

Active senior citizens in Europe

- A WHO perspective -



SANTE Seminar – Active Seniors – 29 august / 1 september

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Outline

- Global aging – a WHO priority
- Seniors
- Concept of active aging
- Inactivity status among elderly
- Importance of PA for seniors
- The challenges faced by elderly
- How much do seniors need / new WHO Global Physical Activity Recommendations
- What works?
- Policy response

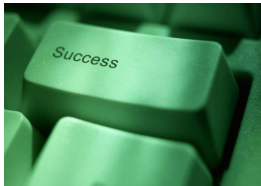


Global aging- a WHO priority

But also many challenges...

Population aging is first and foremost a success story for public health as well as social and economic development

Gro Harlem Brundtland, DG WHO, 1999



The quality of life of seniors and their contributions to society and economies can only be ensured if older persons enjoy good health and if society addresses their needs.

How to improve quality of life in old age?

Seniors

- Definition of seniors?
- In 2000 > **600 million**



projection



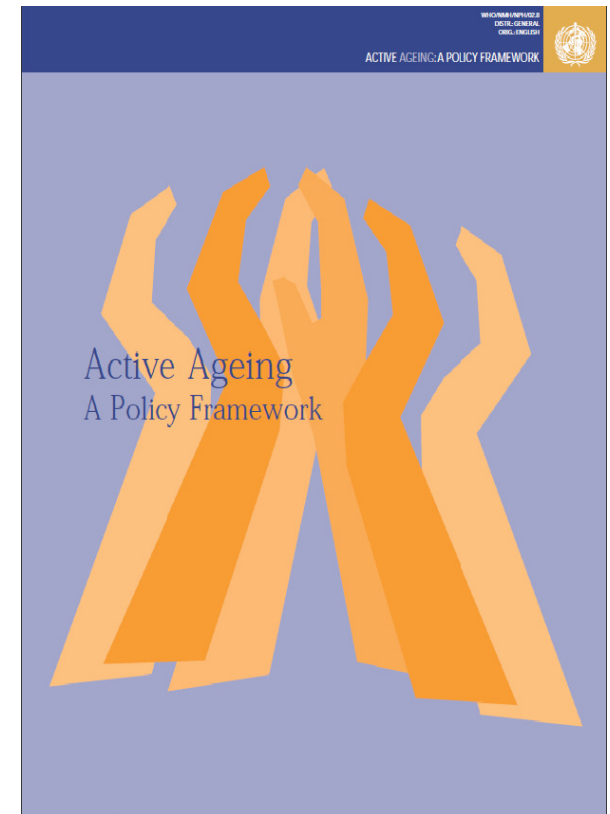
by 2025 > **1.2 billion**

by 2050 > **2 billion**

- From 11% in 2006 to 22% in 2050

Overall concept of active aging

- Active ageing is the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age.
- Active ageing applies to both individuals and population groups.
- It allows people to realize their potential for physical, social, and mental well being throughout the life course and to participate in society according to their needs, desires and capacities, while providing them with adequate protection, security and care when they require assistance.
- The word “active” refers to continuing participation in social, economic, cultural, and civic affairs, not just the ability to be physically active or to participate in the labourforce.
- What is the role of PA in active aging??



Inactivity status among seniors

- GBD 2004: Attributable deaths by age, sex, risk factor and disease or injury for the year 2004
- Physical inactivity 4th leading risk factor in global mortality
- Total death attributable to physical inactivity almost 1 mil

	60-69	70-79	80+	total
male	111633	145844	86767	344244
female	87291	183944	224692	495927
total	198924	329788	311459	840171



Inactivity status among seniors

- Eurobarometer 2006 (25 EU)
- In the last 7 days, on how many days did you do vigorous physical activities like lifting heavy things, digging, aerobics or fast cycling? 55+ = 68% none

Moderate: 49% none

- Walking at least 10 minutes: 16% none, average 4.5 times a week



Inactivity status among seniors

- Eurobarometer 2009 (27 EU)
- Sport once a week: 55-70 33% and 70+ 22%
- How often do you exercise or play sport:

55-70: never 51%/ regularly 10%
70+: never 66% / regularly 8%

- Engage in PA outside sport such as walking cycling, transport, homejobs?

