National strategy(ies)

The drafting and implementation of health and well-being policies usually lead to national plans being drawn up that set out the Government's priorities in terms of health.

The draft National Health Sport Plan 2019-2024 is most often part of the overall orientations of the National Health Strategy. Its goal is to promote physical activity and sport as "a determinant, in its own right, of health and well-being for all, all throughout life".

This strategy is articulated with other plans. The aim is to promote sport to all audiences, with a special focus on reducing social inequalities in access to physical activity and sport and the development of physical activity.

The National Sport-Health Strategy[1] 2019-2024 is more generally articulated around different axes:

- Promoting health and well-being through physical activity and sports
- The development and use of physical activity adapted to therapeutic aims
- Protecting the health of athletes and strengthening the safety of practices and practitioner

These multi-year strategies are then implemented at the regional level in partnership with the
Promoting and supporting sport and physical activity among young people

No programme has been set up to date that specifically encourages physical activity among young people. That said, there are schemes for developing sports practice among women and residents living in deprived urban neighbourhoods, set up by the Ministry of Sport in 2012.

Encouraging women to take up sport

In France, men have twice as much access to a sports pastime as women in some local areas. According to the 2015 report of the National Observatory for Urban Policy (Observatoire national de la politique de la ville), in deprived urban neighbourhoods where there are urban policy (politique de la ville) measures in place, the proportion of members of sports clubs is lower than in other urban neighbourhoods – especially where women are concerned: this proportion exceeds 4% for male members, but is less than 3% for female members.

To address this situation, in 2012 the Ministry of Sport organised a policy to develop sports practice among women – especially in deprived areas. This policy still relevant has resulted in support being lent to associations that promote sport and in the development of community facilities.

Encouraging sport practice in deprived urban neighbourhoods

In 2015, the Ministry of Sport launched the "Citizen of sport" (Citoyen du sport) scheme geared towards promoting the benefits of sport in terms of citizenship, preventing all forms of violence, antisocial behaviour and discrimination in sport and increasing access to regular sports practice, not least among young people who are the furthest removed from any access to sport as well as those living in deprived urban neighbourhoods.

Moreover, the Ministry in charge of sports implemented the program “I’m learning to Swim” (J’apprends à nager), which provides free swimming lessons in deprived urban neighbourhoods and rural areas for children before they join secondary school. 70,000 children have been able to benefit so far. This program is part of the interministerial plan "Aquatic ease". It allows children to discover and evolve the aquatic environment safely.

This program has several objectives:

• understand the aquatic environment from 4 years;
• know how to swim when entering the 6th grade;
• practice aquatic and nautical activities in complete safety;
• prevent drowning.

**Physical education in schools**

Considered to be a factor that contributes to both social inclusion and to better health, sport is a **compulsory subject in school**, where it is known as EPS - physical education (éducation physique et sportive) in France. It is tailored to the different levels of schooling. Physical education is specified and defined in the official education programme of the consolidation cycle (last two years of primary school and first year of secondary school, programme officiel d'enseignement du cycle de consolidation) set out in [the Ruling of 9-11-2015 - French Official Journal (Journal Officiel) dated 24-11-2015](https://www.jo.gouv.fr/), as well as the [Guidance and Planning Law no. 2013-595 of 8 July 2013 for restructuring French schools](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jo/). Teachers have a wide range of digital teaching aids for drawing up their lesson plans, including the [Ministry of National Education's Eduscol website](https://www.eduscol.education.fr) dedicated to EPS, which compiles information about competitions, programmes and news concerning physical education.

**Primary education**

**In infant and primary schools, 108 hours a year are devoted to physical education**, which equates to an average of three hours a week. EPS is intended to meet five learning outcomes (champs d’apprentissage):

1. Developing motor skills and learning to express yourself using your body;
2. Learning how to use methods and tools via exercise and sport;
3. Sharing rules and taking on roles and responsibilities;
4. Learning to keep fit through regular exercise;
5. Adopting an artistic and sporting physical culture.

Over and above developing motor skills and improving health, EPS must also play a part in ensuring the social inclusion of children by:

- Contributing to health education and enabling pupils to become more familiar with their own bodies;
- Contributing to "safety education" through controlled risk-taking;
- Teaching accountability and independence and passing on such ethical and social values as respecting rules, yourself and others.
Secondary schools

All secondary school pupils attend **compulsory weekly physical education classes** for four hours in total in Year 7 (first year) and three hours in all the other years. These classes are **assessed as part of the DNB - national general certificate of secondary education (Diplôme national du brevet)** via coursework.

Pupils can practise a range of activities out of a choice of 26 physical, sporting and artistic activities defined at national level. Under the Common Base of Knowledge and Skills (see Eurydice: Introduction [8]) for example, all pupils must take swimming, or more specifically "learn how to swim".

At secondary-school level, physical education also serves a number of educational purposes:

- Following rules;
- Embarking on a project-based approach;
- Taking on responsibilities;
- Knowing and looking after yourself.

Sixth-form colleges (lycées)

All sixth-formers follow 2 hours of compulsory physical education (EPS) lessons a week. The EPS syllabus for general and technological lycées includes aspects relating to the **Guidance and Planning Law for the Future of Schools no. 2005-380 of 23 April 2005** [9]. It is intended to follow on from the syllabus taught at secondary school. EPS is assessed as part of A Levels (the Baccalauréat) via CCF - coursework (contrôle en cours de formation) during the final year. In addition, if students would like to devote more time to sports training, they have the possibility of choosing:

- Optional EPS lessons for 3 hours a week during all three years spent at lycée in France (equivalent to the last year of secondary school/Year 11 and the two years of sixth-form college), focusing on two activities;
- Exploratory lessons for 5 hours a week in Year 11, possibly then followed by additional teaching for 4 hours a week during the final cycle.

Collaboration and partnerships

Physical education (EPS) is underpinned by a partnership between the Ministry of National Education, various sports associations and the local authorities who lend their support in a variety of ways, such as through grants for school associations and assistance with the running of sports facilities. This intersectorial collaboration takes shape particularly through "extracurricular sport" (sport scolaire).

Extracurricular sport

Over and above physical education, which is taught during national school hours and lessons, pupils are able to take **additional sports activities** on an "**extracurricular sports**" basis. This is organised by school-based sports associations that have been given a public service mission for
educational and social purposes. Their role is clarified in the agreements they sign with the Ministry of National Education. These school partner associations are as follows:

- At primary level, the USEP – Sports Education Union for Primary Education (Union sportive de l'enseignement du premier degré);
- At secondary level, the UNSS - National Union for Extracurricular Sport (Union nationale du sport scolaire) [10].

An extracurricular sports association must be set up in each secondary school and lycée. An integral component of the institution’s strategic plan, it must contribute towards a thriving academic scene within the school.

It gives pupils the chance to play one or more sports, for 3 hours each week, all year round. This is in addition to physical education lessons. What is more, pupils are encouraged to get involved in the life of the sports association and in organising events and competitions. School-based sports associations are federated within the UNSS. This association had over a million members and 9,561 associations. More than 33,000 physical education teachers are involved in running it.

Extracurricular sport at school level also provides opportunity to forge international partnerships and organise myriad cultural exchanges, particularly through exchanges with sports teams from institutions in other countries.

Sports academy (section sportive scolaire)

Sixth-formers attending lycée who are keen on taking their sports practice to another level, all the while following a regular academic curriculum, can choose to enrol in a sports academy. Students are selected on the basis of a sporting and academic application.