improve the dissemination outcomes, because the guidelines would more acceptable and relevant to many sports organisations.

### 3.4. Bae Schilling, The Association For International Sport for All (TAFISA)

**(1) Interviewer:** I would like to ask you some questions about the initiatives and actions taken by TAFISA to promote recreational sports and health-enhancing physical activity among its member organisations. How many organisations from the European Union countries are members of TAFISA?

**Respondent:** We have 82 members from 24 countries.

**(2) Interviewer:** The following question will ask you to estimate the level of TAFISA's commitment to the promotion of different types of sports and physical activities. I will ask you about competitive sports (i.e. top level sports focused on competition), health-enhancing sports (i.e. recreational sports or 'sport for all'), health-enhancing exercise (i.e. planned, structured and repetitive exercise aimed to improve or maintain one or more components of physical fitness and health), and other health-enhancing physical activities (i.e. non-sporting and non-structured activities such as gardening, walking or cycling for transport, and stair climbing). On the scale from 0-10, where zero stands for "not committed at all" and ten for "most highly committed," how much is TAFISA committed to the promotion of: competitive sports; health-enhancing sports (recreational sports or 'sport for all'); health-enhancing exercise (e.g. Nordic walking, aerobics, gym workout); and other health-enhancing physical activities (e.g. gardening, walking or cycling for transport, stair climbing)?

**Respondent:** To the promotion of competitive sports, not very; I would say maybe "two to three". To the promotion of health-enhancing sports, by your definition probably quite high; "seven to eight", I guess. We are very committed to the promotion of both health-enhancing exercise and health-enhancing physical activities; I would say "nine to ten". But, I would also like to note that TAFISA does not necessarily differentiate between all these categories. We are committed to the promotion of all of the categories, as we consider "sport for all" to encompass all of the categories, as opposed to separating them.

**(3) Interviewer:** What do you think about the current level of commitment of TAFISA to these types of sports, exercise, and physical activities? Is it fairly distributed? Should it be altered in the future?

**Respondent:** I think TAFISA's mission is fairly distributed, what we focus on is what we consider to be "sport for all", which can be physical activity of any kind, for all people. This means that we focus less on the competitive sports, because we feel they already receive a lot of attention from other organisations, such as international sport federations, national sports federations, and Olympic committees. So, our focus is very much on making sure that individuals who do not necessarily do competitive sport also gain access to physical activity and "sport for all", through improvements in public and active transport, through better planning and municipality-based activities, and through government influence on policy making regarding "sport for all". I think our focus area is quite right in place and in accordance with the



TAFISA's specific purpose and mission, so the proportions of time we spend on promoting different types of physical activity are appropriate. And, I do not think this would change.

**(4) Interviewer:** If any, please describe the initiatives and actions that have been taken by TAFISA to promote the implementation of health-enhancing sports (recreational sports or 'sport for all') among its member organisations (e.g. influencing policy change, organising workshops or training for the member organisations, providing guidelines and support, etc).

**Respondent:** I have to note again that what we do is not specifically what you define as recreational sport or "sport for all", but it does include it. So, we have adopted the global platform, physical activity platform, we publish many papers in this area, including traditional sporting games revolution, active city development strategy, code of ethic, the statement that "sport for all" participation has benefits for refugees, and a specific frame of reference to the current European climate. We also have other resolutions and papers, and we organise a congress, every couple of years which focuses on new developments in the "sport for all" sector. We also have lots of different programmes; for example, Certified Leadership Course and Reach Out Programme. We also develop the cooperation with many other leading international bodies in the field, which is called "Global Coalition in Sport for Physical Activity". We have developed the how-to, "designed to move" toolbox to make the global movement understandable and break it down to the practical level, for our members and for our international federations who wish to align to the global framework. We undertake many activities as part of the triple AC programme, which includes active cities, active community, and active citizens. This led to our Sport City Net which is also a project funded by the European Commission. Also, many different international workshops were organised along the way, depending on member need and interest.

**(5) Interviewer:** If any, please describe the initiatives and actions that have been taken by TAFISA to promote the implementation of health-enhancing exercise (e.g. Nordic walking, aerobics, gym workout) among its member organisations.

**Respondent:** We have some more broad, physical activity-based events, such as the Road Challenge and Walking Day which have been organised for some 20 years now. These events focus very much on, by your definition, health-enhancing exercise, particularly the road walking day. We encourage Nordic walking events, walking events of different kinds, Road Challenge Day which is actually Kids Challenge Day, and Be Active Challenge in 2015, and we continue in 2016 with Be Active challenge and Take Back Straight. These events encourage different kinds of physical activity that are not necessarily organised sports. World sport games in terms of traditional sports and physical activity, which includes Nordic walking and similar activities. So, we do definitely have some activities which are focused on what you define as health-enhancing exercise.

