

Let's Fora healthy life

I.O. 03 FINAL GUIDELINES





Let's fit healthy life!

The role of sport in regenerating deprived areas

ERASMUS+ SPORT PROJECT

Collaborative Partnerships Grant Agreement n. 2018 – 3835 /001 – 001

I.O. 03 GUIDELINES

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1. PURPOSE

Guidelines will primarily concern with Fitwalking discipline in the Countries involved; their contents will be developed from activities and is considered important as a tool to address participation in physical activity within the involved countries. The core beliefs underpinning this GUIDELINES include:

- A belief that Fitwalking activity along with recreational and competitive sport play a vital role in community life and there are great benefits for individuals, communities and society in general from increased levels of physical activity;
- A belief that a strategic plan helps local policy makers, local sport associations and community stakeholders in increasing social participation in physical activity and providing the evidence for developing sports and physical activity in marginalized areas.

2. SCOPE

The GUIDELINES include:

- Description of the methodologies of teaching Fitwalking discipline;
- Training materials in the form of simple scripts for trainers, as tested in the 6 areas;
- Training materials in the form of a script for people interested in practicing Fitwalking.

The GUIDELINES also focus on assisting local public health practitioners in increasing physical activity among young and elder people through the following approach: favoring a community-based fit-walking program to increase social support of individuals wanting to improve their health and activity habits.

We are expecting that Communities successfully establish a fit-walking program to see the following results:

- The companionship, support, and encouragement offered to participants through these Guidelines will lead to increased knowledge about physical activity and confidence in the ability to exercise;
- Length and frequency of physical activity will increase, and overall physical fitness will improve for men and women, people of all ages, and both sedentary and previously active individuals.

3. PROJECT

The aim of the project is to encourage participation in sport and physical activity, especially by supporting the implementation of the EU Physical Activity Guidelines.

Taking into consideration this aim and the results of laboratories, practical sport exchanges and participatory events organized in the context of this project, common Guidelines on health and Fitwalking will be developed to be international, cross-sectorial, multi-targeted, flexible, accessible to all.

Based on the module structures, the consortium will implement joint Guidelines that will be issued to Participants and will include sports methodologies, strategies and tools aimed to addressing people to practice Fitwalking discipline.

As already indicated, Guidelines will be available in different languages - each Partner will have to translate the output in its native language.

THE PROJECT ITSELF

Let's fit healthy life!
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Collaborative Partnerships
Grant Agreement n. 2018 – 3835 /001 – 001

DURATION

January 1st, 2019 (M1- month 1) – December 31st, 2021 (M36 – month 36).

PARTNERSHIP DESCRIPTION

The project is promoted by:

P1 Lead Partner: **Regione Piemonte** ITALY
P2 partner: **Zemgale Planning Region** LATVIA

P3 partner: Carvalhais Sport, Cultural and Social Association PORTUGAL P4 partner: Gymnastikos Athlitikos Syllogos ILISOS (Gas Ilisos) GREECE P5 partner: Club Deportivo Nordic Walking Castilla y Leon (Palencia) SPAIN

P6 partner: Municipality of Valga ESTONIA

P7 partner: ASD Scuola del Cammino Fitwalking ITALY

4. PARTNER PROFILE

P1. Project Coordinator – Regione Piemonte – ITALY

Regione Piemonte, with more than 4.300.000 inhabitants, is the government of an Italian northwestern region. Regional policies are aimed at promoting the economic and social development of Piemonte and its communities, by supporting and promoting balanced and sustainable economic growth, social cohesion, educational programs, research, plans for environmental protection, development of sustainable tourism and promotion and enhancement of Piemonte's cultural and historical heritage. The Regional Department of Culture, Tourism and Sports has specific skills in planning, monitoring and controlling the quality of life of people, health care and development of social relations, also through sport activities.

Some sports events benefiting of regional contributions are: "Games without barriers" Project, "Regione Piemonte for sports at school" Project, "Sports Spring" Project.

The programmatic activities of the Regional Department of Sports aim to offer the opportunity to experiment, learn and practice physical activities, combined with the cultural and educational support that sport introduces in own personal growth, also with a correct food education. The Piemonte area become famous as the Official Organizer of the 2006 XX Olympic Winter Games, which took place from 10 to 26 February 2006, in Turin and in 8 other mountain locations in Piemonte. The regional territory also hosted, from 10 to 19 March 2006, the IX Paralympic Winter Games. Moreover, the Monferrato area of Piemonte, in 2017 obtained a prestigious recognition by ACES EUROPE as European Community of Sport 2017; the same for the City of Turin, in 2015, as "European Capital of Sport".

Regione Piemonte is candidate as a European Region of Sport 2022.

P2. Zemgale Planning Region (ZPR) – LATVIA

Zemgale Planning Region (ZPR) is a public entity established in 2006, under the direct supervision of Environmental Protection and Regional Development Ministry of the Government of Latvia.

It occupies a territory of 10,733 Km2, that is about 16.6% of the entire Latvian territory, with a population of about 281.000 inhabitants. The main objective of Zemgale Planning Region is to ensure regional planning and coordination, as well as the cooperation between municipalities and the various governmental institutions. Administrative headquarters are located in the city of Jelgava.

Over the years, ZPR has gained extensive experience in the management of projects cofunded by the European Union, and in the last five years has acted as Lead Applicant and Cooperation Partner in about 30 projects of European relevance; therefore, ZPR has a lot of experience in the coordination of many cross-border partners, a lot of knowledge of environmental and cultural issues, practical experience in the management of large-scale projects with an infrastructure component, also providing advices to partner organizations on public, financial and reporting procurements. Zemgale Planning Region as public body together with all their 22 local municipalities are actively involved in ESF Operational Programme "Growth and Employment" noting Measures to promote local health implement various health promotion and disease prevention measures for different population groups in region and especially for groups at risk of poverty and social exclusion by improving access to health promotion and disease prevention services.

P3. Carvalhais Sport, Cultural and Social Association – PORTUGAL

ADCS Carvalhais Association is a non-profit association founded in 1991, following the initiative undertaken by a group of local citizens, with the aim to promote sportive, cultural and social activities.

It is based in Mirandela, a small Portuguese town located in Tua river valley, on a plateau characterized by a fertile land, where olive trees are cultivated. Each summer is organized there a round of the European Jetski Championship (on Tua River). The activities of the Association have begun with the implementation of sports initiatives, with the active involvement of local community and schools, which gradually acquired more and more importance until become a set of fixed and periodical appointments.

Proposed initiatives: soccer and paintball tournaments, mountain biking, local festivals, painting and decorative art workshops, excursions on the territory, health promotion.

P4. Gymnastikos Athlitikos Syllogos ILISOS (Gas Ilisos) - GREECE

It is a non-profit sports club with 40 years of history, with three departments (Athetics – Triathlon – Cheerleading) seated in Zografou. It is a successful national club in Out-of-stadium athletics and long distances in national championships (cross-country, marathon, race-walking, Olympic triathlon) with two athletes who participated in the 2008 and 2016 Olympic games (Deniz Dimaki in triathlon – Beijing 08, and Panagiota Vlahaki in Marathon – Rio 16).

With 10 years continuous participation in the ECCC (European Cross-country club championships) representing Greece, and one hundred official athletes in all sports and three paid coaches teaching the kids the basics of sports and produce national champions on continuous basis.

The club is the organizer of many local and national sportive events in athletics (local run) and race-walking (national camp).

