

ACTIVE4SME

Second Deliverable

Co-creation of steps and processes for tailoring physical activity implementation to the contextual needs of Small-and-medium-sized enterprises

ERASMUS-SPORT-2024-SSCP
Active4SME- SEP-211039012

April 2025

Anna Puig-Ribera¹ (PhD), Carles Gelonch² (MBA), Anna Codina-Nadal (MsC)¹,
Isaac Taberner (PhD)¹, Ilkka Väänänen³ (PhD)

¹Sport and Physical Activity Research Group, Institute for Research and Innovation in Life and Health Sciences in Central Catalonia, University of Vic-Central University of Catalonia, Catalonia, Spain.

²Consell Esportiu de les Garrigues, Catalonia, Spain.

³ILE Coaching, Consulting & Counseling, Finland

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tackling sedentary and physically inactive lifestyles in all age groups is a universal challenge to promote health, well-being, and productivity. The physical activity (PA) Strategy of the WHO European Region 2016-2025 emphasizes the essential role of workplaces in promoting PA to the adult population, for its potential to reach out all employees. However, insufficient scaling-up of effective, feasible and sustainable PA programs in most European workplaces is a challenge. In Europe, 99% of businesses are small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which experience greater difficulties and low scalability for implementing PA interventions. Scalability means embedding PA programs into the specific context of SMEs'. Given the limited evidence-to-practice on how to effectively scale-up and sustain PA interventions in SMEs, the Active4SME project aims to co-create and seek feasible solutions on key steps and processes for improving training, dissemination, and implementation of PA in SMEs.

Active4SME is carried out in two European geographical contexts: Finland (Active4SME-Finland) and Catalonia/Spain (Active4SME-Catalonia). A national analysis of European Barometry of Sports-472 revealed the highest level where most respondents said they engage in physical activities with some regularity in 17 EU Member States was Finland (54%). On the contrary, "never" was the most common answer in Spain by almost half of respondents (45%). Both countries are excellent cases representing two different contexts in Northern and Southern Europe for developing a proof-of-concept to implement PA in SMEs, as a pilot for an international broader use across Europe.

2. SECOND DELIVERY: CO-CREATION OF STEPS AND PROCESSES FOR TAILORING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION TO THE CONTEXTUAL NEEDS FOR SMALL-AND-MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES.

The second deliverable of ACTIVE4SME presents the results obtained from the co-creation sessions with key stakeholders for implementing PA in SMEs, which were held during April 2025 in Catalonia and Finland. In Catalonia, two different local contexts were represented by two counties -Les Garrigues and Osona- which have been described in the first delivery of ACTIVE4SME. It is important to note that Les Garrigues and Osona differ in their population density, the distribution of urban centres and in the stakeholders that play a role in PA promotion. Despite the organisational structure at the municipal and supra-municipal levels is similar in both geographical contexts, the involvement of the different stakeholders and the way they interconnect with each other varies between counties. [Therefore, the ecosystem that enabled the integration of PA in SMEs of Catalonia were analysed and presented separately for Les Garrigues and Osona as both local contexts are different.](#)

In Catalonia, key stakeholders were identified collaboratively by SMEs who participated in the initial co-creation sessions (see first delivery). These sessions used co-design methodologies, and a participatory approach based on citizen science (CC). Supported by cooperative planning, these methodologies allowed to explore existing PA

initiatives in the ecosystem for “PA in SMEs”, their scalability to SMEs and, indicators and measurement tools to integrate PA into the SMEs’ ecosystem. Like the first deliverable, the methodology was implemented by [Science For Change](#), a company specialized in generating innovative solutions through multidisciplinary collaboration.

The co-creation sessions with key stakeholders aimed to identify what alliances and resources these territories needed to strengthen a system for allowing the integration of PA into the work environment of local SMEs. The co-creation sessions were organised into three blocks. The first block included the identification of **existing PA initiatives in the local ecosystem and their current scope**, which were grouped around four key areas aligned with the WHO Europe’s toolkit for promoting PA in SMEs: (i) the promotion of an active lifestyle, (ii) the provision of spaces for PA, (iii) specific activities aimed at workers and, (iv) communication and awareness-raising actions on the benefits of an active life. The second block, included **strategic alliances and resources necessary to respond to the expectations expressed by local SMEs** in previous co-creation sessions, highlighting both the key stakeholders of the territory and the forms of collaboration that could facilitate the implementation and sustainability of the PA initiatives in local SMEs. The third block included the identification of **impact indicators and measurement instruments** that would allow to evaluate the impact of the proposed PA actions in SMEs, with the aim of establishing a rigorous monitoring system for guiding the future implementation of PA interventions into local SMEs.

In Finland, there were three workshop sessions (14th of January, 6th of February and 20th of March) in Päijät-Häme region. The first one was facilitated by an action-oriented think tank company (BrainStormCorner Ltd) who are experts in generating innovative solutions through multidisciplinary brainstorm sessions, and idea and project generation. The second was organized with the Lahti Sports Hub (LADEC Ltd) who creates opportunities, develop innovative solutions, and connects sports businesses by identifying and supporting potential ventures. The last workshop session was organized by the regional Päijät-Häme Physical Activity at Workplaces Network.

3. ACTIVE4SME-CATALONIA

a. Context

The WHO Europe’s toolkit for promoting PA in SMEs contains practical strategies that SMEs can integrate into their daily routines to cultivate a health-enhancing working environment. These strategies involve organizing walking meetings, fostering a friendly “take-the-stairs” culture, or promoting cycle-to-work schemes. The guide includes a list of the top 10 interventions that are considered as practical and feasible for SMEs. Some of these initiatives include:

- Implementing a cycle-to-work campaign with team challenges
- Encouraging active meetings with stretching and walk-and-talk formats
- Distributing information packs on walking routes
- Encouraging walking to work
- Introducing physiotherapy services in the workplace

- Including short warm-up sessions in the daily schedule
- Offering support for individual behavioral change
- Promoting the use of stairs in the workplace

Prior to the co-creation sessions with key stakeholders and based on the WHO Europe's toolkit for promoting PA in SMEs, the co-creation sessions held with SMEs from Les Garrigues and Osona (see first deliverable), identified the following PA initiatives as being feasible to be integrated into the work environment of SMEs.

- **Active lifestyle and sustainable mobility:**
 - Facilitate access by bicycle to work (bike lanes, parking lots).
 - Improve pedestrian routes to the workplace.
 - Encourage the use of public transport (improvement of public transport).
 - Offer physiotherapy sessions during working hours.
 - Introduce active breaks with professional support.
- **Spaces for physical activity and well-being:**
 - Use existing spaces for training in healthy habits.
 - Enable exercise areas in the company (pilates, yoga, etc.).
- **Physical Activities for workers**
 - Vouchers or discounts for sports activities in free time.
 - Agreements with sports centres and professional advice.
 - Mindfulness sessions during the working day.
 - Group outings to improve physical and mental health.
 - Activities to strengthen team cohesion (excursions, challenges).
 - Visits to other stakeholders in the "PA for SMEs" ecosystem and practice of new activities.
 - Cross-company challenges (e.g. "healthiest company").
- **Awareness and training**
 - Online/face-to-face trainings on healthy habits
 - Specific courses (postural hygiene, guidelines according to work activity).
 - Motivational talks for workers and managers.
 - Information posters adapted to the economic sector.
 - Visual evaluation studies on the impact of PA into their enterprises (e.g. Power BI).
 - Individual advice for personalised PA in their enterprises such as personal trainer.

This list of proposed PA actions for being implemented in SMEs was presented and discussed to the selected stakeholders within the "PA for SMEs" ecosystem. The list was used as a starting point for (i) exploring current services and activities related to PA and its integration into the work environment of SMEs within the current ecosystem and (ii) for

exploring the allocation of resources and the creation of strategic alliances between stakeholders that would be needed to implement the proposed PA actions in local SMEs.

b. Objectives of the co-creation sessions with stakeholders.

To identify the steps and processes for scaling-up the implementation of a sustainable PA into SMEs, the aims of the co-creation sessions with stakeholders were threefold:

1. **To assess the feasibility of SMEs' expectations** on how key stakeholders in the territory should support them integrating PA in the work environment of SMEs, identifying which expectations are realistic and scalable, and how to change and adapt those expectations that are not.
2. **To identify existing resources and alliances needed** within the “PA for SMEs” ecosystem to meet SME’s expectations, leveraging services already in place and avoiding duplication, as well as identifying new key collaborations to implement effective solutions.
3. **To establish a measurement and evaluation system** to assess the impact of implementing PA initiatives in SMEs, favouring their effectiveness and long-term sustainability.

c. Methodology of the co-creation sessions with stakeholders

Based on the core elements of the RE-AIM framework for scaling up PA interventions (Reach, Efficacy/Effectiveness, Adoption, Implementation, Maintenance) and Citizen’s Science, twenty-one local key stakeholders from the “PA for SMEs” ecosystem from the two counties in Catalonia (Osona, n=13; les Garrigues, n=8) were reached out to participate in two presential co-design sessions (2 hours each, April 2025). Sessions were conducted by two independent researchers’ who were experts in co-design methodologies. Researchers belonged to an external company (Science For Change, SFC), to the project consortium for avoiding bias. SFC was responsible for the design, implementation of the sessions and data analysis.