**(6) Interviewer:** If any, please describe the initiatives and actions that have been taken by TAFISA to support its member organisations in the promotion of other health-enhancing physical activities (e.g. gardening, walking or cycling for transport, stair climbing).

**Respondent:** Yes, absolutely, the World Challenge day, again is a good example of that, because it encourages people to be active, in any form whatsoever. But, also some of the regulations and policy work has been very much aiming at developing active cities in a holistic

sense, so, active cities development strategy and also our alignment with the Designed to Move Framework. It is all about how do we bring physical activity to people in a very holistic sense, outside of its traditional sports structure, and how do we engage urban transport and the urban design in making activities in our landscape much more appealing for people to be physically active. So, we certainly have a focus outside of just structured sport.

**(7) Interviewer:** Were any of the initiatives and actions that have been taken by TAFISA to support its member organisations in the promotion health-enhancing sports, health-enhancing exercise or other health-enhancing physical activities tailored to a specific age group (e.g. children, adolescents, young adults, middle-aged adults, older adults)? If yes, please provide examples.

**Respondent:** Yes, Kid's Challenge Day was focused on children. Some of the other, more educational programmes such as Certified Leadership Courses focused towards, typically, young adults as new professional volunteers in the area of sports. Reach Out Courses and municipality triple AC programme, City Net Programme are focused broadly on middle-age adults who are leaders in the field, municipality leaders, national sports leaders, and so on. And, we also have another project supported by the European Commission which targets teachers and children specifically. Otherwise, most of our work is rather broad in terms of target groups, as we encourage all people to be active.

**(8) Interviewer:** What do you think were the main obstacles for TAFISA in promoting health-enhancing sports, health-enhancing exercise, and other health-enhancing physical activities?

**Respondent:** What we consider as “sport for all”, that is, the broader definition which encompasses all previously mentioned types of physical activity, is often deemed to be less important and attractive than elite sports. Also, more funding is likely to be allocated to elite sport or competitive sport than to “sport for all” and health-enhancing physical activity. These are certainly big challenges we deal with.

**(9) Interviewer:** What do you think would facilitate increased commitment of TAFISA to the promotion of health-enhancing sports, health-enhancing exercise, and other health-enhancing physical activities?

**Respondent:** It is easy; simply increase funding. The more money we have, more work we can do.

**(10) Interviewer:** If any, which policy documents of TAFISA mention or focus on the promotion of health-enhancing sports, health-enhancing exercise, or other health-enhancing physical activities (e.g. mission statement, specific strategies, action plans)?

**Respondent:** Our core document is TAFISA Statute, which is the backbone of the organisation and it focuses very much on physical activity and “sport for all”. All of our policy papers in fact mention and focus on the promotion of sport and physical activity, because that is what we do. For example, active city development strategy regulation on physical activity, “sport for all” and health from 2005, regulation on civil and public space for sport and physical activity again from 2005.

**(11) Interviewer:** If any, which policy documents of TAFISA include a wider health promotion perspective (e.g. focusing on healthy lifestyle)?

**Respondent:** All of our papers include a broader element of health promotion. We consider “sport for all” as a part of healthy lifestyle. So, we certainly encourage healthy lifestyle around “sport for all” and physical activity, but our focus is on the sport side of things. So that is certainly more emphasised throughout our policy papers.

**(12) Interviewer:** Are any of these policies tailored to a specific age group? If yes, please provide examples.

**Respondent:** Not really, we tend to paint with a broad brush.

**(13) Interviewer:** Prior to this interview, as a representative of TAFISA were you aware of the SCforH guidelines, recommended by the Council of the EU in 2013 for the implementation of health-enhancing physical activity programmes in sports clubs?

**Respondent:** Yes.

**(14) Interviewer:** When and how did you find out about the guidelines?

**Respondent:** TAFISA was involved in the development of SCforH project since 2008. TAFISA, as an organisation, has been aware of the guidelines since they were issued and myself, I have been aware of them since I have started working in TAFISA.

**(15) Interviewer:** How well are you informed about the SCforH guidelines?

**Respondent:** Me personally, I listened to a presentation about the guidelines, I read them, and I attended a workshop about them. And, TAFISA, as an organisation, took part in the development of the guidelines.

