



STEP UP! TACKLING THE BURDEN OF INSUFFICIENT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN EUROPE

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This intervention is made independently from the organiser of this meeting. I have no conflict of interests with the topic of this session



Declaration

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OECD/WHO-Europe report on physical activity

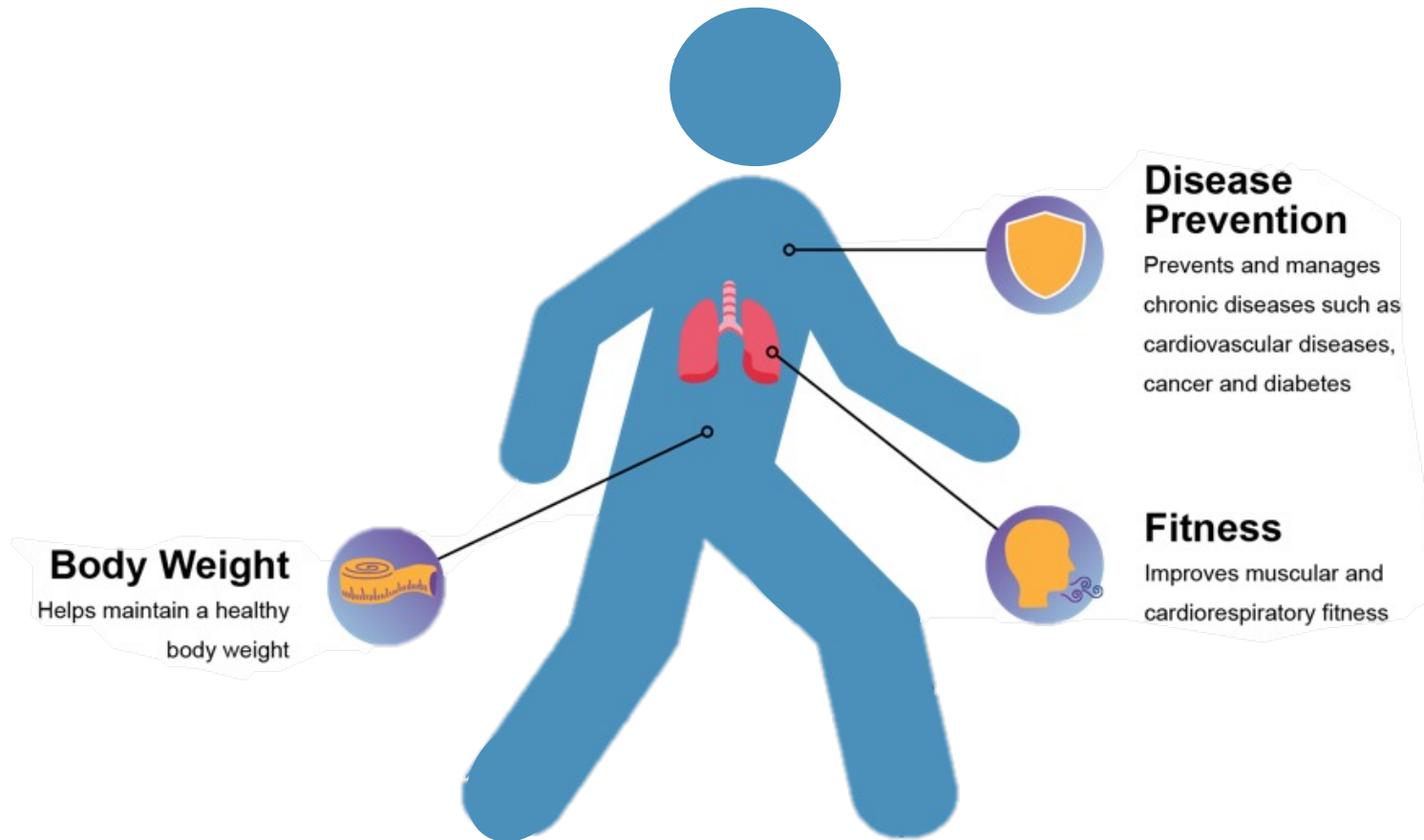


Why?

How?