The Club:

- Is organizing for many years an international race-walking camp, where race-walkers form all over the world can learn the basics of race-walking and train with the best local race-walkers, who are ranked among the best world-wide;
- Has created many national race-walking champions during the 40 years of its sportive work;
- Has in its athletics' department, as technical advisor, the national race-walking coach Mr. Napoleon Kefalopoulos. For 10 years, under Mr Kefalopoulos' coordination, organized the Athens Walkamp which represents an innovative activity that combines technical and scientific aspects of race walking within a cultural and friendship reinforced approach. In total more than 250 athletes were hosted in the past years from 12 EU member States (Greece, Italy, Serbia, Slovakia, Hungary, The Netherlands, Ukraine, Sweden, Cyprus, Slovenia, Austria and Latvia). Besides the strictly speaking sportive dimension, focus is given also to the social dimension of the athletic clubs considered as inhibitors of preventive health-based initiatives and practices as well as campaigns for fitwalking and health for the elderly people.
- Has as primary goal to educate the youth to grow embracing the Olympic and sportive principles and ideals including specific actions dedicated to deprived areas regardless of any athletic ability or ethnic background in line with the requirements of the new national sports law issued on 9 March 2019 by the Greek Parliament. The new sports law rules that

all people can officially practice in Greece and be members of athletic clubs no matter whether they have an identity card or not, or they have a Greek nationality or not, and even if they have no nationality as refugees. The actions are aimed and designed to bring the sports in the most remote borders of Greece which actually are the most remote borders of Europe where people who crossed boarders live, where specialized trainers will teach sports to anyone who would like to participate, regardless of any athletic ability or ethnic background (everyone is invited whichever language is speaking)

P5. Club Deportivo Nordic Walking Castilla y Leon (Palencia) – SPAIN

The organization Club Deportivo Nordic Walking Castilla y León was founded in 2015. It is a Club of regional and national scope, registered in the General Direction of Sports of the Meeting of Castile and Leon. It is also recognized by the Spanish Mountaineering Federation, as well as the Federation of Castilla y León de Mountain. We designed an offer that tries to promote sport, and above all, health. As a Sports Club accompanies the Iberic Nordic Walking in: development of educational and informative activities; organization of sporting events of Hiking and Nordic Walking; promotion of Nordic Walking as Sports Health; development of touristic proposals related to the NW; organization of federative competitive tests; research and development of new proposals for different events.

It has taught Nordic walking to more than 4000 people and are currently considered one of the most professional and consolidated proposals of this discipline in Spain, after 7 years of activity.

It also founded the company Iberic Nordic Walking, responsible for replicating the Palencia model in the rest of Spain.

Palencia is a Spanish municipality of the autonomous community of Castilla y León, capital of the province of the same name. It is located in the plain of Tierra de Campos, on the banks of the Carrión River. Located at 749 m altitude, it is 235 km from Madrid and 47 km from Valladolid, being the two closest Spanish provincial capitals. The municipality has a population of 78.892 inhabitants (2017) over an area of 94.95 km². It is an important industrial center of Castilla y León. The capital is located in the valley of the Carrión River near its mouth in the Pisuerga. The first crosses the city from north to south, and opens in three arms when entering the city, forming the island of Sotillo and another small island, both occupied by a park called El Sotillo de los Canónigos. The Carrión is re-united (it is the place where the Puente Mayor is located (from the 16th century) to open again in two arms, forming the largest island (Dos Aguas Island) which in its northern zone has a large park and, in the south, it has several sports facilities and a golf course. The river forms several small waterfalls and is a source for an artificial geyser that adorns the riverbed at the height of the Puente Mayor. When leaving the city, the river comes back together. The city is located in a broad plain, with two hills in the north-east; in the closest to the city center is the colossal image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Palencia, the Cristo del Otero, the work of the sculptor Victorio Macho. Palencia also has a mountain with 1438 ha of oaks and oaks 6 km away and 865 meters above sea level, known as "Monte el Viejo". The mountain, which is one of the places of recreation and leisure for the population, is accessible by a road and a bike path. The vegetation is formed in the highest part and dry by oaks and gall oaks and as you descend in altitude it becomes greener, to gall oaks, oaks and black poplars. In the mountain is a large fence in which native deer inhabit that can be easily sighted by visitors. In addition to the hunting reserve, Monte el Viejo has several facilities: routes with obstacles and exercise equipment, municipal swimming pools, a

bar and a restaurant, a shelter and the so-called Small House and Big House; the last is an inn of the sixteenth century. The true channel of the channel of Castile does not cross the city, but a branch, called the Dársena, yes it penetrates in the outskirts of the helmet. This dock was used to load goods, but with the arrival of the railroad it fell into disuse. At the moment it is rehabilitated for the tourism and to its borders, in one of the houses of work of the same one, is the Museum of the Water.

P6. Municipality of Valga – ESTONIA

Valga is a city in southern Estonia and is the capital of the County of Valgamaa. It has about 12,000 (together with Valka 17,000) inhabitants and is located near the border between Estonia and Latvia. It constitutes a single urban core with the Latvian municipality of Valka, cut in two parts by the borderline. In fact, until their separation in 1920, Valga and the town of Valka in northern Latvia were one town and now, despite its small size, the city of Valga has several peculiarities being straddling two countries, Estonia and Latvia, with two different languages and cultures. The Municipality of Valga is member of 3 organizations: The twinned City Association (8 neighboring cities of different countries), Innovation Circle Network (48 institutions-municipalities-cities in 7 countries) and Twin Cities Association (7 cities connected for friendship in Europe).

These characteristics allowed Valga Municipality to be part of an extensive cooperation network, developing over the last 20 years a great experience in organizing international conferences, seminars and workshops.

Moreover, in recent years the city government of Valga has been characterized by an active involvement of the institutions and local citizens in various activities promoted within projects co-funded by the European Commission, especially in the Health field. One of the municipal priorities is the promotion of healthy lifestyles through health, sport, education and food policies.

P7. A.s.d. Scuola del Cammino Fitwalking Italia – ITALY

The A.S.D. Scuola del Cammino Fitwalking Italia is an amateur sports association - affiliated to the Italian Athletics Federation – and founded in 2001 as a Sport Walking School Foundation and transformed in 2013 into the current ASD Scuola del Cammino Fitwalking Italia. The purpose of the Association consists in the promotion and development of sport in the context of "popular walking", with particular attention to accessibility to sport for all. The ASD in recent years has developed specific expertise in walking, and is the reference for the technical management of the discipline of Fitwalking, project of MAP Italia s.r.l., which has just entrusted with ASD the development of the technical aspects (launched by the Former Olympic champion Maurizio Damilano). The ASD has launched initiatives and projects in the social and health topics too, with particular attention to the use of walking as physical exercise to prevent and improve health, as well as a mean of prevention alongside traditional treatments for those types of diseases defined activity "sensitive exercise".

The ASD, in addition to courses for instructors and practitioners, has also launched initiatives and projects in health sector, with particular attention to walking as physical exercise to prevent and improve health, collaborating with schools, promoting initiatives aimed at involving young people and urging policies aimed at sustainable mobility. It has experience in fostering sports activities for citizens of any age, from school level to big events with crowds of people, from training practices for students to walking events as instrument for improvement of healthy behaviors for elders.

5. **DESCRIPTION OF METHODOLOGIES**

Awareness raising activities targeted at young people

Stated that sedentary life may turn into serious muscular and bone related illnesses along individuals' lives it is necessary that correct information is given since the very early phase of people's life, in such a manner to foster the willingness to practice sport, to move owns body properly and periodic medical checks.

Given that contemporary lifestyle pretty often involving the use of personal mean of transportation such as scooters, cars, motorcycles, that the youngest use even for very short distances, especially in urban context, it is necessary that they understand the importance of walking not just to move from point A to point B but also to keep their body in good shape and to prevent future illnesses arising from the lack of a good amount of daily walking.

An action to impact on the youngest is necessary to foster their self-consciousness of the benefits deriving from walking as well the capacity of better control their sport attitudes in an amateurish way, outside the gyms.

Such actions were planned in the form of meetings and seminars at school on a regional scale and are designed in such a manner that the message will not be handed out academically but in a cooperative and participative way so that the youngest were actively involved in the seminars and they have contribute to the construction of the message itself.

During the Project realization time awareness raising activities were organised at school level in marginalized areas, located in the 6 Project countries territories. Other schools have invited to join the meeting, too.

The Participatory meetings with the young students were divided into 2 following activities:

- Presentation of the benefits deriving from practicing correctly sports, not exceeding or reducing the average amount of daily activity suggested to the youngest between 14 and 18, including examples of good practices.
- Experts speakers in the field of Sport Medicine has attended the meeting as speakers, some of them from the public Health Services.
- Role playing with the active participation of the students. Along such activities the students
 have been asked to participate simulations during which both the consequences of not
 practicing sports, namely not walking enough, and the benefits of it were displayed and shown
 directly in such a manner that they can experience directly both sides of the same issue.

Awareness raising activities targeted at elder people and people with chronic diseases

Elder people and people with chronic diseases nowadays are an increasing percentage of EU population, it's very important live the older age staying active and feeling to be active part of the society, make sport with other people is a good way to do that, with another positive effect: sanitary costs reduction. The actions were:

- Involved centers for elder people and associations that support and deal with and people with chronic diseases and Regional Public Health Service in Participatory actions
- Created walking groups to help elders and people with chronic diseases to take care of their health and socialize. Nowadays loneliness is one of the main marginality factor for seniors, physical activity is helpful to connect people.