**(16) Interviewer:** If any, please describe the initiatives and actions that have been taken by TAFISA to promote the use or implementation of SCforH guidelines among its member organisations?

**Respondent:** We distributed the book of SCforH guidelines to all of our member organisations and also organised an introduction workshop in connection with different activities. We have taken measures to have some of the guidelines translated into other languages where appropriate. We developed adoptable consultation package for our member organisation based on their city setting and infrastructure.

**(17) Interviewer:** What do you think were the main obstacles for TAFISA in the promotion of SCforH guidelines?

**Respondent:** I guess drawing a parallel between sports clubs in different countries. The reason for this is that different countries have different frameworks for sports clubs. For example, sports clubs might not be the same in Finland and in Poland. Also, parts of the guidelines are quite wordy. Our members tend to like such materials to be very practical and concise. And

then, unfortunately, health and sport policy do not necessarily sit within the same Ministry or within the same segment of the public sector. So, it can be challenging to align the missions of both the sport sector and the health sector and bring them together.

**(18) Interviewer:** What do you think would facilitate increased commitment of TAFISA to the promotion of SCforH guidelines?

**Respondent:** I guess, a more holistic approach, as I mentioned several times earlier in the interview. We do not necessarily categorise different types of activities, but rather we focus very holistically on sport and physical activities. So, having a more holistic focus would certainly synergise our members' missions more closely, rather than segregating it to specific types of health-enhancing physical activity. The other thing would be to have the guidelines in a form that is easier to distribute to our members; for example, during our congresses or in a short more snappy form than extensive books and lecturing articles on the topic that can be a little overwhelming to our members.

**(19) Interviewer:** Our project aims to update the SCforH guidelines. Would you have any suggestions that would help us improve the guidelines?

**Respondent:** To make it shorter and more accessible, certainly at the initial level. And, if people want to delve further, of course, they can go into all the theory behind it. I would make it a more holistic approach. Obviously, with the focus on health-enhancing part but recognising that all "sport for all" physical activities do in fact improve health, obviously when practiced safely. So, having a more holistic approach rather than categorising it. And, then also understanding the framework in which we have to implement the Sports Clubs for Health guidelines. So, focusing on what the people who actually use them manage to achieve. For example city or municipality administration looking at how they might use the information within the SCforH framework.

**(20) Interviewer:** One of our project aims is to disseminate the SCforH guidelines among umbrella and national sport organisations and sports clubs in the European Union. Would you have any suggestions that would help us broaden the reach of dissemination?

**Respondent:** As I mentioned previously, just making them more accessible to our members by aligning them more with the aims and mission of our member network. Within the European Union as a whole, I guess trying to understand the EU policy framework and member states framework within that, and making sure that the information in the guidelines is related and applicable to that framework.

## 4. Results and discussion

The commitment of all four European and international umbrella sports organisations to the promotion of elite-level, competitive sports is substantially lower than their commitment to the promotion of “sport for all”, health-enhancing exercise, and health-enhancing lifestyle physical activities. From the estimates of the overall commitment for some of the organisations and the examples of actions taken to promote different types of physical activity, it seems that these organisations mainly focus on health-enhancing sports and health-enhancing exercise. The representative of TAFISA mentioned that they do not strictly differentiate between different types of health-enhancing physical activity as in the classification used by the SC-forH consortium (3, 6), but instead promote all the types of health-enhancing physical activity collectively.

A range of actions have been taken by the four European and international umbrella sports organisations to promote health-enhancing physical activity. Some examples of such actions include: advocating for the promotion of sport and physical activity at the political level; providing tools, expert knowledge, and other resources to their member organisations; and organising events for their members and wider public. From the responses of interviewees, it seems that the key obstacles for the actions taken by these organisation to promote health-enhancing physical activity were limited funding, shortage of personnel, and lack of awareness of the importance of physical activity and healthy lifestyle among potential partners.

In their responses related to activities and policies of their organisations that promote different types of health-enhancing physical activity, the respondents most frequently used the following terms: activity ( $n = 81$ ); sport ( $n = 64$ ); physical ( $n = 36$ ); organised ( $n = 31$ ); example ( $n = 26$ ); promotion ( $n = 24$ ); focus ( $n = 22$ ); national ( $n = 21$ ); commitment ( $n = 20$ ); exercise ( $n = 20$ ); and European Commission ( $n = 20$ ). The findings of the word frequency analysis are shown in Figure 1.