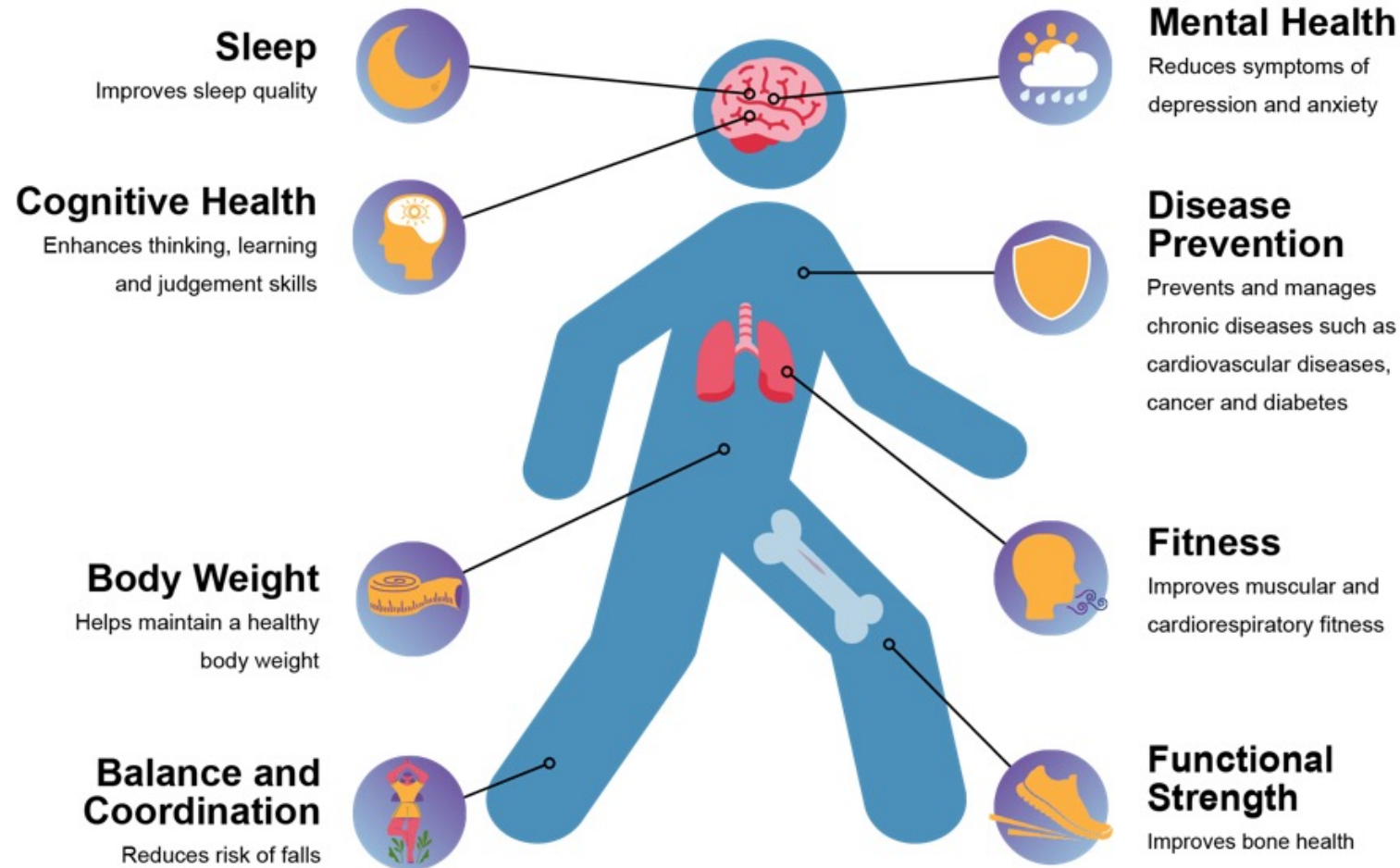


Physical activity has significant benefits for health...





Physical activity has significant benefits for health and wellbeing





Nevertheless, the prevalence of insufficient physical activity remains high in Europe

One in three adults
do not meet WHO
physical activity
guidelines



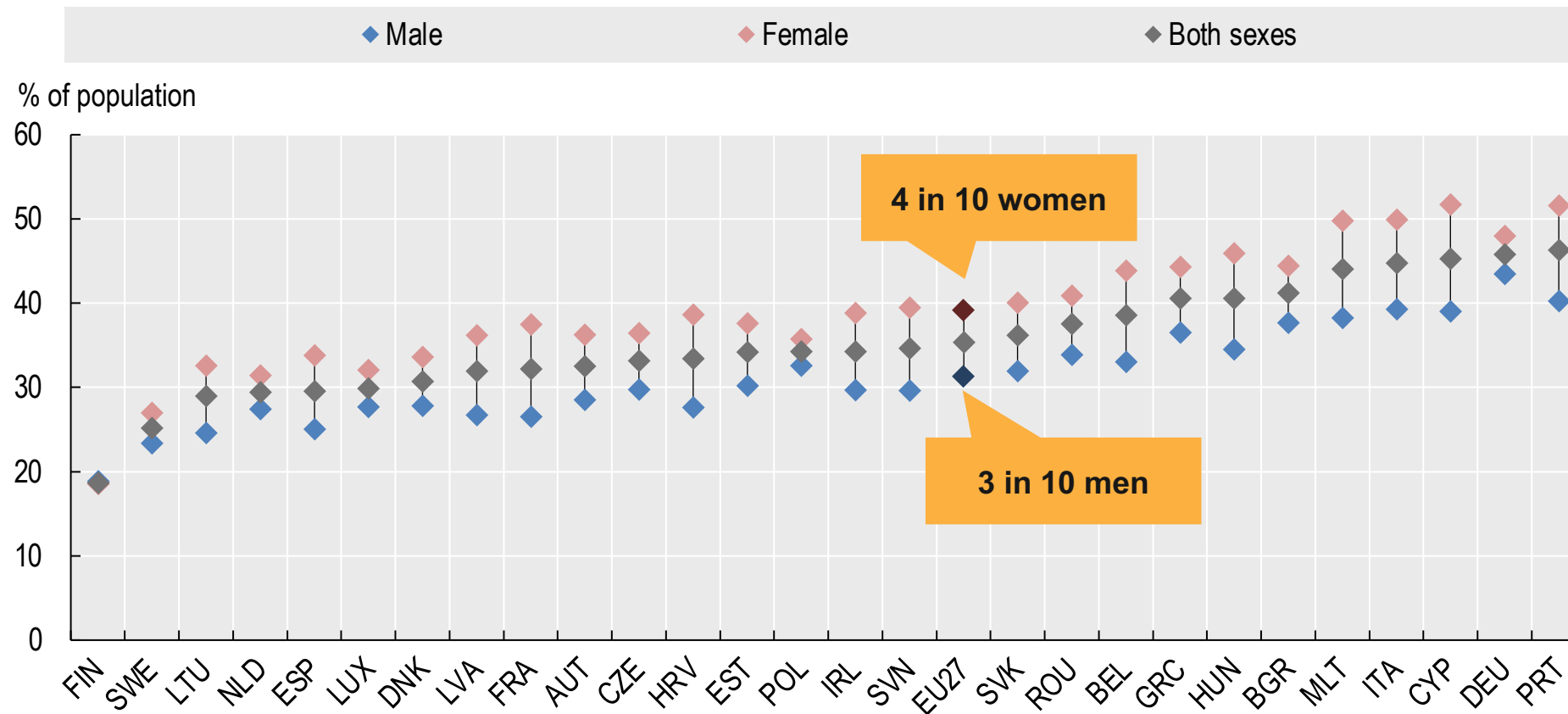
Half of all adults
never do sport or
exercise