6. COUNTRY EXPERIENCE

ITALY

The technique of Fitwalking has its origin from the mechanics of normal walking.

The real difference between normal walking and moving at a Fitwalking pace lies in the gait dynamics, in its most vigorous action and in the speed of execution of the movements.

Step and fake

Walking and Fitwalking are cyclical movements, in which the same actions are repeated repeatedly. This continuous repetition of the same movements characterizes all the aerobic disciplines and for this reason, it is very important to learn how to perform this repeated action in the best way, economically and quickly.

The movements that characterize step and stride of Fitwalking are:

- Attachment moment of resting the foot on the ground with the heel
- Swing advancement of the free leg from the support to the ground to allow the body to move forward
- **Single support** movement of the foot that remains on the ground and supports the weight of the body in the forward translocation, characterized by the central moment in which the weight of the body is completely on the vertical passing from the back to the front
- **Double support** when both feet are in contact with the ground. The higher is the speed, the shorter is the duration of this phase. In a good Fitwalking action, this phase is well evidenced by an extended push position and by an energetic heel support of the front foot characterized by a wide angle with the ground.
- Push moment that characterizes the whole propulsion of walking. The foot completes
 its buffer action by imparting an energetic movement that starts from the moment
 immediately following the single support phase, in which the passage of the body is
 highlighted on the vertical, and continues until the contact between the ground and the
 tip of the big toe with the double support phase.

The step is exactly half of a stride. It develops from the support on the ground of one of the two feet until reaching the same position with the opposite foot to the one with which the action began. The stride is instead formed by two steps and develops from the support of one of the two feet on the ground until reaching the same position with the same foot.







DOUBLE SUPPORT AND PUSH



PUSH END ON THE BIG TOE TIP



SEQUENCE OF A FITWALKING STEP

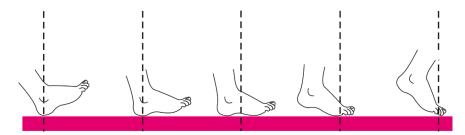
The foot movement

The foot has a very important role in the action of fitwalking. A proper use can really have a decisive effect on a more effective and efficient action. The foot makes a movement that in technical terms is called "pad action".

This term is used because it identifies the entire foot movement from the moment of its contact with the ground until the end of the push. The phases that characterize this foot action are attack, full plant support, push to the maximum point available in the toe tip.



Following the image it is possible to clearly see the entire foot movement.



The decisive motor aspects, however, are given by a careful focus on the decisive impact of the heel, which must offer the sensation of a different vigor than normal walking; a good pushing force, the foot must "feel" under the ground and "attack it with force" until closing the action on the tip of the foot. If we think of the three elements heel – soles of the feet – tiptoe and we realize them with force and accentuated rhythm, we can easily understand the importance

of this movement. As we acquire a good naturalness of action, we acquire too the advantages of using correct action of the foot in Fitwalking.

The instructor must be very careful in teaching the movement of the foot, focus on this movement that have be done with the right strength, intensity and, at the same time, naturalness. It is possible that, especially in the early stages, participants complain of a pain/discomfort in the front of the leg between the knee and the external malleolus. It is a soreness of the tibial muscle. This pain is temporary and linked to the warming of that muscular part. Normally after 10-15 minutes, it disappears. For beginners it increases as the ability to walk fast improves. Normally after a certain period of continuous activity (it is not the same for everyone, but in general it is a few weeks) this problem is no longer felt even thanks to an improvement in the quality of the tibial muscle.

Legs movement

The legs follow the movement of the foot with a tonic impact with the ground (in the phase of the foot attack), finishing their action with great energy in the pushing phase. The fitwalker's legs movement is very natural, it's different from nrmal walking only for the force and energy impressed on the step.

Basin mobility to facilitate the Fitwalking step

If feet, legs and arms are the essential movements of the Fitwalking action, the pelvis movement is essential to allow a harmonious step, using the force of the push to the fullest to maintain a natural action of feet legs and arms.

We could somewhat define the pelvis as the "hinge" between the actions of the lower limbs and the upper limbs. If this hinge is not well oiled it doesn't make this jointing action so the whole movement will be more difficult and wasteful. A good pelvic mobility therefore allows the step to open well, to the foot to complete the push phase at best, to the arms to oscillate broadly and to the overall action to remain fluid and dynamic.

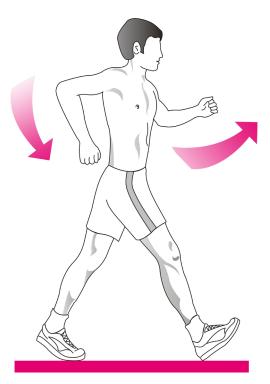
Arms use

The movement of the arms is very important in Fitwalking.

The arms can be used stretched along the sides or, in its typical action, bent at the elbow at about 90° and oscillate vigorously maintaining this position.

In both situations it is however important that the oscillation is wide to help the movement of the lower limbs to keep itself wide.

A good swing of the arms is at the base of a good setting of the step and, consequently, contributes significantly to ensure that the entire action remains dynamic with a full exploitation of the pushing phase.









ARMS POSITION BENT AT 90°

In the typical Fitwalking movement, the arm moves in a way that is always synchronous to that of the legs, for this reason its action (more or less wide) influences the same amplitude of the step and the complete use of its movement. The arms are the second (or fourth) legs of the fitwalkers.

Their movement occurs with the arm bent at the elbow at about 90° making them swing forward and backward and passing with the hand, in the lowest passage of their excursion, at about the height of the pelvis. Frontally they reach a central point in the chest up to the sternum. Back they rise with the elbow up about the shoulder blades, during this movement the angle at the elbow remains unchanged.

If we follow the movement of the hand/elbow line, from the frontal central point to the back, we find that it, if used correctly, draws a kind of half-moon.

The arms movement has a certain complexity of execution because normally people use them stretched along the body in the normal walking.

During the action it is important that the shoulders take a very relaxed position (almost to feel them abandoned downwards) so that tensions do not accumulate in the neck and torso area.

Teaching module

The instructors who will follow the activities must, before setting out a correct walking technique, try to convey the importance of the constant practice of physical exercise by explaining the reasons in consideration of the above.

Before being Instructors, they must be motivators, obviously adapting the approach according to the target audience (younger or elder people and people with chronic deseases).

As general indications valid for both targets, it is important to underline some elements:

• gradualness the practice must be gradual (especially for the elderly and the chronically ills) in that way there is the right time to absorb the information provided;

- fun the activity must be felt as funny and not as an obligation or a duty;
- measurement of the results can be useful to adopt some systems of measurement of the results (measurement of abdominal circumference, journey times of a measured path, ...) it's a stimulus for the participants, it is always useful to have a goal.



An added value to be conveyed to the participants is the sense of support and guidance that particularly concerns suggestions on how to walk correctly.

On the other hand it could appear as a simple walk accompanied, while the intent is improve the way of walking explaining the key elements of the biomechanics of walking and posture.

As indicated in the paragraph dedicated to the technique, the cornerstones of a correct and dynamic walk are:

a. the correct use of the feet

The feet are the true propeller of the walker. Not only because you walk with your feet, but because the foot movement helps and accompanies all the other main movements, from legs one to the arms one, and dictates the timing of the overall action. The foot therefore plays a main role. A good foot movement does not mean a use so different from a normal one, but substantially more decisive and more vigorous. Each of the individual movements is carried out in a more accentuated manner and with more extended position angles and movements.

The foot in Fitwalking is used in its entirety, from the moment the heel touches the ground to the end of the push that takes place at the toe. This movement is also technically described as a "pad action", because it moves exactly like the old pads that dried the ink on the sheets. The advice to people is therefore - after explaining these fundamentals - to learn to feel greater vigor in the phases of support of the foot and subsequent push, as well as a good and wide swing of the arms.

b. leg movement

The stride, the time between two steps, finds its rhythms dictated also by how the feet are used. If we place our feet firmly on the ground, we do not suddenly fall towards the ground and push well until the end, we will have enough time for a good stride to be expressed or good steps. If the foot makes a reduced job it will be evident that we will also have shorter and less incisive steps. Legs should look for a good opening of the step. The forward rush has to be perceptible but must not lead to a "kick" with consequent stiffening of the knee. A good step is expressed above all with a good push. This must be as prolonged as possible, that is use at the best the foot pad movement.