The co-design methodology implemented was participatory, inclusive, flexible, and it was designed to be able to adapt to the particularities of the different stakeholders in each context. The methodology used *Design Thinking* techniques implemented throughout the interactive Tools developed by SFC, facilitating collaborative work and the generation of practical solutions. The description of how the co-creation sessions were implemented has been described in the first delivery. For this second delivery, participants were stakeholders that SMEs had pointed out as fundamental for integrating PA into the work environment of local SMEs. Stakeholders were invited to participate, with the aim of deepening their roles and exploring possible collaborations among them to support the scaability and sustainability of physical activity in local SMEs.

The following stakeholders were considered fundamental for SMEs to develop an effective and supportive “PA for SMEs” ecosystem in their local contexts. In **Les Garrigues**, the “PA for SMEs” ecosystem was made up of the following stakeholders: (i) public administrations, (ii) sports entities, (iii) health centres and, (iv) municipal business associations. Among the **public administration**, several stakeholders were identified such as **city councils** at the municipal level (e.g. Juneda City Council), **regional councils of les Garrigues** at a supra-municipal level (e.g. Consell Comarcal de les Garrigues) and the **Regional Council of Lleida** at the regional level (e.g. Diputació de Lleida), which provided technical, economic and political support to the municipalities of their region. **The sport sector** was particularly diverse, with representation from regional stakeholders such as the **Sports Council of Les Garrigues** (e.g. Consell Esportiu de les Garrigues), and **municipal private and public-sponsored sport centres, gyms and sport clubs** (e.g. Gimnàs Juneda and La Serreta Tennis Club) and **local physical activity centres** focused on health and well-being (e.g. Estudi Lumbini Ioga). The **health sector** included only one stakeholder, being the **general practice that offers primary care health services to the municipality** (e.g. Borges Blanques Primary Care Center (CAP)). In the **business sector**, **municipal business associations** were included such as the Consell Empresarial de les Garrigues.

In **Osona**, the group of key stakeholders identified as part of the “PA for SMEs” ecosystem was represented by a diversity of institutional and professional profiles at a municipal, supra-municipal and regional level. At the **municipal public administrative level**, **city councils** were identified (e.g. city councils of the towns of Vic and Gurb). **At the supra-municipality administrative level**, the **Osona County Council** (e.g. Consell Comarcal Osona), provided a local perspective of the implementation of public policies in relation to the specific needs of the territory. At the **sport sector**, representatives of the **public and private sports sector** included **municipal and regional sports technicians** such as the **Osona Sports Council** (Consell Esportiu d’Osona), and **local exercise and physical activity centres** such as Jordi Crosas Training & Health Center or Espai Salut Vic, which combine health, physical exercise and well-being. In **the academic sector**, the **University of Vic-Central University of Catalonia** was identified for its contribution and practice in linking training and research with the territory. In the **health sector**, The **Catalan Institute of Health (ICS Central Catalonia)** provided the perspective of the public health system into the specific geographical area of Central Catalonia, while the **mutual insurance workplace companies like Asepeyo** (through consultants in occupational risk prevention and medical managers) introduced the perspective of occupational health. In the **business sector**, the participation of regional SMEs associations like **PIMEC** stood out as a representative of the business network in Catalonia of SMEs, as well as **municipal business associations** like Consell Empresarial d’Osona (CEDO).

In Osona, representatives of stakeholders (n=13) were divided in two groups, ensuring that each group had a representation from the different types of stakeholders before mentioned. This enabled to maximize the exchange of ideas between diverse profiles of stakeholders and, potentially, facilitate the creation of links and alliances to scale PA into the local system for SMEs. In Garrigues, representatives of key stakeholders (n=8) were organized in one-only group.

d. Co-creation protocol and guidelines.

A structured co-creation protocol -aligned with the goals of the ACTIVE4SME project- was implemented in the co-creation sessions. The Co-creation protocol with stakeholders included the following categories of information:

1. **Start of the session:** Welcome to participants and organization of multi-stakeholder working groups. Each group was composed of representatives from different profiles of key stakeholders, previously assigned to ensure diversity among groups.
2. **Project presentation:** The ACTIVE4SME project, its objective and implementation approach in Catalonia were introduced. The dynamic of the sessions, the needs and PA actions detected in previous sessions with SMEs and the basic rules of co-design were presented. The use of SFC Tools participatory tools was also explained.
3. **Existing PA initiatives in the current ecosystem:** Key stakeholders shared the PA initiatives that were already being used and had the potential to respond to the needs raised by SMEs. These contributions were organized on a collaborative map and categorized around four areas: active lifestyle, spaces for physical activity, activities for workers, and communication and awareness based on the WHO Europe's toolkit for promoting PA in SMEs
4. **Scope of the initiatives:** Each participating stakeholder indicated the territorial and population scope of its PA initiatives and assessed their scalability and ability to be tailored and adapted to other contexts. It was also collected whether the same organization could replicate its actions in other contexts.
5. **Improvements or new proposals:** The resources and alliances necessary to scale current initiatives or develop new actions that respond to the needs detected were identified. Innovative activities, individually or jointly, were also proposed among the present stakeholders.
6. **Impact indicators and measurement instruments:** Impact indicators that would allow measuring the impact of PA initiatives in the future were defined, such as the number of participating workers, reduction of sick leave, improvement of the work environment, among others. Tools and instruments were also proposed to evaluate the defined indicators, such as surveys, reports, participation records or internal monitoring.
7. **Conclusions and closing:** The main conclusions drawn from the session were shared, the participation of the attendees was thanked, and the next steps of the project were presented, including the invitation to answer a brief assessment survey.

e. Data collection and analysis

The key stakeholders identified by SMEs were recruited by the Catalan partners of the ACTIVE4SMEs consortium: *Consell Esportiu de les Garrigues (in les Garrigues)* and *University of Vic-Central University of Catalonia (in Osona)*. Both entities searched for key contacts for each stakeholder to be a representative of the stakeholders in the co-creation sessions. Once identified, phone calls and emails were sent to stakeholders from each profile to participate in the co-creation session. The dates and time for the co-creation sessions were agreed before inviting stakeholders. The aim was to recruit as many different profiles of stakeholders as possible from those that had been identified by SMEs.

In the co-creation sessions, stakeholders used easily erasable water-based markers and erasers to express their opinions writing on hexagons of different colours. Each colour corresponded to a specific category of data that matched the co-creation protocol for stakeholders. Photographs of the tables with the hexagons were integrated into an analysis document and a collaborative map was recreated. Special attention was paid to capturing the existing relationships between the different categories of information discussed in the co-creation protocol.

Data analysis systematized the information expressed collaboratively during the session by taking photographs of the table where the hexagons were placed, allowing for a visual documentation of the information (see Image 1). In this second deliverable, the location of hexagons was used to identify the **connections between existing PA initiatives**, the potential **partnerships** arising from them, and the **resources** needed to scale and broaden their reach and effectiveness, to shape an inclusive PA work ecosystem. Impact **indicators and measurement instruments** were identified to monitor and evaluate the implementation of this model for PA and its initiatives associated with the proposed alliances and resources.

Image 1: Hexagons with the written information of SMEs according to data categories



f. Participants: Representatives of stakeholders

The characteristics of the participating stakeholders for the “PA for SMEs” ecosystem in Les Garrigues and Osona are shown in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Description of the participant key Stakeholders from Les Garrigues, part of the “PA for SMEs” ecosystem.

#	Agent	Entity Type	Territorial scope
1	Juenda City Council	Local public administration	Local (Juneda Township)
2	Primary Care Center Borges Blanques	Health Center / Primary Care	Regional (Borges Blanques and surroundings)
3	Country Council of Les Garrigues	Supra municipal public administration	Regional (Les Garrigues)
4	Sports Council Les Garrigues	Sports promotion entity / Regional Association	Regional (Les Garrigues)
5	Provincial Council of Lleida	Provincial public administration	Provincial (province de Lleida)
6	Ioga Study Lumbini	Local business / Health & Wellness Services	Local (Juneda or nearby municipality)
7	Juneda Gym	Local company / Sports Center	Local (Juneda)
8	La Serreta Tennis Club	Sports entity / Sports and social club	Local / Regional (Juneda and surroundings)

Table 2: Description of the participant key Stakeholders from Osona, part of the “PA for SMEs” ecosystem.

#	Agent	Entity Type	Territorial Scope
1	Gurb City Council	Local public administration	Local (Gurb municipality)
2	Osona Country Council	Supra-municipal public administration	Regional (Osona)
3	Osona Sports Council	Sports promotion entity / Regional Association	Regional (Osona)
3	Jordi Crosas, Training & Health Center	Local Business / Health & Training Center	Local (Vic and surroundings)
4	Espai Salut Vic	Local Company / Comprehensive Health Service	Local (Vic and surroundings)
5	UVIC (Professional careers)	Academic Institution / University	Regional (mainly Osona)
6	FUB (Bages University Fundation)	Academic Institution / University	Regional (Bages and Central Catalonia)
7	Sports technician at the Sports Activities Office	Public Administration / University Sports Technician	Local / University (UVIC - Vic)
8	Department of Sports - Vic City Council	Local Public Administration / Sports Area	Local (Vic)
9	ICS Catalunya Central (Catalan Institute of Health)	Public health system (Catalan Insitute of Health)	Regional (Central Catalonia)
10	Asepeyo (Consultant 1)	Muntual insurance company collaborating with Social Security / Risk prevention	Regional / National (Catalunya)
11	Asepeyo (Consultant 2)	Mutual insurance company collaborating with the Social Security / Prevention of occupational risks	Regional / National (Catalunya)
12	Asepeyo (Doctor)	Mutual insurance company / Territorial medical management	Regional / National (Catalunya)
13	PIMEC (SMEs Catalonia)	Business Association / Representation of SMEs and the Self-Employed	National (Catalonia, with a regional and provincial presence)

g. Results

Results are presented separately for Les Garrigues and Osona. Subsequently, a joint conclusion for steps and processes including both contexts will be developed as a summary of steps and processes to be implemented in Catalonia..

g.1 Les Garrigues

g.1.1 Existing PA initiatives in the current ecosystem of Les Garrigues

The following existing current PA initiatives were identified to be already implemented by key stakeholders that participated in the co-creation session in Les Garrigues. Table 3 shows a summary of the different types of PA initiatives implemented by each stakeholder.