Women are less physically active than men in all European countries

Prevalence of insufficient physical activity



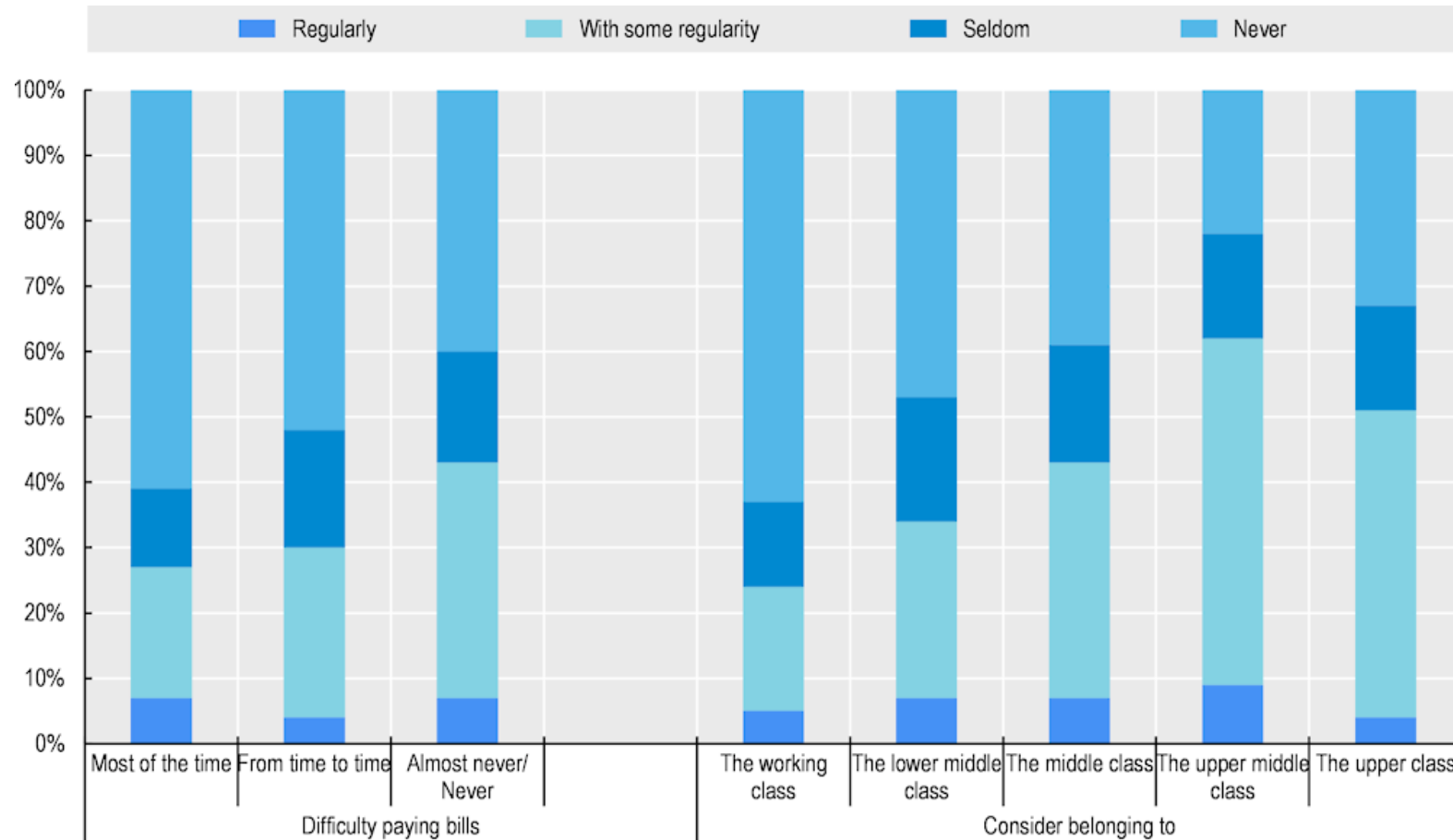
Source: WHO (2021), Prevalence of insufficient physical activity among adults aged 18+ years (crude estimate) (%),