The advice for people is to get used to finding a good open pace, with wider steps than normal but keeping its as natural as possible. Walking is a natural action and even when we

try to walk quickly we must do it in a relaxed way. The knee, while extending to get an open step, should not be stiffened. Ground support always takes place with the knee slightly bent at its corner.

c. the arms

The arms are the "second motor" of walkers. If you don't learn to swing them well you can hardly express a vigorous and dynamic walk. The arms can be kept stretched along the sides or bent at the elbow at about 90 ° as in the Fitwalking typical movement, this is essential if the speed increase.

Shoulders should be kept as relaxed as possible.

The advice is to learn to let your arms swing. Those who try it immediately realize that the walk takes a more decisive course. Learn to remain relaxed with your shoulders. If the arms are bent at the elbow shoulders have to be relaxed and the neck free not embedded in the them. Remember that a good arm use also facilitates a correct posture of the upper body.

d. posture

Posture is not a main aspect from the point of view of the quality of walking but on the health of the exercise. You can also walk hard with an incorrect posture but sooner or later you will feel the consequences of this action with various pains or more serious injuries.

The posture mainly concerns the upper part of the body, even if the pelvis is directly interested by the correctness with which the trunk goes to settle and to unload the weights downwards.

The trunk must be straight (well erect) but not kept rigid. A good posture helps balance the different weights that affect the joints and the skeletal muscle apparatus during walking. A bad position of the trunk inevitably displaces this balance and therefore loads the joints in a different way.

The advice is to get used to walking straight, to feel the spine well stretched. Give a look to the front while still maintaining a good mobility of the neck. A mistake to avoid is to look at the ground, turn your gaze towards your toes, this unbalances your chest towards you and makes you lose postural centrality.

I.O. 02. How to involve participants and how to "teach" them Fitwalking

To reach project's objectives and involve the project's target, for the I.O. 02 Participatory Actions' organization it has been used the following scheme:

- scheduling of the calendar in agreement with the Valle Orco municipal administrations and ASL TO 4;
- communication and promotion of the program through the web pages dedicated to the project, the sites of the host municipalities, the newsletter of the Cral of the Regione Piemonte and the ASL TO 4, the local press;
- proposal of a free Fitwalking demonstration conducted by a qualified instructor.

The activities were structured as follows:

- meeting at a clearly identifiable point (town hall, tourist office, ...);
- verification of those present and signature of the participants;
- light muscle warming; walk at a moderate pace (or modulated according to the sporting level of the participants) for about an hour (about 5 km)
- stretching.

For the activities scheduled in 2020 and 2021, due to the COVID-19 outbreak, particular attention was paid to compliance with the anti-contagion guidelines, thus avoiding gatherings, wearing a mask and often sanitizing the hands.

Walking together turned out to be an aggregating and socializing experience that made it possible to know and experience the paths suitable for walking present in the host municipalities. Thanks to the presence of a qualified instructor, it also allowed participants to get to know or learn more about the Fitwalking technique, thus being able to experience how affordable it is to take care of one's well-being through a simple activity such as walking.

After an evaluation of the context, the precise choice was made is to be present continuously for the duration of the project therefore, even after the forced stop caused by the lockdown due to Covid outbreak. The Italian partners (Regione Piemonte and A.s.d. Scuola del Cammino Fitwalking Italia) decided to propose a busy schedule of activities, favoring constancy and continuity of action with respect to the number of participants.

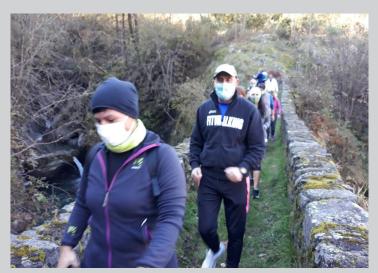
This choice meant that the Erasmus + project "Let's Fit!" was known and appreciated throughout the project's area.

PARTICIPATORY ACTIONS PROGRAMME:

Event number	Date	N° of participants	Place
1	06/07/2019	37	Rueglio (To)
2	27/07/2019	19	Ceresole Reale (To)
3	24/08/2019	33	Ceresole Reale (To)
4	14/09/2019	131	Rueglio (To)
5	28/09/2019	13	Ceresole Reale (To)
6	05/10/2019	19	Locana (To)
7	13/10/2019	7	Ceresole Reale (To)
8	18/07/2020	11	Ceresole Reale (To)
9	19/07/2020	14	Pont Canavese (To)
10	25/07/2020	10	Locana (To)
11	08/07/2020	17	Locana (To)
12	08/09/2020	11	Ceresole Reale (To)
13	09/08/2020	16	Alpette (To)
14	05/09/2020	9	Noasca (To)
15	06/09/2020	19	Ceresole Reale (To)
16	19/09/2020	35	Cuorgnè (To)
17	19/09/2020	15	Pont Canavese (To)
18	17/10/2020	11	Locana (To)
19	17/10/2020	17	Sparone (To)
20	26/06/2021	34	Locana (To)
21	10/07/2021	4	Pont Canavese (To)
22	24/07/2021	12	Alpette (To)
23	25/07/2021	5	Locana (To)
24	28/08/2021	7	Noasca (To)
25	28/08/2021	12	Sparone (To)
26	29/08/2021	31	Ceresole Reale (To)



RUEGLIO 6 LUGLIO 2019



SPARONE 17 OTTOBRE 2020



PONT CANAVESE 19 LUGLIO 2020



LOCANA 5 OTTOBRE 2019



CERESOLE REALE 27 LUGLIO 2019



CERESOLE REALE 24 AGOSTO 2019



CERESOLE REALE 8 AGOSTO 2020



CERESOLE REALE 6 SETTEMBRE 2020



CERESOLE REALE 29 AGOSTO 2021

LATVIA

Sport walking - Fitwalking

Sport walking is the performance of steps when the walker is in contact with the ground at all times, so that the human eye does not see the loss of contact. The front leg must be straight, it must not be bent at the knee from the time it first touches the ground to a completely vertical position.





In the 50 km men's distance, the first Olympic champion in the 1932 Games in Los Angeles is the British walker Tommy Green with a result of 4 hours 50 minutes 10 seconds, silver was awarded to Latvian athlete Jānis Daliņš - 4 hours 57 minutes 20 seconds.

Sport walking technique

Sport walking is a cyclical athletics discipline. The walking technique is based on coordinated leg and arm actions on both sides of the body, performed on the principle of cross-symmetry (right arm forward, left leg back, left leg forward, right arm back) to achieve potentially higher walking speeds (see 3.att.). The main rule of walking is that both feet are not detached from the ground at the same time and that it is straightened when the foot is placed on the ground. An invisible phase of flight is permissible, as it is difficult to maintain "contact with the ground" as speed increases.

Sport walking contains the following kinematic characteristics:

- For pedestrians, the speed is from 10 to 15 17 km / h, which is three times faster than the pedestrian speed;
- For walkers, the frequency of steps is up to 200 240 steps per minute, moreover, the contact time with the ground when walking decreases faster than the foot movement time;
- For walkers step length 105 130cm, pedestrian step length from 80 95cm;
- Movement of the hips of an active walker around the conditional vertical axis;
- The forward and backward movement of the bent arms is much more vigorous than in normal walking.
- Sport walking is a cyclical movement in which the springing phase of one leg and the springing phase of two legs alternate, with the obligatory straightening of the spring leg in the knee joint, leaning against the ground.

At fast normal walking at 9 km / h the two-way foot contact with the ground is 0.07 - 0.08 s, but at sports walking at 15 km / h this indicator decreases ten times.

Phase 1

In the first phase, the walker's left leg is straightened and placed on the heel (the approximate angle formed by the foot with the surface is 24 degrees), but the right leg is slightly bent and does not maintain contact with the ground, because the foot must be moved forward with the hip. The foot is on the toe.

When moving the arms do not exceed the height of the chest. The arms are bent at the elbow and form about 84 degrees. The head is perpendicular to the surface.



Phase 2

In the second phase, the walker rests on one leg. The foot "sweeps", the right leg is carried forward, while the support leg remains straight. The movement is "pulled in" by hand at this point. The hands are low in this phase because they help maintain contact with the ground. Height is straight. Against the background of higher speed and fatigue in this phase it can be noticed that athletes try to get into the hips.



Phase 3

In the third phase the walker rests on the toe of the left foot. The left leg is straightened, but the right leg is bent forward. The hands operated on the same principles as before. The arms do not exceed the height of the chest, although each technical nuances and performance are different. In fatigue and high speed, the walking technique will be significantly different from what it is in calm walking.