Promoting an Active Lifestyle

1. **Juneda City Council:** Promotes healthy routes for the community.
2. **Sports Council Les Garrigues:** It facilitates access to bicycles, promotes active breaks and has implemented the EMPIC service in companies.
3. **Lleida Provincial Council:** It installs recreational spaces throughout the territory to encourage physical activity from 0 to 100 years of age and provides aid to sports entities to promote an active lifestyle.
4. **La Serreta Tennis Club:** Provides a safe route to the club with lighting, signage and pedestrian paths, as well as encouraging the use of bike lanes to connect with sports centres.

Spaces Intended for PA

1. **Sports Council Les Garrigues:** It offers gyms, cycling and athletics schools, guided groups, walks and Nordic walking.
2. **Country Council of Les Garrigues:** Encourages the use of parks for sports and provides spaces for walking.
3. **Ioga Study Lumbini:** It gives up its space for directed activities.
4. **Juneda Gym:** Provides the space and material necessary for the activities.
5. **La Serreta Tennis Club:** It offers the tennis courts, paddle tennis and the swimming pool to companies at times of low influx.

Activities for Workers

1. **Juneda City Council:** Conducts semi-public sports activities for Juneda citizens of all ages.
2. **CAP Borges Blanques:** Organizes group outings and walks.
3. **Country Council of Les Garrigues:** Organizes directed activities such as gym classes, physical activity groups, cycling, athletics and group walks. It also organises team building activities through the AF
4. **Lleida Provincial Council:** Provides aid to ESALs (non-profit organisations) through the "Work and Training" programme to promote physical activity.
5. **Ioga Study Lumbini:** Offers discounted classes for affiliated companies

6. **Juneda Gym:** Carry out group activities to strengthen team cohesion and decompression activities within the gym.
7. **La Serreta Tennis Club:** Offers guided tennis and paddle tennis lessons, as well as water activities in the pool.

Communication and Awareness

1. **Primary Care Center Borges Blanques:** Disseminates infographics on the importance of physical activity, makes social prescriptions and raises awareness about postural hygiene.
2. **Country Council of Les Garrigues:** Offers training on healthy habits, establishes agreements with gyms, companies and personal trainers and physical activity challenges for companies.
3. **Lleida Provincial Council:** It organises workshops and training pills on healthy habits for local workers, as well as promoting postural hygiene.
4. **Ioga Study Lumbini:** Promotes the improvement of personal joy and happiness through physical activity, identifying positive experience as an engine of change.
5. **Juneda Gym:** Provides training

Table 3: Existing Physical Activity Initiatives being implemented in the ecosystem of Les Garrigues.

Organization	Promoting an Active Lifestyle	Spaces Intended for PA	Activities for Workers	Communication and Awareness
Juneda City Council	Healthy routes		Semi-public sports activities	
Primary Care Center Borges Blanques			Group outing and hikes	Infographics, social prescription, postural hygiene
Country Council of Les Garrigues	<i>Drift to Sports Council of Les Garrigues</i>	Promotion of the use of parks and enabled spaces	<i>Drift to Sports Council of Les Garrigues</i>	<i>Drift to Sports Council of Les Garrigues</i>
Sports Council Les Garrigues	Facilitates access to bicycles, active breaks	Gyms, cycling and athletics schools, directed groups	Supervised activities, cycling, athletics, walking	Training on healthy habits, PA challenges, and team building
Provincial Council of Lleida	Recreational spaces and aid to sport entities	-	Grants to ESAL to promote physical activity	Workshops and training pills on healthy habits
Ioga Study Lumbini	-	Provide space for directed activities	Discounted classes	Improving happiness through PA
Juneda Gym	-	Space and material needed	Group activities and decompression	On person training on healthy habits

La Serreta Tennis Club	Facilities safe routes: bike lanes	Tennis, paddle tennis and swimming pool courts	Supervised tennis, paddle tennis and swimming classes	-
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g.1.2 Scope of the physical activity initiatives and improvements for new proposals in Les Garrigues.

During the co-creation session, multiple proposals and discussions emerged on how to scale, improve or tailor the PA initiatives that were already being carried out in the territory of Les Garrigues. Based on the analysis of the available resources and potential alliances among the key stakeholders who participated in the session, several strategic lines were identified that could serve as a roadmap to strengthen the local ecosystem for supporting the integration of PA into the SMEs ecosystem. These strategies were grouped into three main areas:

1. **Strategic alliances to scale up and multiply existing PA initiatives.** In the territory, there were already entities closely linked to municipalities that offered activities in the community context. However, many of them faced limitations, either due to lack of personnel, human or material resources, which made it difficult to expand their offer. During the co-creation session, it was highlighted that (i) through closer collaboration and (ii) the sharing of resources and a common vision among stakeholders, would be necessary to scale up PA proposals already underway, generate new PA initiatives and ensure their sustainability over time.
 - A. **Stable funding:** Establish agreements between entities that offer PA services with public administrations (City Council, Provincial Council, County Council) to finance their services on a continuous basis, guaranteeing decent working conditions and a continuous offer of activities.
 - B. **Shared resources bank or platform:** Facilitate access to sports equipment through exchange between entities (clubs, town halls, schools, etc.).
 - C. **Institutional alliances (city councils, provincial council, general practices):** To co-program activities, free up staff time and guarantee spaces. It proposes the creation and strengthening of joint structures and local networks to take advantage of synergies, share infrastructures and resources, and optimize costs.
 - D. **Expand the portfolio of health services:** Include workplace PA as a structural part of community health and expand the portfolio of services with local initiatives that already offer activities.
 - E. **Connection with ORPS (Occupational Risk Prevention Services)** to routinely incorporate PA in the work environment of SMEs, thus

establishing a link between the prescription and practice in SMEs.

- F. **Collaboration with companies and business associations:** To generate tailor-made activities and promote PA as part of the corporate culture.
- G. **Share data and impact indicators of PA initiatives:** To demonstrate the impact and reinforce the legitimacy and continuity of PA actions.

2. **Awareness, training and leadership by example:** It was identified that the practice of PA in an integrated way in SMEs or workplaces in general is not part of the work culture yet. For PA initiatives to grow and gain attraction, it is necessary to build a community culture that recognizes the value of PA in the day-to-day, led by people who are leaders and in leadership positions within training and workspaces.

- A. **Cross-cutting training on the importance of PA for well-being:** Offer training to employers, health, education and political personnel, combining practice (e.g. yoga and mindfulness) and reflection (conscious leadership).
- B. **Lead by example:** Identify natural or institutional leaders (medical staff, business, teachers or sports technical team) so that they become visible references in the practice of PA in SMEs.
- C. **Include an awareness-raising component into the PA initiative** to encourage deeper changes.
- D. **Raise awareness throughout schools:** Introduce PA educations techniques for health and wellbeing in schools as part of the training plan.

3. **Expansion and adaptation of PA services to reach out ALL employees in SMEs.** People who value PA are already sensitized and practice PA regularly. However, the real challenge is to reach those people who, for different reasons, such as lack of time, low physical fitness or lack of awareness, do not practice PA on a regular basis. To this end, various strategies were identified during the co-creation session aimed at attracting and involving these less active profiles.

- A. **Micro-activities in common spaces of SMEs:** Shared playgrounds, routes in nature, gyms in the office and active breaks that integrate PA into the daily routine of SMEs. It is considered that these activities have greater potential to be integrated during the working day by most SMEs.
- B. **PA activities designed to be tailored for people with low physical fitness:** It is essential to propose low-impact activities that do not require an advanced level of motor skills, so that they are accessible and safe for those who are starting out or have a physical condition with some type of limitation.
- C. **Playful and intergenerational proposals:** Activities are proposed that integrate the physical component with enjoyment, nature and social

cohesion (such as *team building* dynamics, orientation circuits, among others). These initiatives not only promote physical well-being, but also generate an emotional connection that favours continuity in the practice of PA.

g.1.3 Impact indicators and measurement instruments for implementing PA in SMEs in Les Garrigues

Designing and implementing a measurement system to support the alliances between the different stakeholders of the ecosystem for “PA in SMEs” was identified as an essential step of the process for integrating PA in SMEs. For this purpose, it was important to collaboratively define impact indicators and their measurement instruments (see table 4). These will make it possible to check whether AF initiatives achieve the expected results by SMEs. Results on the impact indications should be able to be shared in an interoperable, secure and confidential system among all the stakeholders involved.