Lower socio-economic groups are less likely to exercise

Sport or exercise in adults by socio-economic group

Proportion of adults who reported doing sport and exercise regularly, with some regularity, seldom and never, by socio-economic group, weighted average for EU27, 2022



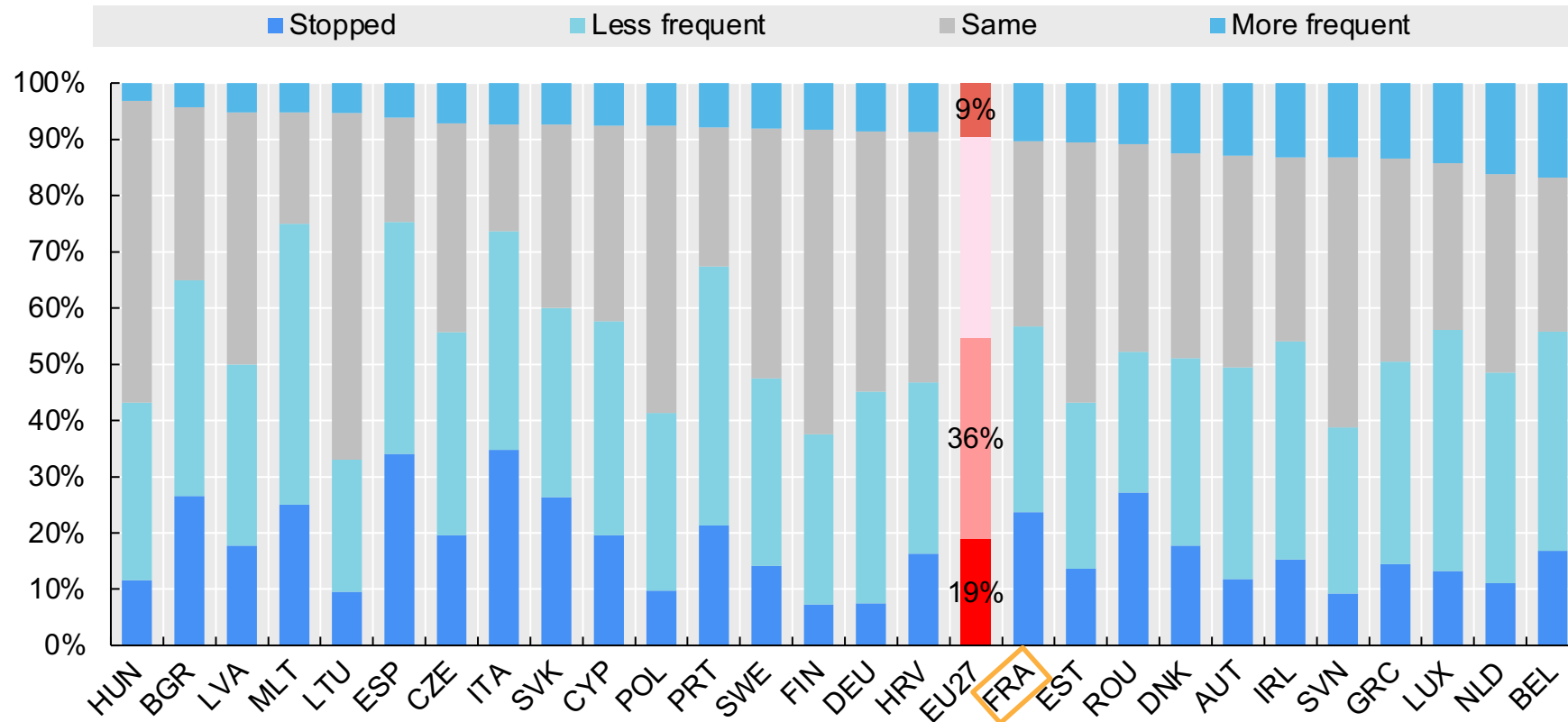
Only 24% of people who consider themselves working class exercise at least once a week, versus 51% of people who consider themselves upper class.