Phase 4

In the fourth phase of walking the walker carries the bent leg forward and puts it straight on the ground. In this phase, the walker with his left foot on the toe maintains contact with the ground. The arms are not raised above the chest. Invisible flight is allowed in this phase of the competition, but if the judge sees the flight, he is entitled to make a note.



The most common mistakes in walking technique

The most common mistake that walkers usually make is the "flight phase", when both feet are off the ground. The statistics of international competitions kept by the judges during one Olympic cycle from 1980 to 1984 show that approximately 70-90% of all disqualified participants in the 20km and 50km distances were disqualified directly for the "flight phase". In walking competitions, the note given for the "flight phase" is marked with "~", but the note given by the judges for the bent leg is marked with ">". Each participant may not receive more than three notes, which are marked on the judges' board. The note may be shown by the competition judge, but sometimes it can only be considered as a reprimand and does not appear on the judges' board.

To exclude the "flight phase" in the walking technique, it is necessary to actively use the muscles from the back surface of the thigh (hamstrings), which participate in the straightening of the support leg.

In order to learn the correct arm, leg and hip actions when walking, remember:

- 1. The leg is placed straight on the ground and remains so upright;
- 2. Putting your foot on the ground, pull your toe toward you;
- 3. The height of the walker is straight and the view is forward;
- 4. During walking, the arms are bent in the elbow joints and move back and forth, their movement in front of the body is directed slightly inwards;
- 5. Leg movements must be in the direction of walking;
- 6. When walking, do not lose contact with the ground;
- 7. Body straight, must not allow lateral and vertical oscillations;
- 8. Put your foot on your heel;
- 9. The leg must be straight when bent and returned;
- 10. The hands move parallel to the walking direction.

Walking movements that promote the formation of the flight phase:

- 1. Straightening of the knee too active in the repulsion phase;
- 2. Excessive straightening of the stepping foot in the knee joint, at active bending of the foot, coincides with the movement of the stepping foot in the hip joint;
- 3. The slow lowering of the walking leg on the heel is followed by the straightening of the knee joint of the stepping leg.

Exercises for learning sports walking

Anyone can learn the basics of sports walking, but high results in sports walking can be achieved only by training for many years, as well as by improving the physical fitness and improving the walking technique under the guidance of a coach.

With what to start? By watching the competition - best in person. With watching the competition on the TV screen. By imitating sports walking movements. By studying literature.

Exercises

1. Get acquainted with sports walking technique and walking short distances:

• walking 2 - 4 x 50 - 60m. Walk slowly and with acceleration.

Instructions: do not bend your legs at the knee joints, do not bend or bend your body, do not strain your arms and legs. If possible, make a filming for later.

2. Leg exercises:

- walking 4 6 x 50 60m with a straight leg in front, keep the leg straight until the vertical moment,
- walking 4 6 x 40 60m with active footing on the heel and pointing the toe "towards oneself",

Instructions: put the foot from the heel with the following "sweep" on the whole foot, actively straighten the foot after touching. Gradually increase your walking speed.



EXERCISE FOR ACTIVE FEET WITH ACTIVE FOOT PLACEMENT ON THE HEEL AND TOE POINTING "TOWARDS ONESELF"



PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN LEARNING PROCESS OF RIGHT MOVEMENTS

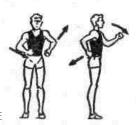
3. Exercises for hip action:

- 2 4 x 30 50m walking with pronounced hip action around the vertical axis,
- 4 6 x 50 60m walking along the line with hip rotation, achieving a longer step
- "Cross step" of walkers 2 4 x 40 60m

Instructions: repeat several times at different speeds. Do not move your hips, but by placing a straight leg far in front, increase the length of the step.

4. Arm and shoulder exercises:

- 4 6 x 15 20s hand simulation on the spot,
- 2 4 x 50 100m walking with hands behind,
- 2 4 x 50 100m walking with hands behind head,
- 2 4 x 50 100m walking by actively moving straight arms



5. Exercises to coordinate the acquired movements:

- 6 8 x 50 100m walking at different speeds,
- 2 4 x 40 60m walking in zig-zag or zigzags,
- 2 8 x 30 120m walking in a circle and in the stadium in a circle (turn).

Instructions: follow the condition of the body and head.

Align arms and legs. Walk freely, breathe deeply and evenly.

EXERCISE - WALKING ZIG-ZAG OR ZIGZAGS



6. Exercises to improve the technique and eliminate mistakes:

- 1. Walking towards the mountain, emphasizing the straightening of the knee joint
- 2. Walking with the body tilted forward, with an active hand stroke.
- 3. Walking, tilting the body and reaching the foot of the opposite leg by hand at each step.



EXERCISE - WALKING UP THE MOUNTAIN

Competition rules

The rules of the competition in sports walking are quite complex and have different nuances depending on the importance of the competition, but all competitions follow the main rules, which are related first of all to the definition of walking.

As our project Walking Guide is intended for more amateurs than professional athletes, the most important thing is to develop yourself physically, not competing with others, by following the common steps and movements of fitwalking.



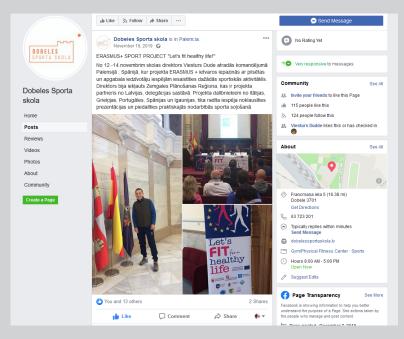
UP-WARMING EXERCISE. SALGALE PRIMARY SCHOOL, OZOLNIEKI MUNICIPALITY, 2019.



MASS START
OF THE ANNUAL 3 KM
RUNNING AND WALKING
COMPETITION
AROUND THE LAKE



THE BEST FIT WALKERS OF THE DAY. TERVETE MUNICIPALITY 2019



PUBLICATION OF EUROPEAN FIT WALKING ACTIVITY. DOBELE LOCAL MASS MEDIA



FITWALKING TRAINING PARTICIPANTS.

DOBELE MUNICIPALITY, 2019



LET'S FIT FOR A HEALTHY LIFE! DOBELE CITY STADIUM, 2019



FIT WALKING ACTIVITY POSTER. YOUNG AND OLD INVITED. OZOLNIEKI MUNICIPALITY



INVOLVEMENT OF VARIOUS SOCIALLY SUPPORTED POPULATION GROUPS. DOBELE CITY STADIUM, 2020

PORTUGAL

Fitwalking teaching methodology in the ADCS Carvalhais

This sport is characterized by simple movements, that are directly connected with simple basic human motor skills. This is an exceptionally good way for the learning of the "global method", in a fun way. By this, the learning of the "partial method" will help in the development of the specific technical gesture.

After this, all the activities can be planed using the "mix method" that will help in the development of the fundamentals. The coaches should teach first the "global method" and after the "partial method", this is a good way of also include the experience and the natural movement of the participants.

We can start the participation in this sport using already some of the experience and motor skills of the participants, they can use some of the daily life moves, till they develop specific skills that need a little bit more coordination for the use of the Fitwalking technique.

It's very important that before start Fitwalking the participant has knowledge about the differences between walking, running and hiking. Start with general drills that combine these types of actions can improve the development of the Fitwalking technic.

It's also very important that the coach should explain to the participants the positive aspects of this sport and the main differences of this kind of physical exercise.

Training Sessions and global pedagogic processes

Goals:

- Help in the perception of the differences between walking, running and hiking.
- Help in the development of interest about the Fitwaking as a sport.
- Help in the development of the interest in the participation in recreational

Activity 1

Using any space were the participants can move in different directions, we ask them to walk freely in a limited area and after the coach give a signal the must change the rhythm of the walk from slow to fast and vice-versa.

Activity 2

In the same space as the previous exercise, the participants should start walking fast as they can, at the signal of the coach they should start to run and vice-versa.

Activity 3

In the same space/place as the previous exercise, the participants should start walking in all directions, at the signal of the coach they should start to walk fast as they can with the legs completely stretched. After every new signal they should change the way of walking.

Activity 4

In this exercise the participants will walk fast with the stretched legs and after the signal of the coach they will start to run changing the movement at every new signal.