Table 4: Impact indicators and measurement instruments for incorporating PA into the ecosystem of SMEs in Les Garrigues.

Satisfaction and adherence to activities			
Indicator	Measuring instrument	Function	What it illustrates
Level of satisfaction (Scale from 1 to 5)	Satisfaction surveys (paper or digital)	Measure satisfaction and initial interest	Evaluate whether the activity meets the expectations of the participants
Continuity of participation after 4 months and 1 year	Participation registration	Measuring adherence in the médium and long term	Detects whether people are sticking with the habits and whether the program gains traction over time
- Number of booking mades - Number of activities of difeerent entities	Centralized booking app with time and usage logging	Evaluate efficient use of assigned spaces	It measures the use of spaces and the diversity of uses and actors
Physical and mental well-being			
Indicator	Measuring instrument	Function	What it illustrates
Perception of physical well-being (scale 1 to 10)	- Pre and post activity survey - Weekly tracking app	Assess physical and emotional well-being	Measures subjective improvement in health and physical well-being

Sleep quality	- Self-assessment in App - Smartwatch with sleep quality app	Asses indirect health effects	Relates the practice of PA to improved rest
Reduction in injuries and sick leave in the 1-year period	Internal registration of cancellation in companies	Measuring impact on occupational health	Realtes the systematic practice of PA to concrete benefits un occupational health
Cultural change			
Indicator	Measuring instrument	Function	What it illustrates
No of people with leadership roles involved	Specific registration of participating leaders	Measuring leadership and the multiplier effect	Evaluate the potential for replicability and cultural transformation from referents
No of new participants referred by workers or leaders who are already participating	Internal monitoring cross-registration	Measuring the “waterfall” effect	Indicates the degree of positive contagiousness of PA practice in work or social settings
Increment of PA hours per person	Individual log/self-report / PA Apps	Measure increase in physical practice over time	Indicates whether people integrate PA more consistently and progressively

Although it was not explicitly addressed during the session, it is also necessary to incorporate an indicator that quantified the conversion of PA prescriptions (issued by the health system or mutual insurance companies) into real activities, as well as their level of adherence. Once integrated into the measurement platform, these prescriptions could be evaluated with the indicators detailed in the table below, which will make it easier to assess the effectiveness of the link between the health system/mutual insurance companies and the PA initiatives implemented in SMEs.

g.1.4 Conclusion on the STEPS & PROCESSES for integrating PA in SMEs in Les Garrigues context.

Among the key stakeholders that were part of Les Garrigues PA ecosystem, various initiatives were carried out that could respond to some of the needs raised by SMEs in the previous co-creation sessions. Stakeholders were promoting PA initiatives such as healthy routes, group walks and the use of public spaces that enabled the practice for sports. In addition, infrastructures such as gyms, tennis courts and cycling areas were offered to the municipalities where PA initiatives were carried out such as athletics, cycling and

swimming, although they were not explicitly designed for workplaces or SMEs. Active breaks were also implemented in some workplaces and training was organised on healthy habits, postural hygiene and PA challenges, with the aim of raising awareness about the importance of maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle.

However, there were several areas that required development, such as infrastructure for bicycle access, the inclusion of physical activities during working hours, the provision of exercise areas within companies and the formalization of agreements between companies and sports centres. In addition, initiatives such as the organization of PA challenges between companies and the creation of informative posters adapted to the characteristics of each economic sector are missing. It is also missing to design and implement evaluation studies with visual information (infographics) on the impact of PA initiatives to measure and demonstrate the return on investment (ROI) of these PA initiatives to SMEs.

At Les Garrigues, there are already multiple entities rooted in the territory that offered PA activities that could be extended to SMEs; however, many are limited by the **lack of personnel, human resources or material** that hinders their expansion. If closer collaboration were promoted, crossing administrations, clubs and sports schools, and both equipment and knowledge were shared through a platform of resources, it would be possible to scale up existing initiatives, generate new proposals and guarantee their continuity in SMEs

On the other hand, the **signing of stable agreements with the City Council, the Provincial Council and the Regional Council** would offer continuous financing and decent working conditions, freeing the entities from budgetary pressure and ensuring the offer of PA. At the same time, **co-programming actions with the General Practices and Occupational Risk Prevention Services** would open the door to incorporating the prescription of physical activity in the work environment, merging health, physical activity and work. Likewise, **collaboration with companies and business associations** would make it possible to design tailor-made programs that are part of the corporate culture, while the exchange of data and impact indicators would strengthen the legitimacy of actions and facilitate the evaluation of their long-term impact.

Finally, it was highlighted that integrating PA into the work culture requires a **transversal awareness and training plan** that encompasses employers, middle managers, health, educational and political personnel, combining practice (for example, yoga or mindfulness) with spaces for reflection on conscious leadership. For this strategy to take root, it is essential to "lead by example": **identify natural and institutional leaders** (from doctors and managers to teachers and sports instructors) and make them visible references of the daily practice of PA in their respective fields. Likewise, each PA initiative should be **accompanied by an awareness component** that deepens into its benefits and motivates sustainable changes. In the same way, it is key to extend this vision to the school environment, introducing, for example, PA for health techniques as part of the school

educational plan, so that children and young people grow up valuing PA as a natural element of their well-being.

In addition to strengthening the ecosystem with partnerships and resources, proposals were put forward to engage those who do not practice PA regularly. It was suggested to integrate micro-activities in the workplace (active breaks, mini-gyms, short walks) and to design low-impact programs adapted to all physical levels. Likewise, playful and intergenerational experiences were proposed, such as outdoor dynamics and group workshops, which combine enjoyment, nature and social cohesion, in order to generate an emotional bond and ensure the continuity of the practice.

g.2 Osona

g.2.1 Existing PA initiatives in the current ecosystem of Osona

Existing PA initiatives were identified to be currently implemented by key stakeholders from Osona that participated in the co-creation session. Table 5 shows a summary of different types of PA initiatives implemented by stakeholders.

Promoting an Active Lifestyle

1. **Vic City Council:** Promotes the use of bike lanes in the city and provides bicycles for workers. It also offers physical activities for the elderly, as well as activities outside school hours for children and young people (esport jornades d'estiu).
2. **ASEPEYO:** Supports mobility and organizational well-being plans for SMEs.
3. **Barcelona Provincial Council:** Improve pedestrian routes and bike lanes to facilitate access to work by bicycle.
4. **Espai Salut:** Offers discounts to companies in physiotherapy and physical activity, and on-site physiotherapy services.
5. **Faculty of Medicine (UVic-UCC):** Promotes sustainable mobility in commuting to work, active breaks and support for professionals.
6. **PIMEC:** Establishes agreements with sports centres to promote PA among workers in SMEs.

Spaces for Physical Activity (PA)

1. **Vic City Council:** It offers municipal sports facilities to the territory, both outdoor and indoor.
2. **ASEPEYO:** Offers PA initiatives aimed at the recovery and functional rehabilitation after sick-leave.
3. **Sports Council/Osona Country Council:** Provides sports equipment and promotes PA in its own spaces.

Activities for Workers

1. **Vic City Council:** It offers popular sports activities, organises the sports Festivals, and proposes physical activities through civic centres (swimming and paddle tennis).
2. **Espai Salut:** Signs agreements with enterprises to offer its services.

3. **Sports Council/Osona Country Council:** Promotes and manages sports activities, have specialized PA professionals, and organizes intra and inter-organizational sport events.
4. **Faculty of Medicine (UVic-UCC):** Offers postural and preventive physical activities during working hours with qualified PA professionals.
5. **Jordi Crosas:** Rehabilitation and strength training services
6. **UVic:** Promotes PA by offering internal PA initiatives.
7. **PIMEC:** Signs agreements with sports centres.

Communication and Awareness

1. **Vic City Council (Sports Department):** Organises communication Sport campaigns and offer training on PA to organisations.
2. **ASEPEYO:** It organises face-to-face workshops, awareness-raising sessions for employers and workers, campaigns on world days, web content, e-learnings, good practice guides and dissemination of materials through its website.
3. **Sports Council/Osona Country Council:** It offers training on PA, has its own awareness campaigns, also offer PA training from third parties (Generalitat, Diputació de Barcelona, etc.) and offers psychology group workshops.
4. **Barcelona Provincial Council:** It offers economic, technical and material resources for communication campaigns adapted to the sector, as well as specific courses on physical activity.
5. **Espai Salut:** Conducts training in postural hygiene with job analysis.
6. **Jordi Crosas:** Provides personalized advice on strength training.
7. **PIMEC:** It provides specific courses and training on healthy habits and raising awareness through posters and impact studies.