More than half of adults reported exercising less frequently due to the pandemic

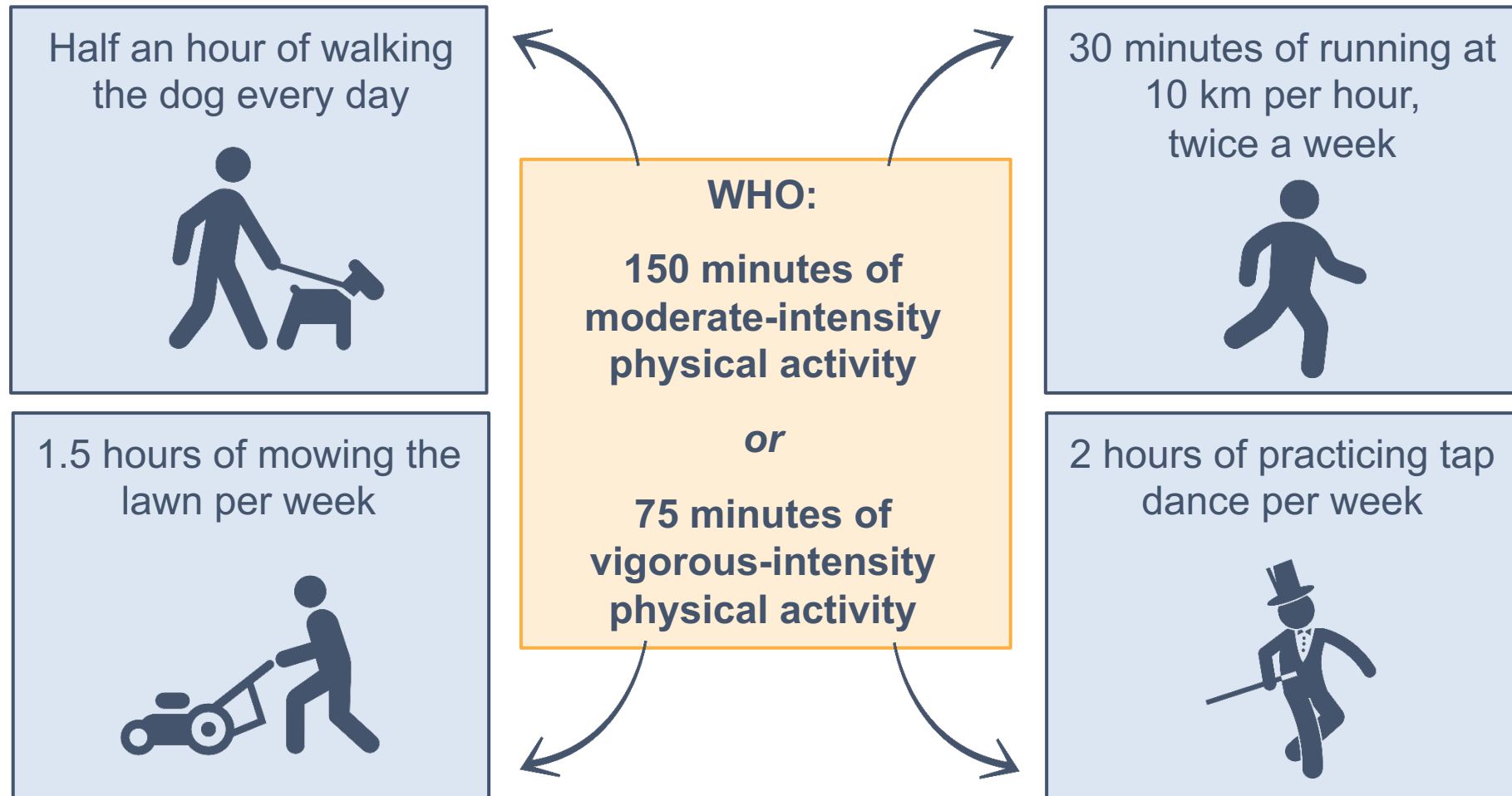
Change in exercise during the pandemic

Proportion of adults, 2022





How much should we be doing?