Walking Route "A"

Start and End: Carvalhais Vocational School

Distance: 1, 5 Km Difficulty: Easy Time: 45 minutes

PROGRAM:

- Introduction to the Fitwalking technic
- Rules and benefits of this sport
- Explanation about the route and technical support





WALKING ROUTE "A" AND LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Walking Route "B"

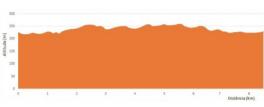
Start and End: ADCS Carvalhais Headquarters

Distance: 8, 5 Km Difficulty: Easy Time: 2h30 minutes

PROGRAM:

- Explanation about the Fitwalking
- Rules and benefits of this sport
- Explanation about the route and technical support





WALKING ROUTE "A" AND LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Walking Route "C"

Start and End:- ADCS Carvalhais headquarters

Distance: 10 Km

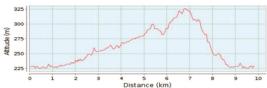
Difficulty: Easy/Medium

Time: 3 hours

PROGRAM:

- Explanation about the Fitwalking
- Rules and benefits of this sport
- Explanation about the route and technical support





WALKING ROUTE "A" AND LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY



PARTICIPANTS IN A FITWALKING EVENT AT VILLAGE OF CARVALHAIS IN PORTUGAL



PARTICIPANTS WARMING-UP IN THE VILLAGE OF CARVALHAIS IN PORTUGAL





PARTICIPANTS IN A FITWALKING EVENT AT VILLAGE OF CARVALHAIS IN PORTUGAL





WALKING ROUTE "B" AND LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY



FITWALKING ACTIVITIES AT THE VILLAGE OF CARVALHAIS IN PORTUGAL



GREECE

In Greece, FitWalking is spread by the use of a wide range of different actions and activities. Public media such as Facebook and Instagram are commonly used to raise awareness of FitWalking and to encourage participation of different aged people to activities and events which are organized by various sport club and associations.

FitWalking sessions are often part of the regular program of race walking events, trail running races, marathons, indoor and outdoor track races, etc.



FitWalking is systematically promoted for the last 10 years in Greece by the ATHENS WALKAMP event. This is an event with increasing popularity over the years and is organized annually by GAS ILISOS (P4 partner of the Erasmus + project 'Let's Fit for Healthy Life'). It gathers national and international athletes in walking race and includes FitWalking sessions in which participate hundreds of people of all ages (from youngsters to elderly). In the context of these FitWalking sessions seminars are given to introduce the physical activity of FitWalking and to promote its benefits for health along with its social dimension. On pages, 3 to 8 of the present document examples are provided of the kind of material which is taught during the FitWalking seminars during the ATHENS WALKAMP events. Besides the strictly speaking sport dimension, the focus is also to the social dimension of the participating athletic clubs considered as inhibitors of preventive health based initiatives, practices and campaigns for Fitwalking and health for people of all ages and especially the elderly.



So far, there is not yet any coordinated action at the Greek State level to promote FitWalking nationwide. However, FitWalking is gaining continuously popularity and for a first time a big FitWalking event entitled "THE GREAT WALK OF ATHENS" was organized on 14 July 2020 by the Municipality of Athens to celebrate the birth of Greek Walking 120 years ago. Thousands of people have participated walking along a path 4 km long inside the historical center of Athens.

This event was widely covered by the <u>Greek National TV Channel ERT</u> and other mass media and represented also an opportunity to widely advertise the scope of the Erasmus +

project 'Let's Fit for healthy life' via the participatory action of GAS ILISOS. This will greatly help the uptaking and implementation in a more systematic and coordinated way of the project's guidelines ebook related to sports methodology and strategies and tools aimed at addressing people to practice Fitwalking.





To this end the project's guidelines ebook is planned to be distributed via numerous communications channels to athletic sports clubs and associations, schools, nursing homes in the entire Greek territory via the involvement of the Hellenic Athletics Federation and the Greek Ministries of Education, Sport and Health. The ultimate objective is to reach people in all parts of the Greek territory and especially those living in deprived areas.

What does it mean the term FITWALKING? How this type of physical activity is defined?

According to Wikipedia **FITWALKING** (alternatively called 'Power Walking' or 'Speed Walking') is the act of **walking** with a speed at the upper end of the natural range for the walking **gait**, typically from 7 to 9 km/h (4.5 to 5.5 mph). To qualify as power walking as opposed to jogging or running, at least one foot must be in contact with the ground at all times. The term **FITWALKING** and its corresponding methodology was founded by Maurizio Damilano (Italian former Race Walker and Olympic Champion) whereas 'Power Walking' or 'Speed Walking' are the terms mostly used by the North European countries.

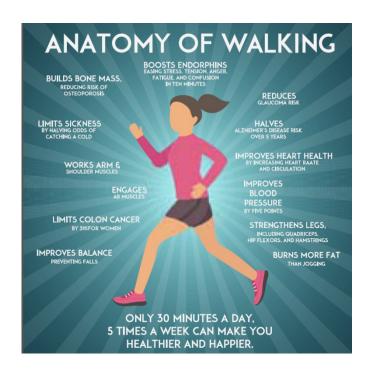
Benefits for health from FITWALKING

Well-consolidated scientific evidence shows that regular, brisk exercise of any kind can improve confidence, stamina, energy, weight control and life expectancy and reduces stress. It can also decrease the risk of coronary heart disease, strokes, diabetes, high blood pressure, bowel cancer and osteoporosis.

Scientific studies have also shown that especially Fitwalking, is also beneficial for the mind, improving memory skills, learning ability, concentration and abstract reasoning, as well as ameliorating spirits and reduces health risks, such as reducing the chances of cancer, type 2

diabetes, heart disease, anxiety disorder and depression and is also increased life expectancy even for individuals suffering from obesity or high blood pressure, but it also improves bone health, especially strengthening the hip bone, and lowering the harmful low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol while raising the useful high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol.

Recent studies show that FitWalking may also help prevent dementia and Alzheimer's.



The 12 most important benefits for health from FITWALKING

1. Improve Circulation

FitWalking wards off heart disease, brings up the heart rate, lowers blood pressure and strengthens the heart. Post-menopausal women who walk just one to two miles a day can lower their blood pressure by nearly 11 points in 24 weeks. Women who walk 30 minutes a day can reduce their risk of stroke by 20%, and by 40% when they stepped up the pace, according to researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health in Boston.

2. Shore Up Your Bones

FitWalking can stop the loss of bone mass for those with osteoporosis, according to Michael A. Schwartz, MD, of Plancher Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine in New York. In fact, one study of post-menopausal women found that 30 minutes of walking each day reduced their risk of hip fractures by 40%.

3. Enjoy a Longer Life

Research findings show that people who exercise regularly in their fifties and sixties are 35% less likely to die over the next eight years than their non-walking counterparts are. That number shoots up to 45% less likely for those who have underlying health conditions.

4. Lose Weight

A brisk 30-minute of FitWalking burns 200 calories. Over time, calories burned can lead to pounds dropped.

5. Lighten your Mood

FitWalking releases natural painkilling endorphins to the body – one of the emotional benefits of exercise. A California State University, Long Beach, study showed that the more steps people took during the day, the better their moods were.

6. Strengthen Muscles

FitWalking tones your leg and abdominal muscles – and even arm muscles if you pump them as you walk. This increases your range of motion, shifting the pressure and weight from your joints to your muscles.

7. Improve Sleep

Studies found that women aged 50 to 75 years, who took one-hour morning Fitwalks, were more likely to relieve insomnia than women who did not FitWalk.

8. Support your joints

The majority of joint cartilage has no direct blood supply. It gets its nutrition from joint fluid that circulates as we move. Movement and compression from FitWalking "squishes" the cartilage, bringing oxygen and nutrients into the area.

9. Improve your Breath

When FitWalking, your breathing rate increases, causing oxygen to travel faster through bloodstream, helping to eliminate waste products and improve your energy level and the ability to heal.

10. Slow down Mental Decline

A study of 6,000 women, ages 65 years and older, performed by researchers at the University of California San Francisco, found that age-related memory decline was lower in those who FitWalked more. The women FitWalking 2.5 miles per day had a 17% decline in memory, as opposed to a 25% decline in women who FitWalked less than a half-mile per week.

11. Lower Alzheimer's Risk

A study from the University of Virginia Health System in Charlottesville found that men between the ages of 71 and 93 years who FitWalked more than a quarter of a mile per day had half the incidence of dementia and Alzheimer's disease than those who FitWalked less.

12. Do More for Longer

Aerobic walking and resistance exercise programs may reduce the incidence of disability in the activities of daily living for people who are older than 65 years and have symptomatic OA, a study published in the Journal of Clinical Outcomes Management found.

