



Simona Pajaujiene¹, John van Heel², Farid Kempnaers³, Eric Vandenabeele³, Eva Rýzková⁴, Gabriela Luptakova⁴, Branislav Antala⁴, Jana Labudová⁴, Adriana Kaplánová⁴, Susana Franco⁵, Vera Simões⁵, Carla Chicau-Borrego⁵, Manel Valcarce-Torrente⁶, Sergio García Ortega⁶, Bojana Harrison⁷, Darinka Korovljević⁷, Sergej M. Ostojić⁷, Aurimas Maciukas⁸, Louis Moustakas⁹, Iris Španjol⁹

¹Lithuanian Sports University, Kaunas, Lithuania

²New Health Foundation, Weert, Netherlands

³Belgium fitness organization, Brussels, Belgium

⁴Faculty of Physical Education and Sports – Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia

⁵Sport Science School of Rio Maior – Santarém Polytechnic Institute, Rio Maior, Portugal

⁶European Association Sport, Exercise and Health, Madrid, Spain

⁷Center for Health, Exercise and Sport Sciences, Belgrade, Serbia

⁸Lithuanian Association of Health and Fitness Clubs, Kaunas, Lithuania

⁹European Network of Sport Education, Vienna, Austria

PROMOTION OF HEALTHY LIFESTYLE NETWORK IN EUROPE: PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

Introduction

“Good health and well-being” are one of United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (UNICEF Data, 2024). It is proven that an unhealthy lifestyle can result in several non-communicable diseases. Recognizing that poor dietary and exercise habits are primary contributors to diabetes, overweight, and obesity, WHO emphasizes the need to empower nearly 50% of the EU population, many of whom lack essential health literacy, with the knowledge and skills to make informed lifestyle choices. A combined intervention with healthy behaviors, such as physical activity, healthy eating, and a positive mindset is essential. Healthy literacy and lifestyle behavior awareness and changing should be promoted. Therefore, competent and qualified professionals – healthy lifestyle promoters and coaches must be educated with essential resources to tackle key health challenges, including obesity and related chronic diseases.

Purpose of the presentation – to inform about the newest initiatives and HLNE project to improve the lifestyle, health and quality of life of European citizens, particularly those facing existing health challenges.

Research results and their discussion

Healthy Lifestyle Network Europe (HLNE) is a three-year European project (2023-2026), with 8 full partners, financed by ERASMUS Sport (no. 101133533) with 400.000€, following the previous European project New Health 2022 (NH2022; 2020-2022). Both aim to improve the healthy lifestyle of the European population, using physical activity, eating, and mindset.

HLNE’s mission is focused on establishing a robust network of trained Healthy Lifestyle Promoters (HLPs) and Coaches, equipping individuals and families with clear, accessible information and tailored support. The project aims to train 1,000 HLPs, each armed with comprehensive digital tools and resources to engage 50 individuals facing health issues within their communities. This initiative has the potential to reach over 50,000 people, fostering health awareness and sustainable lifestyle changes across Europe. Additionally, the introduction of a “Healthy Lifestyle Coach” course creates new opportunities for volunteers and professionals, thereby strengthening the network of health



advocates committed to addressing lifestyle-related health risks and promoting a healthier Europe.

To improve European citizens healthy lifestyles, during the NH2022 project, several digital resources were developed: a “New Health” website platform (www.new-health.eu) and a free App, where professionals, consumers, partners, and companies can register and do a Lifestyle Scan; a series of open 29 healthy lifestyle videos, empower individuals and professionals to evaluate and enhance their health habits; and an Open e-Book, about lifestyle coaching and behavior change. It was also developed EuropeActive’s Educational standards (EQF level 2) for Healthy Lifestyle Promoters (HLP) (Szumilewicz et al, 2021), which were as basis for creation of a free HLP e-learning training course (divided into 3 parts: Exercise as Medicine; Food as Medicine; Brain as Medicine).

HLNE will use the tools created in the project NH2022 and will: (1) train HLPs through a structured blended learning course, that will promote a healthy lifestyle to the population; (2) develop the Healthy Lifestyle Coach (HLC) qualification standards and (3) create a training course for HLCs who will coach consumers with health inequalities; (4) the consortium will develop a European Healthy Lifestyle Education Institute.

Conclusions

In summary, it is expected with HLNE project to significantly enhance public health across Europe by improving health literacy, encouraging active lifestyles, and mitigating health disparities. Through its comprehensive training programs, digital tools, and community outreach initiatives, HLNE equips individuals and professionals with essential resources to tackle key health challenges, including obesity and related chronic diseases. By establishing the European Healthy Lifestyle Education Institute, HLNE ensures the sustainability of these initiatives, fostering a culture of wellness and preventive health for future generations. This project not only benefits individual participants but also promotes broader economic and social well-being, contributing to the development of a healthier, more informed society.

Literature

- Szumilewicz, A., van Heel, J., Berriman, J., Franco, S., Pajaujiene, S., Fuster, J., Van Reckem, G. (2021). *EuropeActive Occupational Standards: Healthy Lifestyle Promoter. Lifelong learning qualification (EQF Level 2)*. Bruxelles : Professional Standards Committee of Europe Active https://www.europeactive-standards.eu/sites/europeactive-standards.eu/files/EuropeActive_Summary_Healthy-Lifestyle-Promoter-2021_0.pdf
- UNICEF Data (2024). *Goal 3: Good health and well-being for all*. Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) National Reviews <https://data.unicef.org/sdgs/goal-3-good-health-wellbeing/>