Table 5: Existing Physical Activity Initiatives being implemented in the ecosystem of Osona

Organization	Promoting an Active Lifestyle	Spaces Intended for PA	Activities for workers	Communication and Awareness
Vic City Council	Bike lanes, bicycles, activities for the elderly and children	Municipal sports facilities	Popular activities, Sports Festival, swimming and paddle tennis in civic centers	Communication campaigns, training for entities
ASEPEYO	Mobility and counselling plans Organisational well-being plans	Physical activities for functional rehabilitation	-	Workshops, awareness campaigns, web materials: e-learnings, guides. Healthy company portal
Sports Council / Osona	-	Sports equipment, revitalization of own spaces	Management and dynamization of PA, intra/inter-	Traning, own and third-party campaigns, group sessions psychology

Country Council			organisational events	
Barcelona Provincial Council	Improvement of pedestrian routes and bike lanes	-	-	Sectorial campaigns, posters, specific PA courses
Espai Salut	Discounts for companies (physiotherapy and PA)	-	Agreements with sports club	Training in postural hygiene, job analysis
Faculty of Medicine (UVic-UCC)	Promotion of sustainable mobility to work, active breaks, support for professional	-	Postural preventive activities. Revitalization of internal activities	-
PIMEC	Agreements with sports centers	-	Signing of agreements with sports centers	Specific courses, training in healthy habits, posters, impact studies
Jordi Crosas	-	-	Regabilitation and strength training	Personalized strength advice

g.2.2 Scope of the physical activity initiatives and improvements for new proposals in Osona.

During the co-creation session, multiple proposals and discussions emerged on how to scale, improve or tailor the PA initiatives that were already being carried out in the territory of Osona for SMEs. Based on the analysis of the available resources and potential alliances among the key stakeholders who participated in the session, several strategic lines were identified that could serve as a roadmap to strengthen the local ecosystem for supporting the integration of PA into the SMEs ecosystem. These strategies were grouped into three main areas:

1. Strategic alliances to scale up and multiply existing PA initiatives: It was detected that PA initiatives were being implemented, but these were dispersed and without systematic coordination between key stakeholders in the territory. To achieve greater impact, there is a need to build strategic alliances that connect health, work, education and the business network, allowing scaling-up what already works, avoiding duplication and generating new synergies. These alliances can facilitate access to spaces, data and resources for PA and, access to shared governance that ensures continuity and coherence between the different institutional and sectoral levels for implementing PA. The following strategies are proposed:

1. **Consolidate alliances between the health system and SMEs** to promote the prescription of workplace-based PA from the health system. It is also proposed to make use of **the National Plan for the Promotion of Physical Activity (PNPAF)** to promote these alliances.
2. Coordinate alliances between the Catalan government, local governments (including provincial councils), academia, companies, preventive services and mutual societies. Such alliances could be supportive for carrying out **impact studies through collaborative research**.
3. Create a **public-private collaborative network** to reach the population between 16 and 60 years of age, focused on the working population.
4. Establish **synergies between SMEs to share PA practices and resources** among them.
5. **Connect all mutual insurance companies to prevent occupational risk factors** to share PA data and PA practices.
6. Offer **municipal sports and PA spaces** through the town councils and the Provincial Council to facilitate access to PA for SMEs
7. Provide **support to SMEs from the sports councils** in providing physical activity managers, monitors, material and events organization.

2. Awareness and training: A lack of awareness and structured training around PA as part of occupational health was detected. Stakeholders agreed that, to achieve sustainable cultural change, it is essential to act from the grassroots and generate a political-social alliance that promotes the integration of PA at all levels of the SMEs' ecosystem. The following strategies are proposed:

1. Promote a **political-social alliance for occupational health** that promotes cultural change ("movement is life") for integrating PA at workplaces, including SMEs.
2. Create PA **raising-awareness campaigns** through alliances with mutual insurance companies and educational entities to reach the population earlier and better, focusing on raising awareness from the grassroots
3. Promote **training and formative programs with universities** to address the lack of PA professionals at all levels (from technical staff to management)
4. To make visible the **return on investment (ROI)** for promoting PA in SMEs.
5. To promote the **leadership of city councils and sports councils** as engines of the cultural transformation for integrating PA into SMEs.

3. Innovative and complementary strategies for implementing PA in SMEs: Complementary opportunities were identified to promote physical activity in SMEs, using more innovative and personalized approaches. The importance of integrating technological tools, generating intersectoral synergies and improving access to relevant information on PA were highlighted. The following strategies are proposed.

1. Implement **smart furniture in companies** that encourages movement and PA during working hours, for example chairs or screens that vibrate or display messages from time to time to get up and move or sit-stand desks.
2. To provide **regularly updated information on PA, as well as maps of PA agents** to SMEs in the territory, as well as to health centres so that they know the PA offer in the territory
3. Establish **flexible compensation plans in SMEs** that include PA options (with reference to good practices from Nordic countries).
4. Activate the **SME database** available through mutual insurance companies to identify opportunities for action in companies that are not yet implementing FA initiatives

- Involve cultural and leisure agents in **innovative activities** that attract a more varied audience such as dance, yoga or mindfulness.

g.2.3 Impact indicators and measurement instruments for implementing PA in SMEs in Osona.

Designing and implementing a measurement system to support the alliances between the different stakeholders of the ecosystem for “PA in SMEs” was identified as an essential step of the process for integrating PA in SMEs from Osona. For this purpose, it was important to collaboratively define impact indicators and their measurement instruments (see table 6). These will allow to check whether AF initiatives will achieve the expected results by SMEs. Results on the impact indications should be able to be shared in an interoperable, secure and confidential platform among all the stakeholders involved.

Tabla 6: Impact indicators and measurement instruments for incorporating PA into the ecosystem of SMEs in Osona.

Satisfaction and adherence to activities			
Indicator	Measuring instrument	Function	What it illustrates
Number of participants	Participation record by activity	Asses reach and engagement	It shows how many people are involved in the activities
Level of satisfaction with the activity	Satisfaction survey (paper or digital)	Measure satisfaction with initiatives	It reflects the degree of acceptance and enjoyment of the activities
Number of new users	Computer registration systems or cameras	Measure new adience acquisition	Indicates if new people are being attracted to participate
Completion of awareness courses	In-house course tracking software	Evaluate the success and usefulness of the training	Measures commitment to training and perception of its value
Number of group sports activities	Register of business activities	Measure dynamism of domestic supply	It shows organizational commitment to PA
Rate of visitis to websites with awareness-raising PA content	Web Analysis Software	Evaluate communication effectiveness	Measure interest in and Access to PA content
Physical and mental well-being			
Indicator	Measuring instrument	Function	What it illustrates

Level of work environment	Work environment survey	Evaluate work environment	Realtes PA to improvements in labor relations and collective well-being
Degree of pain/tolerance to PA, range of motion, level of strength	Software adapted to measure these variables	Measure functional fitness	Reflects concrete physical improvement in staff
General health status of the squad	Database of medical check-ups of mutual insurance companies	Assess overall health	Provides a comprehensive medical view of staff status
Burnout syndrome test	HR forms	Assess mental health	Identify levels of stress and emotional fatigue
Reduced injuries and sick leave	Internal registration of cancellation in companies	Measuring impact on occupational health	Relates the systematic practice of PA to concrete benefits in occupational health
Cultural change			
Indicator	Measuring instrument	Function	What it illustrates
Number of bicycles used	Bicycle counter	Measure active mobility	Shows the level of adoption of sustainable habits
Number of times a route has been followed	Mobile apps such as Strava or Wikiloc, with virtual club creation	Measure External Resource Usage	Reflects the actual use of external proposals and infrastructures

g.2.4. Conclusion on the STEPS & PROCESSES for integrating PA in SMEs in Osona.

In the ecosystem for promoting PA in Osona, various stakeholders were already implementing PA initiatives that might respond to some of the needs expressed by SMEs, such as the improvement of occupational well-being, active transport and the incorporation of PA in workers' day-to-day life. These actions include the use of bike lanes, offering physical activities outside school hours for children and young people, or discounts for enterprises in physiotherapy and PA services, including *on-site* sessions, in the workplace. Municipal sports spaces also offer agreements with clubs and sports centres to facilitate access to the practice of PA. Physical activities are organised during working hours, popular sporting events are being organized and training in healthy habits, postural hygiene and active breaks are currently being offered. Through awareness-raising campaigns, workshops and adapted materials to stakeholders and SMEs' economic

sectors, the aim is to increase the commitment of SMEs and workers to sustain an active lifestyle. Mutual Prevention Services of Occupational Risks would be key in playing this role.

However, some challenges remain to be addressed, such as **expanding the offer of PA initiatives** specifically integrated into SMEs, formalizing collaborations between companies and health professionals, and generating **evidence on the positive economic and social impact of these PA initiatives** in SMEs. Opportunities are also identified in the creation of collective challenges for PA across SMEs and the incorporation of more innovative practices in the work environment of SMEs such as mindfulness.

In Osona, current PA initiatives could be strengthened if stronger alliances were established between stakeholders in the territory. Currently, these PA actions are operated in isolation and, without a systematic coordination between key stakeholders including health, education, business and public administrations. To solve this challenge, it was proposed to articulate a **public-private collaboration network** that connects primary care centres, mutual insurance companies, occupational risk prevention services, universities, local governments and sports councils, in order to scale up existing PA initiatives, share PA resources (such as facilities, data or technical personnel) and generate new synergies. It was also suggested to consolidate **alliances between the health system and companies** to promote the prescription of PA as part of health care in the workplace, taking advantage of frameworks such as the National Plan for Physical Activity Promotin (PNPAF) in Catalonia.