**FIGURE 1. THE 50 MOST COMMONLY MENTIONED TERMS IN THE DESCRIPTIONS OF HEPA\*-PROMOTING ACTIVITIES AND POLICIES OF FOUR EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL UMBRELLA SPORTS ORGANISATIONS†**



\* Health-enhancing physical activity

† International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA), European Federation for Company Sport (EFCS), European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation (ENGSO), and The Association For International Sport for All (TAFISA)

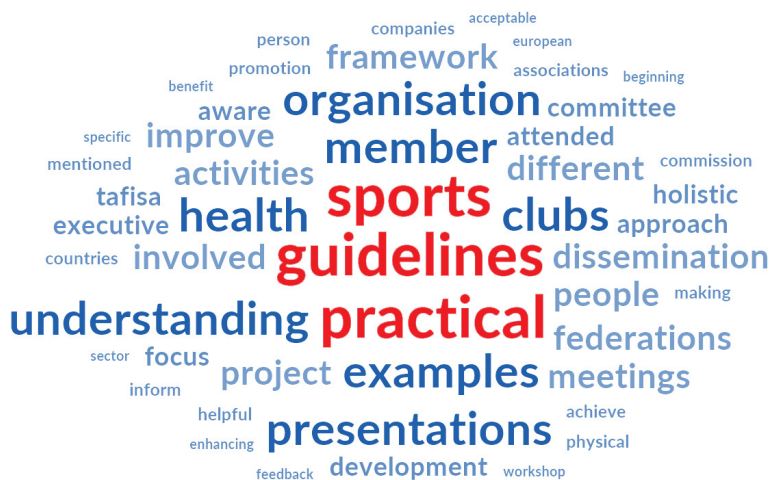
Furthermore, the representatives of all four European and international umbrella sports organisations were aware of the SCforH guidelines prior to the interviews. They gained knowledge about the guidelines by reading them, attending presentations about them, and/or actively participating in their development. All the organisations assisted in the dissemination of SCforH guidelines by sharing the news about them through their newsletters, distributing the printed book of guidelines among their members, and organising workshops and presentations about the guidelines. Their actions in this regard have significantly contributed to raising the awareness of the SCforH guidelines among the representatives of sports associations across Europe (7).

The representatives of the European and international umbrella organisations suggested that the guidelines could be improved by including more practical “how-to” examples, shortening the descriptions, using lay language, describing real-world experiences with their implementation, and including examples of good practice from sports clubs. In the latest international SCforH project titled “Creating Mechanisms for Continuous Implementation of the Sports Club for Health Guidelines in the European Union”, we addressed these suggestions by publishing a textbook (8) with SCforH guidelines presented in lay language and by creating a database of examples of good SCforH practice (9).

In the responses about their involvement in the SCforH movement, the respondents most frequently used the following words: guidelines ( $n = 40$ ); sports ( $n = 28$ ); practical ( $n = 23$ ); member ( $n = 17$ ); examples ( $n = 14$ ); clubs ( $n = 13$ ); health ( $n = 13$ ); organisation ( $n = 13$ ); presentations ( $n = 12$ ); activities ( $n = 11$ ); and involved ( $n = 11$ ). The findings of the word frequency analysis are shown in Figure 2.

When interpreting these findings, it is important to take into account that the interviews were conducted in late 2015. In the meantime, these organisations have taken a number of additional actions to promote health-enhancing physical activity that have not been captured in our analysis. It may be that responses to some of the questions related to their involvement in the SCforH movement would have also been different, if the interviews were conducted more recently.

**FIGURE 2. THE 50 MOST COMMONLY MENTIONED TERMS IN RELATION TO THE INVOLVEMENT OF FOUR EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL UMBRELLA SPORTS ORGANISATIONS\* IN THE SPORTS CLUB FOR HEALTH MOVEMENT**



\* International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA), European Federation for Company Sport (EFCS), European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation (ENGSO), and The Association For International Sport for All (TAFISA)

## 5. Conclusion

The four European and international umbrella sports organisations whose representatives were interviewed for the purpose of this study (i.e. EFCS, ENGSO, ISCA, and TAFISA) are highly committed to the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity, generally with an emphasis on “sport for all”. They have taken a number of actions to build capacity for the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity in Europe. As part of their work, they have also significantly contributed to the development of SCforH guidelines and dissemination of the guidelines among sports clubs and associations. The activities of EFCS, ENGSO, ISCA, and TAFISA described in this book chapter may inspire and help sports associations at all levels to focus more on the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity and adoption of the SCforH approach.

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