55-70: never 18%/ regularly 27%
70+: never 27% / regularly 27%



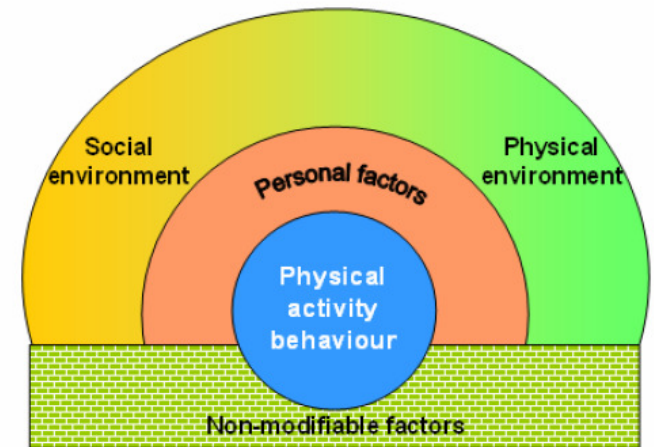
Importance of PA for seniors

Motives to be active:

- Many positive health effects
 - *Gaining health has positive effects for community, society and economy*
 - *Contributes to healthy life expectancy*
- Foster and improves social contacts
- Preserving independence and autonomy
- General contribution to quality of life (by boosting well being, having fun and relax)

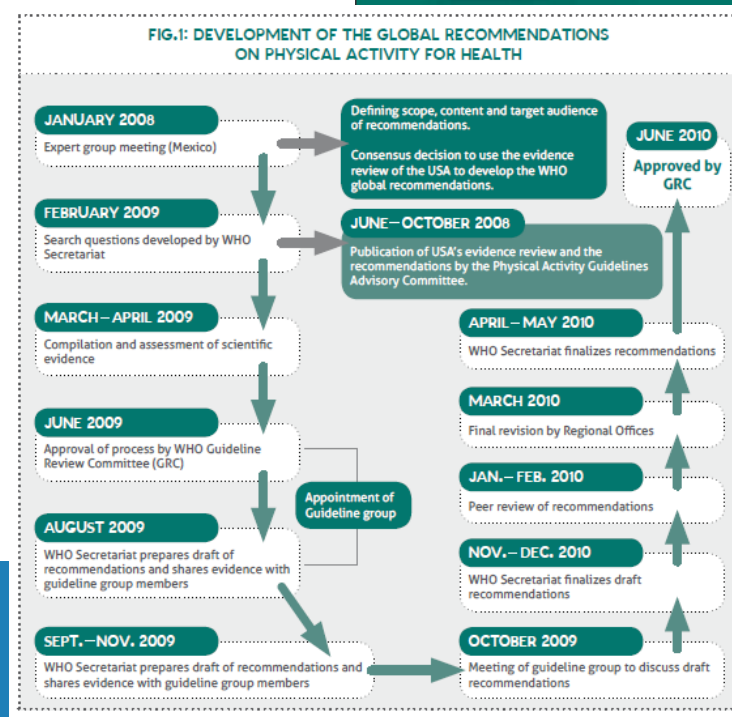
Despite all benefits - many challenges

- Non modifiable factors: gender, age, cultural background
- Personal determinants, lack of motivation/self-confidence, perceived obstacles, lack of skills and abilities
- Social environment; lack of social support (isolation) and structured offers
- Physical environment; lack of availability of facilities, access to facilities (too far, too expensive), cycle and walking unfriendly neighbourhood, safety issues
- Modifiable factors: meaning that with appropriate measures they can be changed!!



How much do seniors need to be healthy?

- WHO recommendations launched in June 2010.
- Main aim: providing national and local policy makers with guidance on dose response relation between frequency, duration, type and total amount of PA needed for prevention of NCD's
- Development: reviewing evidence and expert consultations



Global Physical Activity Recommendations for health

- Target audience: national policy makers
- Population based physical activity for 3 age groups:

5-17 yrs;	-	CHILDREN
18-64 yrs;	-	ADULTS
65 yrs and older	-	OLDER ADULTS

Global Physical Activity Recommendations

Intensity of activity

moderate



vigorous

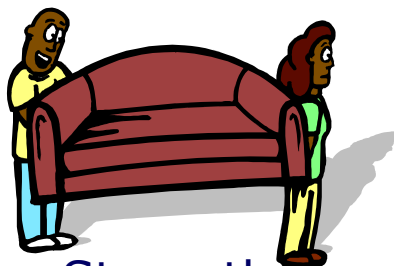


How often?
How long?
How much in
total?