The need to promote a **political-social alliance that promotes a sustained cultural change** was also underlined to ensure PA becomes an essential part of occupational health. To this end, **raising-awareness campaigns were proposed** in collaboration with mutual insurance companies. Educational organizations like schools were proposed for reaching out the population from an early age to understand the links between PA at the workplace and health. Also, **training programs** with universities should address the current lack of specialized professionals, from technicians to management profiles in SMEs. **Making obvious the return on investment (ROI) for implementing PA** and **reinforcing the leadership of city councils and sports councils** were also identified as key elements to legitimize and accelerate the cultural transformation towards a culture of integrating PA in SMEs.

Innovative ideas also emerged to bring PA closer to the work environment of SMEs in a more attractive way. It was suggested, for example, to incorporate **smart furniture** that reminds workers of the importance of doing Physical Activity throughout the day, or to integrate **micro-activities** such as active breaks or group stretches into the working day. The need to provide companies, general practices and mutual societies with **updated information on the PA services offered by the territory's**, as well as **stakeholders PA maps**, through bulletins or digital platforms was also raised. Other proposals included establishing **flexible compensation plans** that integrate physical activities as part of the employment benefits package, following models successfully applied in Nordic countries. To reach more diverse audiences, it was also proposed **to open the collaboration to cultural and leisure agents**, developing activities such as dance, yoga or mindfulness, which not only encourage movement, but also reinforce social and emotional cohesion. Finally, it was stressed that for these strategies to have a real impact, it is crucial to identify and **make visible professionals that can become references** across all the stakeholders involved (health, education, politics, business) who embody this change and serve as

models in the integration of PA in SMEs.

h. Final steps and processes for implementing physical activity in SMEs of Catalonia

These conclusions outline the key elements of a system that guarantees the sustainable incorporation of PA in the work environment of SMEs in Catalonia, which were co-identified by key stakeholders. Rather than a set of specific steps, it is a matter of establishing an integrated structure of resources, institutional mechanisms and organizational culture, so that PA initiatives for SMEs are mutually supportive rather than isolated from each other.

1. **Intersectoral alliances through agreements.** Formalising agreements between public administrations (town councils, provincial councils, GPs, Prevention Services for Occupational Risks, SPRLs), companies, sports clubs and educational centres for coordinating the PA implementation in SMEs. Optimizing existing resources for PA (spaces, equipment and technical personnel) and ensure stable funding for PA organizations, guaranteeing decent salaries that allow PA professionals to consolidate their work role in promoting PA to SMEs. Agreements can be supported by existing tools such as the National Plan for Physical Activity Promotion of Catalonia (PNPAF).
2. **Joint coordination:** One of the proposals from key stakeholders was to develop a system-based structure to coordinate regional councils or regional sports councils, as entities close to the territory with the capacity to link diverse stakeholders for integrating PA in SMEs. This joint coordination would allow for a more efficient management, adapted to local SMEs' needs, and with an overall vision, favouring the sustainability and coherence of PA promotion policies at a supra-municipal level for SMEs.
3. **Link the prescription of PA from primary care to the services provided by the Mutual Prevention Services for Occupational Risks.** Define protocols so that the prescription of PA goes from medical recommendation to practice in SMEs, training the SPRLs to manage PA and incorporating PA in SMEs. When necessary, liaison figures or support technicians who are experts on PA. Thus, it is ensured that PA professionals are performing PA adapted and tailored to the specific needs of SMEs, supported by an effective use of resources from the territory.
4. **Evaluation, impact and feedback:** establish a unified data recording system that evaluates satisfaction, adherence, physical-mental well-being, cultural change, sick leave, use of resources among others (see impact indicators form the first delivery) to measure the impact of implementing APA initiatives in SME. It is proposed to do so through evidence-based standardized surveys, apps and shared records. This will allow companies, SPRLs and public administrations to exchange reliable data on impact evaluation, tailor PA initiatives to SMEs and demonstrate return of investment (ROI) with concrete data to facilitate decision-making.
5. **Cross-cutting raising-awareness campaigns for implementing PA in SMEs:** Design coordinated campaigns to reach all stakeholders in the ecosystem for promoting PA in SMEs (public administrations, GPs, mutual SPRLs, employers and workers) taking advantage of mutual SPRLs and primary care channels. These

raising awareness actions should be carried out through workshops, digital communications and materials adapted to each stakeholders' audience.

6. **Cultural transformation and active leadership:** Identify, sensitize and make visible those who already practice and support promoting PA in SMEs, including CEOs, doctors, teachers, monitors, to become references for inspiration regarding the implementation of PA in SMEs. Through regular micro-activities (short yoga, mindfulness exercises or active breaks) and continuous training, their example becomes a shared habit. In addition, bringing the incorporation of PA into the daily routine to the educational field, including it in the school curriculum, would encourage new generations to adopt this vision as a natural part of their daily lives

4. ACTIVE4SME-FINLAND

a. Introduction

The Finnish Government will build a well-functioning, safe and fair society. A strong and committed Finland – Program of Prime Minister Petteri Orpo's Government 20 June 2023 includes Get Finland Moving program. The Finnish Government aims to increase physical activity in every age group. To achieve this, a cross-administrative action plan will be drawn up to promote physically active lifestyles and functional capacity. In addition, there is National strategy for physical activity promoting health and wellbeing 2020: On the move

Sports play a fundamental role in the Päijät-Häme. It is one of the regional focus areas of the Smart Specialization. There is Moving Päijät-Häme 2030 -Program in Päijät-Häme region. Its aim is to increase physical activity and reduce sedentary behavior for all people in the region. Physical activity is also an environmental act. The responsibility for promoting physical activity for the people of Päijät-Häme lies with the municipalities, the welfare region, clubs and organizations, workplaces, businesses, schools and educational establishments, decision-makers and many other actors. Each of us also has a responsibility for our own well-being and that of those close to us, and mobility in its various forms is a step towards better well-being for all of us.

The program implements national objectives and continues the development work done in Päijät-Häme to increase physical activity and exercise among residents. The program is also part of the implementation of Päijät-Häme's well-being plan. To achieve the program's objectives, we need extensive cooperation. In addition, each organization can pick out the most appropriate objectives and measures and implement them (see Table 7). The aim is that the mobility program will bring together those involved in mobility promotion work and will be actively used throughout Päijät-Häme.

Table 7: Establishments of enterprises in Päijät-Häme by industry and region by 2023 (Statistics Finland)

Industrial classification	Establishments of enterprises	Personnel in establishments of enterprises
Manufacturing	1348	13403
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	2426	7140
Construction	2271	5637
Human health and social work activities	1012	4157
Administrative and support service activities	886	3806
Transportation and storage	766	3192
Professional, scientific and technical activities	2079	2723
Accommodation and food service activities	740	2240
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	4236	1585
Information and communication	492	1520
Other service activities	1205	673
Real estate activities	1444	616
Financial and insurance activities	326	607
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	74	548
Arts, entertainment and recreation	620	488
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	55	287
Education	273	257
Mining and quarrying	24	49
Total	20277	48928

b. Data collection and analysis

In first session the purpose was to describe the current state of physical activity in Päijät-Häme region. The “Status Quo Analysis” questionnaire was sent participators. The questionnaire had open-ended questions focusing on the current state. The questionnaire was divided into six thematic sections, focusing on the regional strategies and plans, stakeholders, activities, economics, and innovations (see Table 8). The qualitative regional SWOT analysis was done based on the status quo.

Table 8. The sections regarding the current situation of physical activity in Päijät-Häme region.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS	STAKEHOLDERS	ACTIVITIES	ECONOMICS	INNOVATIONS
Is there an explicit strategy of the region (regarding boosting innovation capacities and green upskilling)? If yes, please indicate the main goals, the date of issue, and other information you find interesting and relevant. If not, please explain why not.	Is there any cluster in the region?	What are the main sports and physical leisure activities in your region?	Describe the size and outline of the PS-related <u>production</u> in your region.	How many companies are active in your ecosystem on PA innovation (based on the past 5 years)
What does your RIS3 (Research and Innovation Smart Specialisation Strategy) say about sport and sport innovation?	If yes: What type of cluster is it?	Approximately how many of the inhabitants do sports regularly? (percentage of the population) <i>Practising sport, fitness or recreational (leisure) physical activities at least once a week</i>	Describe the size and outline of the PA-related <u>distribution</u> in your region.	How many startups come on PA innovation from your ecosystem (based on the past 5 years)
Are there any other plans, strategies and documents that support the PA industry? <i>If yes: Please, list them with the link if they are open access.</i>	How many cluster members do they have?	How many professionals (or similar) compete in your region? ²	Are there any sport-related R&D&I activities regarding facilitating PA SME in digital & green upskilling in the region?	What is the estimated turnover on PA innovation in your region (based on the past 5 years)
	What are their focus areas?	Please, list the main PA events organized in the region every year.	If yes: to what industries and services do those R&D&I activities relate? (describe size and outline)	How many companies are active in your ecosystem on PA innovation (based on the past 5 years)
	What is the organizational form of each cluster member? (e.g. SME, University, R&D, agency etc.)	What kind of sports venues and how many are there in the region, and or what kind of sports infrastructures are in the region?	How and from what sources are these sport-related R&D&I activities financed? (describe size and outline)	
		What are the main sports and physical leisure activities in your region?	Are PA or any other sports-related issues included in the regional development strategy? (describe size and outline)	

		Approximately how many of the inhabitants do sports regularly? (percentage of the population) <i>Practising sport, fitness or recreational (leisure) physical activities at least once a week</i>	Are there any special marketing activities related to PA? (describe size and outline)	
		How many professionals (or similar) compete in your region? ²	Is there any PA-related tourism in the region? If yes, please specify (describe the size and outline).	
			What PA events, now or in the upcoming year, are supported by the Government/regional government? (Indicate which government)	
			How would you evaluate PA business models existing in your region in each sport? ³	

c. Results

c.1. Participants

The participants (n=86) in Päijät-Häme sessions are shown in tables 9-11.