Tips for FITWALKING duration and intensity

Physical activity does not have to be vigorous or done for long periods in order to improve your health. A 2007 study of inactive women found that even a low level of exercise – around 75 minutes per week – improved their fitness levels significantly, when compared to a non-exercising group.

FitWalking is low impact, requires minimal equipment, can be done at any time of day and can be performed at your own pace. You can get out and FitWalk without worrying about the risks associated with some more vigorous forms of exercise. FitWalking is also a great form of physical activity for people who are overweight, elderly, or who have not exercised over a long time.

FitWalking for fun and fitness is not limited to strolling by yourself around local neighborhood streets. There are various clubs and venues you can associate to for making your FitWalking an enjoyable and social part of your lifestyle.

Walking for 30 minutes a day

To get the health benefits, try to FitWalk for at least 30 minutes as briskly as you can on most days of the week. 'Brisk' means that you can still talk but not sing and you may be puffing slightly. Moderate activities such as walking pose little health risk but if you have a medical condition, check with your doctor before starting any new exercise program of physical activity.



A comfortable intensity for Fitwalking

For most people, there is little difference in the amount of energy used by FitWalking a kilometer or running a kilometer – it is just that FitWalking takes longer. Plan to cover a set distance each day and monitor how long it takes you to FitWalk this distance. As your fitness improves, you will be able to walk a longer distance and use more energy.



FitWalking fast burns more calories per hour than walking slowly, but this does not mean you have to push yourself until you are breathless. Instead, pace yourself so that you can still talk. This simple rule of thumb means that you walk safely within your target heart rate, which brings about health gains.

Our bodies tend to get used to physical activity, so continue to increase your intensity, as you are able to improve your fitness levels. You can increase the intensity of your walks by:

- FitWalking up hills
- FitWalking with hand weights
- Increasing your FitWalking speed gradually by including some quick FitwWalking
- Increasing the distance you FitWalk quickly before returning to a moderate FitWalking pace
- FitWalking for longer.

Benefits from combining FITWALKING with strength training

The scientific evidence

By FitWalking at a fast speed of about 4 km/hour in 15 minutes a person can consume nearly 50 kilocalories and in 30 minutes 100 kilocalories and in 1 hour 200 kilocalories.

Even if you walk daily, you might control your weight better by practicing weightlifting at least twice per week, according to new research. In a study published in the journal Obesity, people who did the recommended amount of aerobic exercise (150 minutes or more per week of an activity like walking) were 28% less likely to be obese. Those who did the recommended amount of muscle-strengthening exercise (two or more sessions of weightlifting per week) were 30% less likely to be obese. But people who did the recommended amount of both forms of exercise had the lowest odds of obesity - they were 50% less likely to be obese.

What makes FitWalking and strength training such a powerful combination? For starters, **a regular walking regimen** can help you lose weight, reduce stress, lower blood pressure and boost brain health, according to a January 2019 study published in **PLOS One**.

But FitWalking alone is not enough to keep your body healthy. Adding strength training builds muscles that help support your bones, ligaments and tendons.

"Strength training (and weight-bearing exercise in general) is important for your health, specifically for muscle and bone development as well as helping with chronic disease management," says Steve Stonehouse, a trainer, coach and director of education for **STRIDE**, a national boutique fitness brand.

The two combined can help prevent injuries, slow down age-related muscle mass loss and sustain a healthy amount of exercise without burning out.

Combining FitWalking with strength training, we can have an overall big improvement at the posture when we are dealing with younger participants and against health problems like osteoporosis if the participants are elderlies.

Recently an **Australian study** was among the first to analyze associations between aerobic exercise, muscle-strengthening exercise and obesity in such a large sample of adults (1.7 million people). "Up until 2008, physical activity guidelines (including World Health Organization guidelines and the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans) exclusively recommended aerobic exercise - it is only within the last decade that muscle-strengthening exercise has been included in physical activity guidelines," says study author Jason Bennie, PhD, a senior research fellow at the University of Southern Queensland in Australia.

"There is some clinical evidence that doing both muscle-strengthening and aerobic exercise may result in an increased muscle mass, which leads to **increased metabolic rate and/or total energy expenditure**," Bennie says.

"I believe resistance training and aerobic exercise work at different mechanisms at the muscular cellular level, like taking two different medications," says Dr. Tim Church, MPH, PhD, professor of preventive medicine at Pennington Biomedical Research Center at Louisiana State University. You may **build more muscle** from the combined exercise regimen, which could be a contributing factor.

Other associated health benefits

Another **study** from 2010 found the combination of aerobic exercise and muscle-strengthening exercise helped people with **diabetes** improve their **blood sugar levels**.

People who **walked on a treadmill** for roughly 110 minutes each week and did muscle-strengthening exercises with weights twice a week for about 15 minutes each were able to lose about 3.7 pounds and lower their A1C numbers (which measures someone's average blood sugar levels over the previous 3-month period) by 0.3 to 0.4 over a 9-month period. When people only did one type of exercise (aerobic or muscle-strengthening), the impact on A1C wasn't as great.

What's more, "clinical exercise studies have identified that, compared with one mode alone, combining aerobic or muscle-strengthening exercise has unique **cardiometabolic health benefits**," Bennie says. "These include more favorable associations with **cholesterol** and insulin levels."

The social dimension of FITWALKING

FitWalking with other people can turn your exercise into an enjoyable social occasion. Suggestions include:

- Schedule a regular family walk this is a great way to pass on healthy habits to your children or grandchildren, and to spend time together, while getting fit at the same time.
- If you are walking with children, make sure the route and length of time spent walking are appropriate to their age.
- Babies and toddlers enjoy long walks in the pram. Take the opportunity to point out items of interest to young ones, such as vehicles, flowers and other pedestrians.
- Look for the self-guided nature walks that have been set up in many parks. Younger children enjoy looking for the next numbered post; older ones can learn about the plants and animals of the park, and perhaps take photos or record their experience in other ways.
- Ask neighbors or friends if they would like to join you on your walks. Think of starting a
 walking group.

Age groups

People practicing Fitwalking can be classified according to the following categories:

- Kids up to 12 years old
- Adults
- Veteran athletes
- Groups (working groups, companies, families, schools, etc.)

SPAIN

Sport has the magical power to involve people in a complete and transversal way: it can be practiced at an amateur or competitive level, by all types of people and at all ages to keep fit or have fun. The project focuses on particular activities such as walking, fitwalking and power walking, as a vehicle of values such as solidarity, respect, participation and inclusion, on the one hand, and, on the other, as a sport to promote physical and mental well-being... being of the individual.

Nordic walking or Nordic walking is an activity – gait modality, as its name indicates – that has become popular all over the world, although since its inception it was only practiced in countries such as the United States, Austria, Germany and Finland. There are already and we are many who frequent parks and trails to the rhythm of our poles.

More and more, many people are joining this sport, considered by many to be one of the most wonderful for the benefits it brings both physically and mentally as well as in coordination.

It is important to note that from the beginning it was not considered a high-level sport, so its execution was only on smooth surfaces that were very easy to tackle; But after its evolution, there are those who practice in mountainous terrain.

Whatever its modality, the important thing is that you enjoy a tour, while you exercise your body.

The Nordic Walking Sports Club of Castilla y León is a regional and national Club, registered with the General Directorate of Sports of the Junta de Castilla y León. It is also recognized by the Spanish Mountaineering Federation, as well as the Castilla y León Mountaineering Federation.

We designed an offer that tries to promote SPORT, but above all, HEALTH.

As a Sports Club, it accompanies our Iberian Nordic Walking company, ESPECIALLY IN:

- Development of educational and informative activities.
- Organization of hiking and Nordic Walking sporting events.
- Promotion of Nordic Walking as a Health Sport.
- Development of TOURIST proposals related to the NW.
- Organization of FEDERATIVE COMPETITIVE TESTS.
- Research and development of new proposals for different events.

Our club and our proposal started a beautiful journey in 2013 that has allowed more than 5000 people to teach NW and we have diversified our initial idea with two new disciplines, BUNGY PUMP and FITWALKING.

Regarding the latter, we have had the opportunity to participate in a European project sponsored by the founders of the discipline, being able to know first-hand the methodology and implementation of fast walking.

Fitwalking is "the art of walking", it is a way of practicing the path that highlights its full potential and goes beyond just walking.

The English term literally means "walk to be in shape"; is the common denominator of all walking activities that leave normal daily locomotion and become motor sports, free time and relaxation, fun, fitness, health, well-being activities, but which maintain the common root of WALKING WELL.