Type of activity



Aerobic



Strength



Balance



Flexibility

Domains of activity

recreation



and sports



transportation



household



work/school



Older adults - 65 years old & above :

- Do **at least 150 minutes** of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity spread throughout the week **or** do at least 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity spread throughout the week **or** an equivalent combination of moderate-and vigorous-intensity activity.
- Aerobic activity should be performed in bouts of at least 10 minutes.
- *For additional health benefits*, older adults should increase their moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity to 300 minutes per week, **or** engage in 150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week, **or** an equivalent combination of moderate-and vigorous-intensity activity.



Older adults - 65 years old & above :

Specific recommendations for older adults:

- Older adults, with poor mobility, should perform PA to enhance balance and prevent falls on 3 or more days/ week.
- Muscle-strengthening activities should be done involving major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week.
- When older adults cannot do the recommended amounts of PA due to health conditions, they should be as physically active as their abilities and conditions allow.



Type of activity

- What are the needs? They should be easy to integrate in daily life, easy accessible and not too demanding, cultural appropriate
- In older adults, PA includes recreational (leisure) time physical activity, transportation occupational (work), house jobs, play, games, sports or planned exercise, in the context of daily, family, and community activities.
- Daily walking, cycling, using stairs, doing garden and home jobs, swimming. Organized sport and exercise of appropriate pace and duration



What Works?

- Systematic review (WHO 2009)
- PA interventions in a group setting using an existing social structure or meeting place



Possible approaches:

- Encourage sport clubs and other organizations to make age tailored programmes
- Ensure safe and attractive routes to key destinations



Interventions on diet and Physical Activity: What works, WHO, 2009

Policy Response

- Policy suggestions for promotion of PA under elderly:
 - Develop population based information and guidelines on PA for seniors
 - Provide accessible, tailored, pleasant and affordable opportunities to be active
 - Support peer leaders and groups that promote regular moderate PA for people as they age
 - Inform and educate people and professionals about the benefits of active aging
 - Engage the different relevant public and private groups

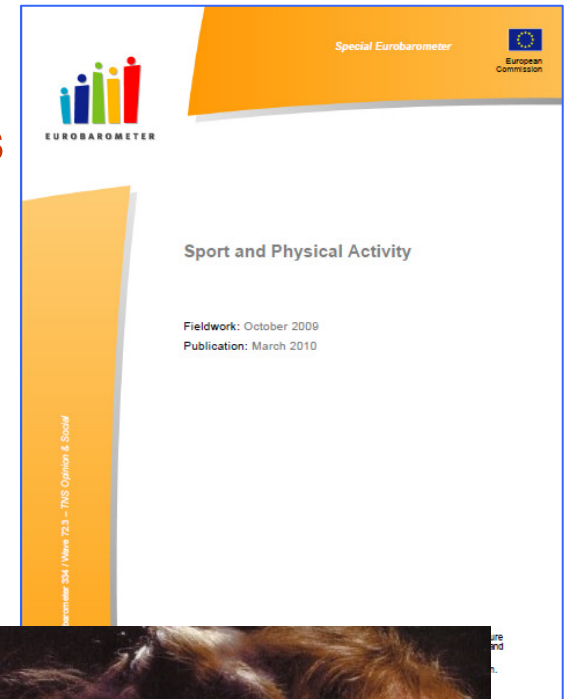
Last key messages

Opinion or behaviour surveys create windows of opportunity

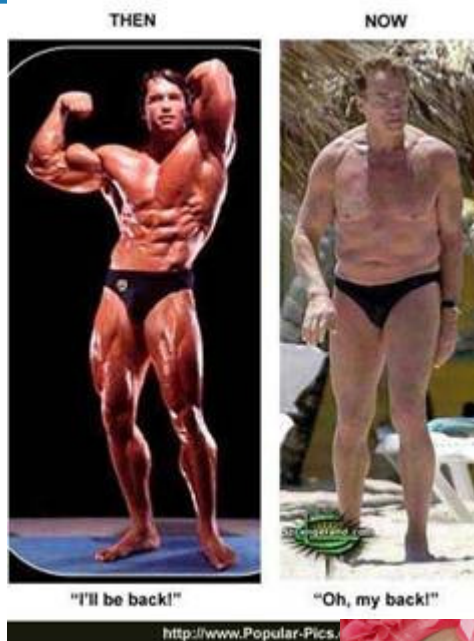
- *There are opportunities to be physically active, but I do not have time to take advantage of them – 50% disagrees*
- *The area where I live offers me many possibilities to be PA – 70% agrees*

Fit and active at old age a MYTH?? NO!!

Aging is a process – therefore advocate in public health messages for Physical Activity throughout the life course



THANKS



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