Table 9: The participant (n=15) of the 14.1. session.

#	Organization	Name
1	Lahden kaupunki	Denis Mustonen
2	LUT	Tero Rantala
3	LADEC	Isto Vanhamäki
4	LADEC	Kimmo Seppänen
5	LADEC	Anri Vuori
6	LADEC	Jari Rask
7	Vierumäki	Jukka Tiikkaja
8	Pajulahti	Tero Kuorikoski
9	Pajulahti	Pauliina Hyvönen
10	Pajulahti	Virpi Remahl
11	Pajulahti	Heini Wennman
12	PHLU	Mai-Brit Salo
13	PHLU	Keijo Kylänpää
14	P-H hyvinvointialue	Risto Kuronen
15	Päijät-Hämeen liitto	Harri Kuusela
16	LAB-ammattikorkeakoulu	Sanna Kangas
17	LAB-ammattikorkeakoulu	Kirsi Kiiskinen
18	BrainStorm LTD	Juho Rissanen

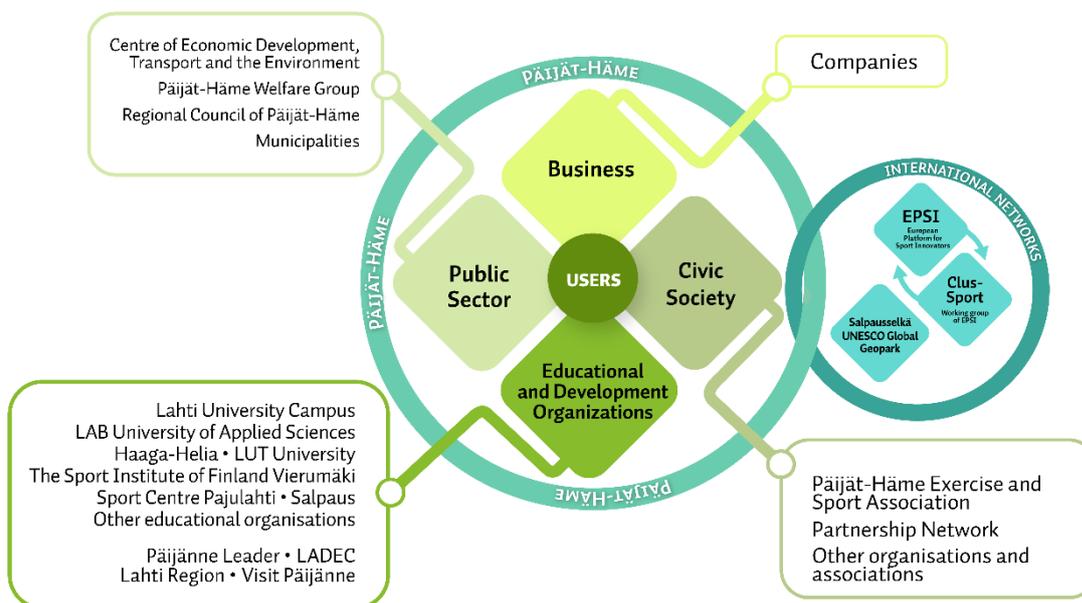
of those with insufficient physical activity is 57,7 % in Päijät-Häme. (Healthy Finland Survey, THL)

According to the national physical functional capacity monitoring and feedback system (MOVE) for Finnish 5th and 8th grade pupils, it can be stated that physical functioning is potentially at a level that consumes or harms health and well-being for up to 401% of 5th and 8th graders in Päijät-Häme. The median results of the tests in Päijät-Häme are in line with the national medians.

c.2.1.2 Stakeholders

LAHTI SPORTS HUB is a regional competence and facility center for the sports sector based on the regional infrastructure and know how. The private-public physical activity ecosystem is built around more than 400 different sports disciplines, universities and other R&D operators in Päijät-Häme (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. The quadruple helix of Sport & Leisure sector in Päijät-Häme region.



c.2.1.3. Sport clubs and venues

There are 54 647 licensed athletes in Päijät-Häme sport clubs (n=268) (Finnish sport club database). The total number of PA venues & infrastructure [Lipas sport facility GIS-database](#) in Päijät-Häme is 1335. They are distributed as following:

- Outdoor sports fields and parks (n=608)
- Off-road sports facilities (n=265)
- Indoor sports facilities (n=253)
- Water sports facilities (n=118)
- Animal sport venues (n=53)

- Recreation and camping areas (n=21)
- Boating, aviation and motor sports venues (n=17)

c.2.1.4. Swot analysis

A SWOT analysis was performed for developing a strategic planning for implementing physical activity in SMEs (see Table 12). The component analysis of the SWOT Framework includes (i) Strengths, (ii) Weaknesses, (iii) Opportunities and (iv) Threats (see Table 12)

Table 12: The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of physical activity in Päijät-Häme, Finland.

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
INTERNAL ORIGIN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User driven design • Events, mass events • International networks sustainability, sport • Unicity - startup culture on the horizon • Companies have enough policy institutional support, it's the communication culture & rapid trial culture that lacks • Business + RDI collaboration opportunities exist - still, companies don't know when and how to use and reach universities • Functional society --> engage • User-driver product service development opportunities • Systemic level infrastructure • Level of democracy • Green in city - open fo all: heath from green & public green transport • Regional bicycle routes and geopark locations • EGC brand 2021 • Nature / natural environment • 4 seasons • The world first CO2 neutral ice hockey team in the world (Pelicans) • Business know how to use sustainability label as a competitive factor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silos, public vs private • Communication culture • Over engineering • Different events for popularization of good practices, not only guides • Create a solid support base • Insight of habitants is missing • Only theoretical facts and brands, no human gaps or excellences • Practice what you preach in the city center • Innovation procurement • Green innovation festival for citizens and visitors, FUN!!! • Market the brands (the green zone") IRL + digital be proud, make it heard! • You are now entering the green zones of life! (like the blue zones, see Netflix) • Put focus on sustainability for innovation gaps • Environmental social & governmental factors • Environmental education & awareness raising • Collaboration to boost eco-innovations, and all the time new sustainability initiatives rising • Business understand why & how to adopt & communicate ESG-issues to their favor
EXTERNAL ORIGIN	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory board on regional level with all stakeholders • Radical innovation needs ownership = top-down • Share to multiply! • Social impact • SMASH & SLUSH partnerships • Specialization/focus in the best values of the region • Mass events ("homemade" events) - engage more with local sports associations - see them as enterprise, developing events together • Networks • Other innovation environments close to Finland for science & innovation capacities • Testbeds for unicorns to be soft landing capacity • Use sport-events participants as testbeds for new services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of investors • Lack of radical innovations • Poor in cultural views • Communication culture • Over engineering • Low digitalisation level • Another Finnish regions - competitors or partners?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call the IRL showcase downtown, the culture of movements • 4 seasons lead to business & event opportunities • Openness to learn & adopt new digital mindsets, trick for revenue • Storytelling/narrative “Lahti style” • From green zone(s) into the next futures (with ethics) & combining them. • Carbon-neutrality in a couple of years • Ladec promotes & guides companies to promote circular economy practices 	
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c.2.2. The most feasible contents, format, schedule and learning outcomes of the physical activity at work places

The interactive Why, How, What ecosystem model the most feasible activity contents and format specified into the Workplaces on the Move package (Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, 2023) was presented as a summary in the last session. The package is based on the scenario that sedentary behavior of working age people cannot be resolved with the traditional approaches and by the physical activity professionals alone. Broader solutions are needed. The model is developed to identify the points of influence physical activity within the existing structures of Finnish work life. In collaboration with a working group consisting of specialists representing various stakeholders such as occupational health care, the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, employers’ pension insurance, trade unions, employer advocacy organizations, and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

c.2.2.1. The distinctive impact pathways for physical activity at Finnish work life

The following five distinctive impact pathways for physical activity within the existing solutions of the Finnish work life were identified and the recommendations have three levels (Figure 2), each of which increases the level of activity, and the benefits achieved.

Figure 2. The recommendations for physical activity promotion at work (www.liikkuvatyolama.fi/en).



LEVEL 1: Physical activity is part of employee benefits

This is a good baseline that motivates personnel to be more physically active. Sports and well-being services are part of the employee benefits, in addition to which there are facilities and equipment for exercise. Furthermore, the personnel is informed about available services. At this level, the solutions are clear and often easy to implement for the employer. Remote work and the nature of the work should be taken into account in the solutions.

Financial support: Personnel is offered a flexible sports benefit.

- Financial support encourages personnel to exercise in the manner they choose.
- According to Finnish legislation, the employer can support an employee's physical activity tax-free up to EUR 400 per year. The employee benefit must be equally available to all employees.
- Company-owned or company-leased bicycles can be offered to employees tax-free up to EUR 1,200 a year.

Facilities and equipment: Personnel is provided with facilities and equipment for exercise, such as:

- exercise equipment is available in break rooms
- active commuting is made easier by safe bicycle parking, changing rooms and washroom facilities

Communication: The personnel is informed of the benefits and opportunities offered.