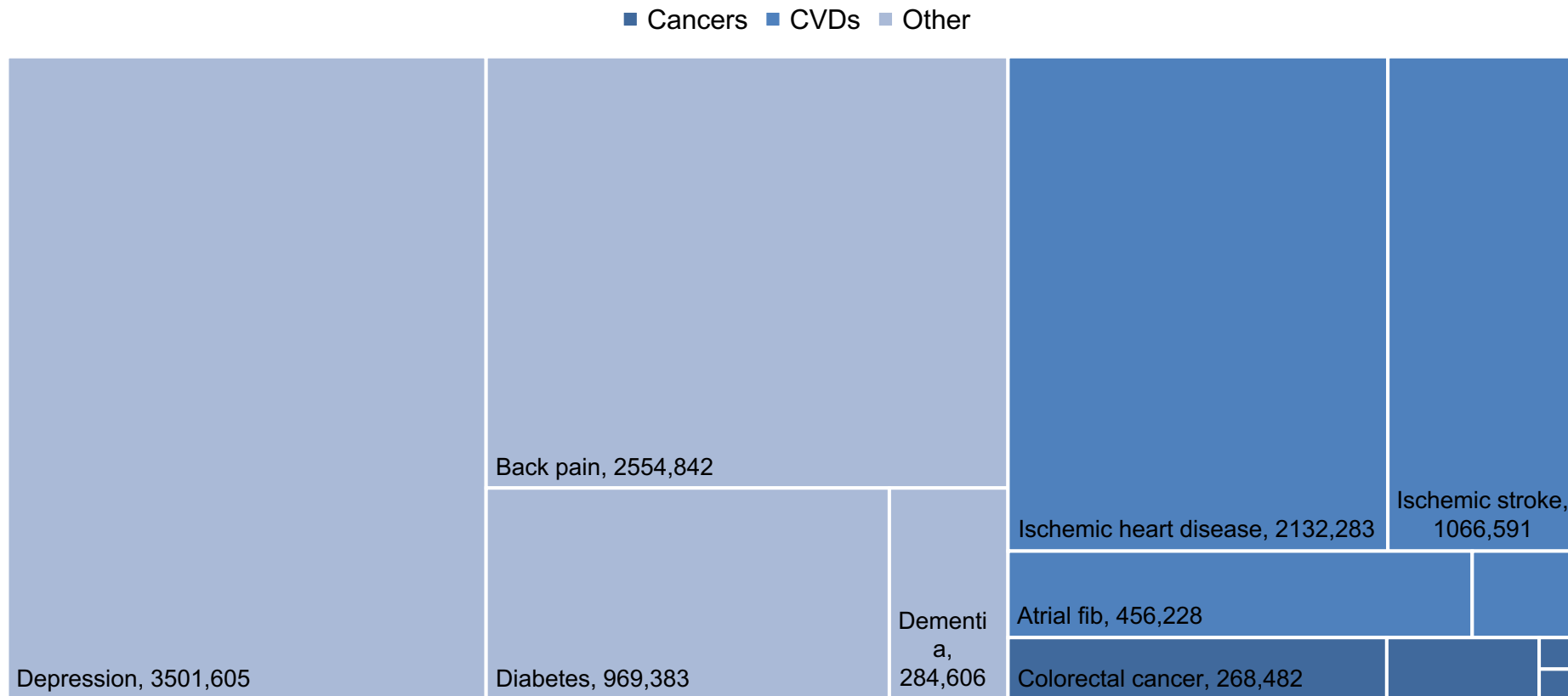


Note: Walking the dog: 3 METs; Running at 6mph: 9.8 METs; Mowing lawn with hand mower: 6 METs; Tap dancing: 4.8 METs
Source: Ainsworth et al (2011) Compendium of Physical Activities: a second update of codes and MET values



Increasing physical activity could prevent 11.5 million new NCD cases by 2050

The impact of insufficient physical activity (defined as less than 150 minutes per week) on number of new disease cases (thousands), total over 2022-2050 and for all 27 countries



Note: not labelled are breast cancer (108), hemorrhagic stroke (104), esophageal cancer (14) and liver cancer (13). Graph is limited to diseases included in the OECD SPHeP NCDs model and may not capture all diseases linked to physical inactivity

Source: OECD/WHO Europe (2023) Step Up! Tackling the Burden of Insufficient Physical Activity in Europe

