

The Olympic Cities Health and Physical Activity Commitment

After two years of the Covid-19 pandemic which has shaken the entire world, the need to promote and support increasing physical activity is stronger than ever. Clearly the pandemic and its consequences of confinement, isolation and disease have had a devastating effect on efforts to reduce physical inactivity and such efforts to get people moving again must now be redoubled.

However, this crisis has also shown the resilience of populations and the creativity of actors - individuals, associations or institutions - to develop new modes of activity and to promote new sports practices which improve physical and mental health.

Throughout this ordeal, cities have shown themselves to be particularly committed and innovative in the search for solutions, in the development of new spaces, in the evolution of practices, and in the service of inhabitants-- particularly populations suffering from isolation.

More than ever, the fight against sedentary lifestyles and the promotion of physical activity is an essential battle, a battle today in order to prepare future generations.

Based on the Call for Action that was signed between TAFISA, The Association for International Sport for all and the World Union of Olympic Cities in Tokyo on 14 November 2019, the Olympic Cities reiterate their commitment to the promotion of physical activity in all its forms and for all segments of the population, with the aim of serving the physical and mental health of their inhabitants.

The Sport and Active Cities approach contributes to tackling current and future global challenges and aligns with the objectives and values of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, WHO's GAPP, the Olympic Agenda 2020, and TAFISA Mission 2030.

Cities have a key role to play as they contribute to the creation of the social fabric, to increased inclusion and to improved well-being for their inhabitants. As a local player, they can implement answers which are meaningful and adapted to the needs of the population. The world's population is growing and becoming increasingly urban, with 66% expected to be living in cities worldwide by 2050. Cities can play a crucial role in curbing the deadly trend of physical inactivity and positively changing the lives of citizens. Research shows that people who are active are also healthier and happier, and that these benefits spread across all sectors of society.

A Sport and Active City approach empowers cities to take on the challenges of the 21st century, making them attractive, sustainable and future proof. Active Cities enjoy the many advantages of having happy and healthy citizens. A Sport and Active City approach means to:

- Prioritise physical activity as a solution and embed it in the city setting by building opportunities for physical activity into city policies, master plans and incentive schemes,
- Foster dialogue and cooperation with key stakeholders to bring together all parties responsible for Sport for All and physical activity, including the governments, media and NGOs, health and medical, education and sport sectors, universities, professionals, city planners, municipalities, sport organisations, observers and other organisations,
- Utilise existing resources as active resources, such as programmes within existing open spaces and parks, after-hours access to facilities including school playgrounds and sports

grounds, establishing “car-free” zones and times for citizens to utilise the streets for physical activity and play, and encouraging the practice of traditional sports and games.

- Make physically active commuting more attractive by providing safe sidewalks, walking and biking paths, bike parking, efficient and convenient public transport solutions.

Olympic Cities are committed to supporting and implementing actions and policies dedicated to:

- Raising awareness, highlighting and communicating the many benefits of the Sport and Active City approach across the world. These benefits include economic development, enhanced safety, environmental improvement, enhanced health, social inclusion and community cohesion,
- Advocate the strong role of physical activity and sport in the everyday life of citizens,
- Promote sustainable legacy for local, national and international sporting events,
- Empower relevant managers and decision-makers to use the Sport and Active City approach for their community by providing resources, experience-sharing and educational opportunities.