- Communication takes place regularly on multiple channels.
- The more active the communications, the bigger the percentage of the personnel using the services.

LEVEL 2: Physical activity is part of the working day

At level 2, physical activity is an integral part of the working days. Active breaks help support recovery, level of alertness and coping. The solutions improve the staff's working capacity, health and well-being. The objective is for more and more people to participate in the exercise offered. At this level, it is important to draw up a physical activity plan.

Staff involvement: The personnel has an opportunity to influence the content of the exercise offered.

- Wishes and needs can be collected through open discussions or well-being surveys.
- Involving the personnel increases their motivation to be physically active.

Physical activity according to the nature of the work: Different work tasks require different kinds of exercise.

- For example, the activity level of sedentary working will be increased, and the recovery of employees doing physical work will be improved.
- Co-operation with the occupational health care provider and the occupational health and safety officers helps to find specific solutions, taking into account the requirements and risks of the work.

Drawing up the plan: A physical activity plan is drawn up based on needs and wishes.

- It is enough to provide at least two other options alongside financial sports benefits and facilities or equipment. These may include exercise breaks, campaigns or physical activity measures offered by occupational health care.
- Personnel's feedback and experience help in monitoring and developing the implementation of the plan. Occupational health care indicators may also be used.

LEVEL 3: Physical activity is in the strategy

When physical activity is included in the strategy, it increases the intangible capital of the organisation. This means that communality, atmosphere and productivity increase and the employer image improves. It helps not only to improve personal work ability, health and well-being but also brings benefits for the work community.

At level 3, management is human-oriented, personnel is involved, supervisors are trained and the promotion of well-being at work is systematic. The amount of activities offered and the level of staff participation in the activities depends on the style of management.

The quality of management is a high priority: Physical activity at work is part of management.

- The physical activity plan is based on the organisation's strategy or personnel strategy.
- The work community is involved and their wishes are taken into account. Cooperation with the occupational health care provider and the occupational health and safety officers is active.
- Management is trained in physical activity and well-being related issues.
- Physical activity is visible in the daily life of the work community in both talk and actions.

- When physical activity is encouraged by managers and colleagues, the motivation for staff participation increases.

Solutions

1. Society provides more incentives to employers such as tax cuts.
Currently in use:
 - Tax-free bicycle benefit
 - Tax-free Employee fringe benefits including sports & exercise.
 - Free Physical activity counselling
2. Workplace risks are assessed in a new way.
The statutory risk assessment of work should include both physically demanding and inactive work. Physical activity can reduce risks in both.
3. Collaboration with occupational health care is more consistent
By working together with occupational health care professionals, workplaces can:
 - create effective strategies to promote physical activity,
 - prevent sedentary behavior and
 - enhance overall work capacity.
4. Psychological, physical and social balance is improved in the workplaces
Physical activity is an effective way to improve the balance between all three.
5. Management training includes aspects of physical activity and recovery
Effective leadership plays a crucial role in promoting employee well-being and work capacity.

In addition, there is a free planning tool (Viksu, available only in Finnish) that allows to create a travel to work and staff mobility plan that suits for SMEs. There are more than 60 measures to promote commuting and staff mobility, which can be used to design physical solutions to support employers' ability to physical activity.

c.2.2.2. The most feasible steps and processes for increasing success of scalability of PA initiatives in SMEs

The ecosystem model of five solutions was presented for comments and evaluations, and after that disseminated widely to stakeholders for their benefit. As a result the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is strengthening the role of physical activity in occupational health care. Starting in the fall 2024, the five solutions has been served as a foundation for the extensive workplace development work led by the new government programme: Get Finland Moving.

In order to encourage as many employees as possible to take advantage of the opportunities for physical activity offered by their employer, it is necessary to encourage and support employers to take the following measures:

- Provide personal coaching, physical activity advice or lifestyle guidance to people who are not exercising enough for their health or who need support to make lifestyle changes.
- Physical activity for fitness at work is included in the organisation's human resources strategy and is managed as a whole.

It is also possible for the employer to:

- Involve staff in planning physical activity content.
- Include employees in the planning of physical activity programmes.
- Make use of existing campaigns.
- Organise and pay for benefits such as commuter tickets and bicycle benefits.
- Allow working time to be used for mobility.
- Reward successes.

Financial incentives for employers provided by society help to create a culture of physical activity in the workplace. Recreational and leisure activities for all staff at a reasonable cost are counted as tax-free staff benefits and are provided or organised by the vast majority of workplaces.

In Finland, the Occupational Safety and Health Act obliges employers to investigate, identify and assess the risks, hazards and stress factors for the safety and health of workers together with their staff. To ensure that the assessment of occupational risks takes into account. The following solutions are necessary to ensure that the risk assessment of work also takes into account prolonged sitting and standing and physically demanding work:

- The work risk assessment should include both physically demanding and inactive work.
- Risk assessment training includes risk management for physically demanding and inactive work. The importance of physical activity in maintaining and restoring fitness for work is also more strongly emphasised.

Employers have opportunities to influence working conditions through physical activity, for example:

- Working with staff to develop solutions for teleworking and hybrid working that encourage activity and mobility.
- Provide opportunities for active and restorative breaks during the working day.
- Encourage commuting.
- Provide accessible and appropriate changing rooms, washing facilities and cycle storage.

The health service is an important partner because it identifies people who are benefiting from increased physical activity and other lifestyle changes. More systematic action is needed in occupational health to promote a more systematic way of living a more physical lifestyle for clients.

When building a partnership with occupational health, it is important to pay attention to two things:

- Employers will be more aware of the opportunities and provision of occupational health care.
- The action plan between the workplace and the occupational health service should include should be set out how physical activity will be promoted and how measures will be monitored.

Proposals for improvements in occupational healthcare:

- The role of occupational physiotherapists should be strengthened in workplace surveys and occupational health promotion.

- The role of the occupational safety and health officer should be strengthened in workplace surveys and in the assessment of the importance of health at work and in drawing up action plans.
- Occupational health staff should be trained in physical activity counselling, lifestyle counselling and how to support clients' behaviour change.
- More and more occupational health professionals are addressing the issue of physical activity with clients and know how to advise them on how to move forward.
- Collaboration between occupational health professionals works to support clients who are not physically active enough to be healthy to move towards a more physical lifestyle.
- Clients' health plans show how to increase physical activity.

In addition to occupational health, other important partners include sport and well-being service providers, organisations, municipalities and well-being regions. Their services should be integrated into workplace and occupational health measures.

Mental, physical and social balance is a prerequisite for human well-being. If this balance is upset, it can lead to stress, insomnia and mental well-being problems. Exercise is one way of increasing balance. Balance at work requires action from 1) society, 2) the employer, 3) the work community and 4) the individual.

1. Society can promote work-life balance through education policy, collective agreements and legislation.
2. The employer both enables and manages a balanced working life by ensuring a healthy and safe workplace, a balance between work demands and individual resources, and fair management. The employer also enables and authorises the use of physical activity as a means of promoting fitness for work.
3. A benevolent and respectful workplace atmosphere promotes balance. Involving staff in the planning of physical activity content increases participation and supports well-being at work. The involvement and example of colleagues is important in encouraging physical activity.
4. Individuals contribute to their work-life balance by developing self-management skills. For example, the ability to prune and prioritise reduces the rush. Opportunities for a physical and healthy working day should be exploited. Balance in working life is part of lifelong learning.

To ensure that the means to increase work capacity do not remain isolated measures and are actively used, the whole must be managed. This means that frontline workers need training/coaching in work capacity management, including physical activity and recovery.

In 15% of workplaces, physical activity is included in the strategy as a means of maintaining or improving staff performance. When physical activity is part of an organisation's strategy, the benefits to the workplace community are achieved in addition to the personal fitness, health and well-being benefits of physical activity.

This means increased sense of community, a better working atmosphere, increased productivity and improved work performance. At a strategic level, mobility therefore increases the intangible capital of the organisation.

Other opportunities for the employer include:

- Involving the whole work community: discussions, participation and other common practices in the work community, and joint action on health and safety.
- The employer and management set an example in the promotion of work capacity.

The following physical activity measures also increase the benefits in terms of work capacity and productivity:

- Maintaining one's own physical fitness, well-being and work capacity is included in all in all undergraduate, post-graduate, specialised and continuing education courses.
- Job-specific profiles will be created to describe the type of physical activity that contributes to work capacity in different occupational areas.
- Providing tools for workplaces to develop a mobility plan for staff and improve recovery.
- Effective communication that creates a new image of mobility at work. In this case mobility is integrated into a range of work and fitness tools.
- Active involvement of employers' and employees' organisations and other workplace actors, training and communication on mobility as the theme of mobility.

c.2.2.3. The physical activity planning toolkits for workplaces

There are Guidelines for promoting health at the workplace [Off we go! - Health at workplaces](#) with different lists of tips for workplaces e.g. [Exercise - Physically strenuous work](#) [Exercise - Sedentary work](#) [Recovery](#) [Nutrition](#) [Sleep](#) and Health promotion plan [Health promotion plan](#). (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. The physical activity planning toolkit for workplaces (available only in Finnish: <https://liikkuvatyoelama.fi/tyonantajalle/viksu/>)

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