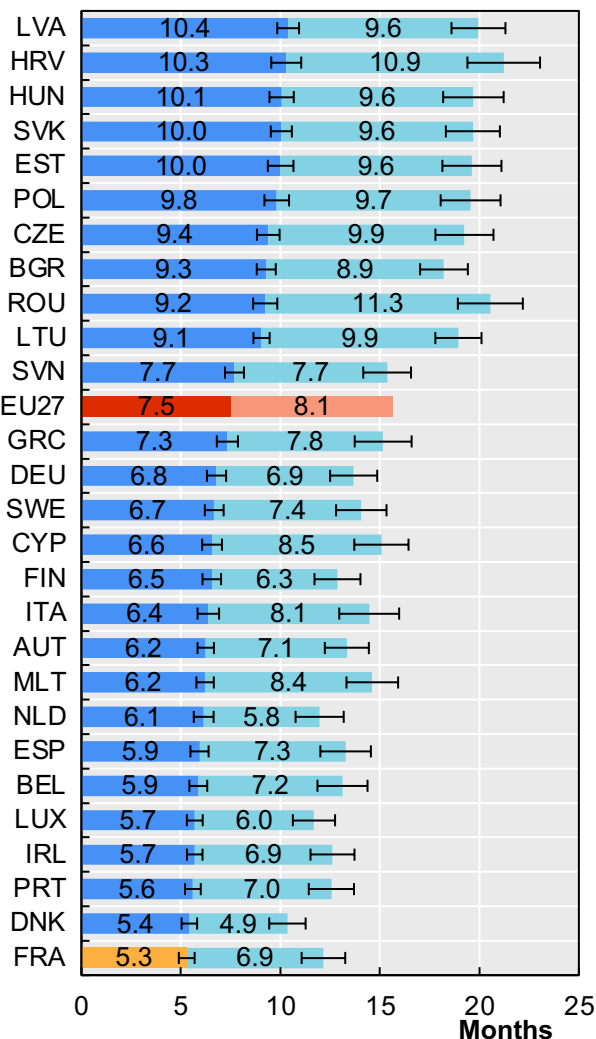


Higher physical activity levels would increase life expectancy

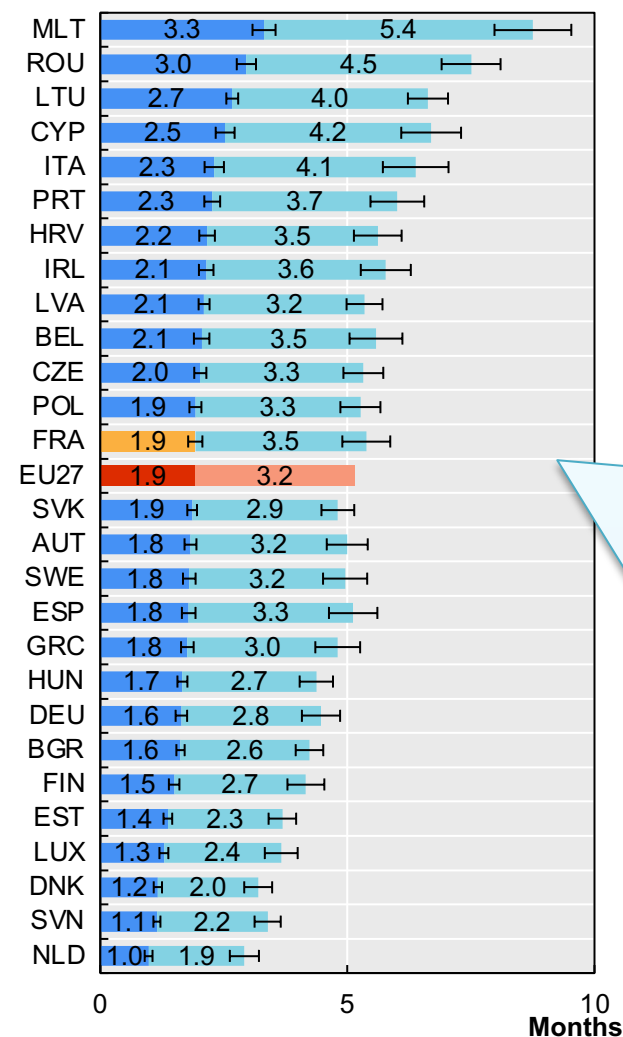
Insufficiently active population

- 150 min/week
- 300 min/week

Meeting the minimum recommended levels of physical activity would increase **life expectancy of people who are insufficiently active by 7.5 months**, and meeting the higher recommendation would add nearly **16 months**



Total population

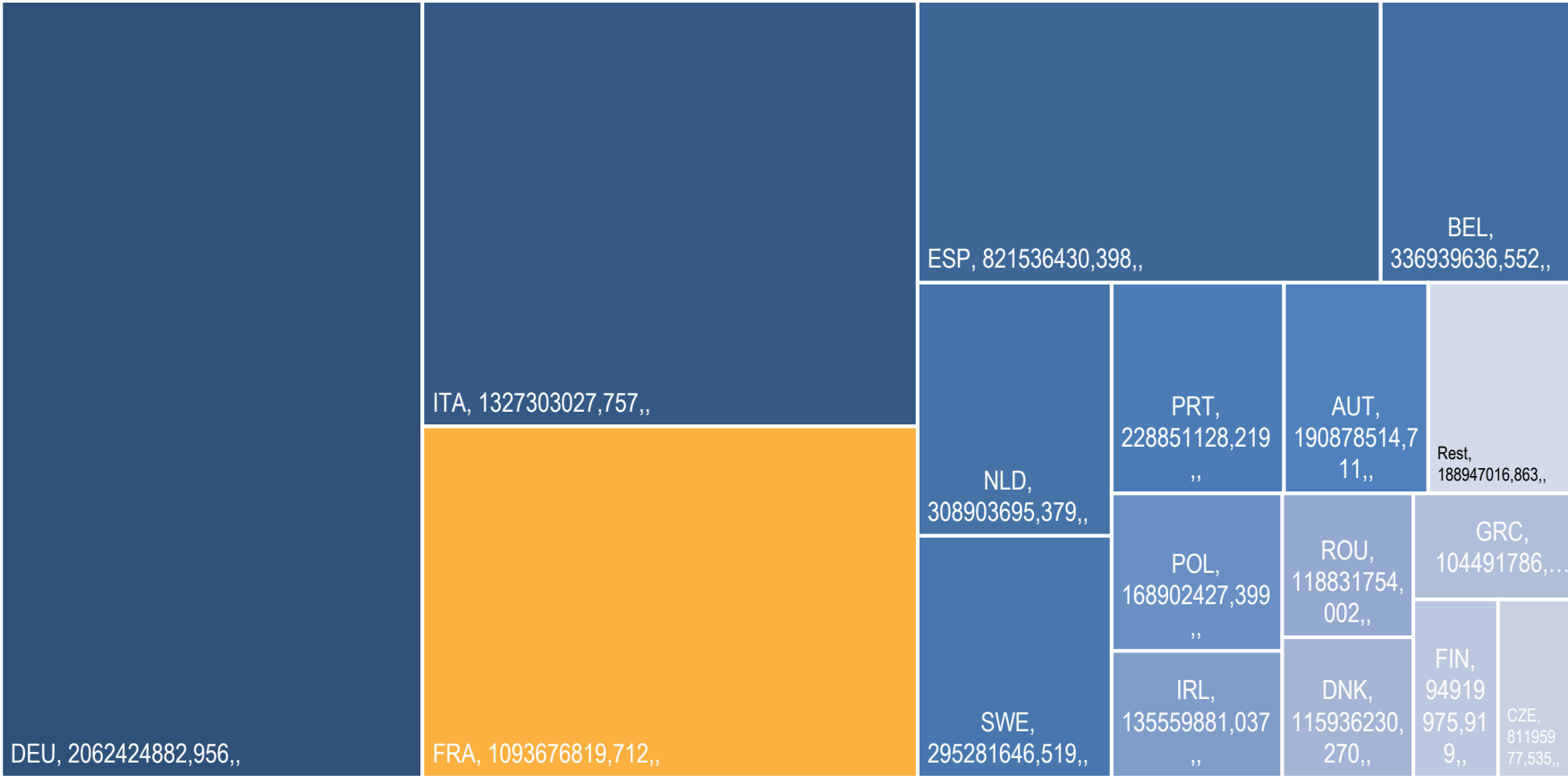


Meeting the minimum recommended levels of physical activity would increase **life expectancy of the overall population** by nearly **2 months**, and meeting the higher recommendation would add over **5 months**



Increasing physical activity would save EUR PPP 8 billion in healthcare expenditure annually

The impact of insufficient physical activity (defined as less than 150 minutes per week) on total annual healthcare expenditure in EUR PPP (millions), average over 2022-2050



Note: rest includes HUN (34), SVK (25), HRV (24), BGR (22), CYP (20), LTU (18), LUX (13), SVN (13), MLT (12), LVA (5) and EST (2)
Source: OECD/WHO Europe (2023) Step Up! Tackling the Burden of Insufficient Physical Activity in Europe



A wide range of policy options exists to increase physical activity



School-based interventions

- Physical education classes
- Active school breaks
- Funding for after school activities
- Active transport to and from school



Workplace-based interventions

- Counselling and information
- Behavioural strategies, like point-of-decision prompts to take the stairs
- Environmental strategies, such as standing desks
- Active transport to and from the office



Interventions in the healthcare setting

- General behavioural counselling
- Prescribing physical activity
- Healthcare-led exercise interventions



Interventions in the sports sector

- Programmes to increase sports participations
- Investment in sports infrastructure
- Funding for local sports clubs



Urban design, environment and transport policies

- Policies to improve road safety
- Planning guidelines to increase parks, trails and other green spaces
- Investments in cycling lanes or public transport



Information and communication policies

- Physical activity guidelines
- National campaigns
- Apps with information about the availability of resources and activities

Few enforcing, mostly enabling, educating, engaging



Policy options for various risk factors

Risk Factor	Improving choice options available	Modifying preferences based on choice characteristics	Increasing price of selected choice options	Banning selected choice options
Tobacco	N/A	Regulating packaging and labelling; health warnings; ban tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship	Increase tobacco taxation	Ban sales to minors; control illicit tobacco trade; regulate contents of tobacco products
Air pollution	Increase urban green areas; improve cycling and walking infrastructure; subsidise low emissions vehicles	Information and communication campaigns on ways to improve air quality	Higher taxes on higher polluting vehicles; congestion charges; increase fuel prices	Ban highest polluting vehicles
Alcohol	Increase availability of non-alcoholic alternatives at social venues	Advertising restrictions; nutrition and health warning labels; promote 'dry' months; information campaigns	Increase taxation; introduce minimum unit pricing	Restrictions on hours and days of alcohol sales and on density of alcohol outlets; minimum legal purchasing age; penalties for drink driving
Physical activity	Create active spaces and recreational areas; improve cycling and walking infrastructure; invest in sports infrastructure	Provide information on available activities and resources/facilities; physical education in schools; campaigns on the importance of physical activity	Implement congestion charges; increase fuel prices	N/A
Diet	Subsidies for healthy foods; increase availability of health choices in schools, workplaces and supermarkets; community gardens	Food labelling; improve food and health literacy; enhance food and nutrition skills (e.g., cooking classes)	Impose tax on products high in sugar, saturated fats, and salt	Ban trans-fats from food supply

Increasing degree of intrusiveness



A wide range of policy options exists to increase physical activity



Interventions in the sports sector

- Programmes to increase sports participations
- Investment in sports infrastructure
- Funding for local sports clubs

Removing barriers to joining sports clubs by making sports facilities **affordable** for all population groups, **tailoring** sessions to specific groups (e.g. women, elderly)



A wide range of policy options exists to increase physical activity



Urban design, environment and transport policies

- Policies to improve road safety
- Planning guidelines to increase parks, trails and other green spaces
- Investments in cycling lanes or public transport

Make active transport easier and more attractive

By improving cycling and walking infrastructure, increasing green space, improving safety



A wide range of policy options exists to increase physical activity

Messenger effect

A formal prescription by a doctor can help **reinforce the message** that physical activity is important for health, and increase **motivation**



Interventions in the healthcare setting

- General behavioural counselling
- Prescribing physical activity
- Healthcare-led exercise interventions



A package of physical activity interventions is a good investment

Physical activity policy package



Prescription of physical activity by primary care doctors



Workplace sedentary behaviour programmes



Increase in access to active public transport



Promotion of physical activity in schools



For every **EUR 1 invested** in a physical activity policy package, **EUR 1.7 are returned** in economic benefits



Step Up! Tackling the Burden of Insufficient Physical Activity in Europe



Read more at:
oe.cd/stepup