"The art of fitwalking" lies precisely in the discovery that it is not enough to walk to make the most of the walk, the trek, the sports, cultural and tourist route or the health activity, but that it is necessary to walk well, that is, to walk. Observing a correct movement mechanics, acquired by knowing and practicing the fitwalking technique. A simple but essential technique to transform normal gait into a sporty way and suitable for everyone.

Fitwalking is, therefore, also a philosophy that accompanies daily life, to make it more alive, more balanced and rhythmic. It is a way of life that allows you to enter everyday life at the right pace, at the right pace, in absolute balance between ourselves and what surrounds us. WALKING If you think about the frenzy of everyday life, you understand the importance of inserting into our day a moment in which everything slows down and where the relationship between time and space acquires an absolutely different dimension and a new physical efficiency and a sense of absolute freedom. The freedom to move where you want and at the desired speed, to let your thoughts wander, to stop and scan the horizon or to go straight ahead with a firm and sure step.

Fitwalking regularly is a bit like going back in time, when walking was the only true form of locomotion that allowed everyone to move long or short distances and perform the normal actions of everyday life.

However, such a broad set of concepts and situations needs a synthesis that limits its contours more clearly.

Fitwalking distinguishes itself, recognizing its roots, from normal walking, from doing it for tourism, art, culture, environmentalism or love of nature.

That is why fitwalking is characterized in 3 categories, or families, which, for convenience, include all the different ways of understanding fitwalking, and in which each one can identify those that best correspond to their goals and needs as a walker.

The walk is a movement that is achieved through the cyclical repetition of actions.

A walk (or stride) cycle is divided into two steps, which means that a full stride begins with contact with the heel of one foot and ends with a new contact with the heel of the same foot.

Instead, the stride is the distance between the two feet (the end of the push with the rear foot and the contact of the heel with the advancing foot) and, as mentioned, it represents half of the entire walking cycle.

Approaching the technique of fitwalking means, therefore, making the way of walking effective enough to be able to move at high speed while maintaining a natural gesture.

It is clear that by taking a more vigorous step, some muscle groups will be more engaged and some movements will be accentuated, so that the typical fitwalking action will be acquired.

To begin to acquire a good technique, you will first have to identify the correct posture and, little by little, gain confidence with this type of action.

A good fitwalker does not walk upright like a lead soldier, his movement is very harmonious and aimed at finding an excellent thrust to favor the acceleration phase of the body. The stride should be balanced, neither too long nor too short, but well balanced with respect to the height and length of the limbs.

The trunk should assume an upright position and the shoulders should assume a relaxed attitude without falling like a weight on the torso.

When you have started to acquire a natural and efficient walk – the times to achieve this are generally not very long – you can refine the movement to optimize the fitwalking technique.

In general, for everyone, even those who will use it occasionally preferring normal gait, acquiring the basic principles of the fitwalking technique will be positive, since it will be possible

to clearly improve the ability to manage and govern the different aspects of the gesture. of the ride, with undoubted advantages in terms of the effectiveness of the movement, its economy and physical efficiency.

The fitwalking technique represents the learning of small actions and scenarios that help the correct way of walking to become an action of greater incisiveness, speed and efficiency.

The feet

The foot plays a very important role. It governs all the movements that the legs, pelvis, trunk, arms and shoulders will perform during the fitwalking action. The ground contact with the heel should be well accentuated to allow the foot to gracefully transition to full sole support and subsequent push off.

The correct position of the foot at rest on the ground is slightly outside, a position that will be maintained until full support on the ground until the maximum thrust point is reached.

The legs

The movement of the legs must be vigorous to be able to feel the work of the muscles. Its action is divided between the support phase and the push phase. The stance phase helps to help the foot support the body throughout its movement, from heel contact to thrust. The push phase takes advantage of the complete "swing" of the foot and through the intervention of the hamstrings it gives force to the advance.

Hips and trunk

The pelvis and the movement of the hips allow the step to develop adequate speed and keep the action fluid and harmonious. Therefore, it is very important to learn to move naturally at the level of the pelvis. A wide and harmonious movement of the pelvis makes the action of walking fluid and the gesture elegant.

A good action of the pelvis also tones the lateral muscles of the trunk and the waist with undoubted advantages also of an aesthetic nature. The pelvis is the hinge between the action of the lower extremities and the upper part of the body.

The trunk should always be aligned with the legs, forming a continuous line between the legs and the torso.

If the torso is projected forward, but the pelvis is held back, the action will not be harmonious and graceful, while an excessive withdrawal slows down the advance considerably.

The arms

The arms are a tremendous aid to the urge to walk.

The swinging movement of the arms in the action of walking in shape takes place by bending them up to approximately 90 ° at the elbow, that is, at a right angle.

In fact, the arm / leg movement is a harmonious whole that finds a perfect synchronization and induces all the action to become more vigorous. In a correct movement, the arms swing back and forth, with a contralateral action so that when the right leg advances, the left arm also advances and vice versa, and in perfect time with respect to the length and frequency of the step. They advance and retreat vigorously, drawing a wide arc.

The elbow moves back almost to shoulder level, while the hand reaches a hypothetical center point between the navel and the sternum. The hands are kept slightly ajar, but not clenched into a fist.

The shoulders

The shoulders support the movement of the arms and should be positioned so that they fall gently downwards. Also remember not to bend them forward or back excessively. The bust should be kept upright (not rigid). You should never have the impression of being curled up on yourself, but rather that you are firm in the legs, upright in the torso, relaxed and free in the movement of the arms and in the position of the shoulders.

The neck and head form a whole that has a major impact on posture. Therefore, the head must be kept very straight, having the feeling of helping in this way the complete lengthening of the spine.

It is important that this position is adopted very naturally without the intention of moving the head up to stiffen the upper body.

The experiences in Spain have been very positive since we have been able to verify both the benefits of the discipline and the enormous possibilities of approaching health and leisure at the same time. We have reached a very wide following in our city, more than 300, and we have contacted the administration for its launch.









ESTONIA

In Estonia, Nordic walking and Power walking are definitely more popular than Fitwalking, but since they are actually similar, we are talking about walking in general here.

Nordic walking and walking began to spread in Estonia, following the example of the Finns, in the late 1990s. Nowadays, Nordic Walking has become increasingly popular among men, women and young people. Walking enthusiasts are concentrated in clubs, which in turn belong to an all-Estonian association. Estonian Nordic Walking Union (**www.kepikond.ee**) is a non-profit organisation that was established in 2004 and represents Estonia in the International Nordic Walking Union. Union stands for public health and promotes Nordic Walking and walking in Estonia. Regular events and trainings are organized and through the union it is possible to train yourself as an official walking coach.

In Estonia, a series of adventure trips and experience marathons is a very good way to put yourself to the test for walkers. Experience marathons are the largest series of Nordic walking and walking marathons in Estonia, which offers participants motivation to move in the nature of Estonia. The predecessor of the sports series is the Lahemaa Walking Marathon, which took place for the first time in 2006. Today, there are five marathons in the series.

There are walking clubs, sports clubs and enthusiasts all over the country who walk regularly. In Valga, for example we organize walking series once every month and walking is always included in running competitions, too. Thanks to the ERASMUS+ "Let's Fit Healthy Life" project, Valga Municipality Government has been able to introduce the Fitwalking methodology to a very wide audience. Nearly 500 people of all ages took part in the events organized during the project. We will certainly continue to promote active movement in the future.

Walking enthusiasts in Estonia can be divided into three categories - health level, fitness level and athletic level. On the first level, people move calmly, this level includes mostly older people. But also, for example, people who regain their shape or learn to move as a result of illness or trauma. The main mass of walking enthusiasts is at the second or fitness level. These are healthy people who want to be active and make at least 10 000-15 000 steps every day. If the training improves and person starts to measure herself with others, one can say that the amateur has reached an athletic level.

We have famous walkers, following the example of which ordinary people improve their fitness. For example, one of the most famous walkers in Estonia Bruno Junk (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bruno_Junk) is born in Valga. Bruno Junk was double Olympic bronze, in Helsinki and Melbourne. In addition, his achievements include two world records, one world top result, nine USSR records and 38 Estonian records, and four gold medals from the USSR championship.

Due to the memory of Bruno Junk, it has been easy to attract people in Valga to walk and it is done with great pleasure. Since 1996 an annual memorial walking tournament has been held in his honor in Valga. The event is usually attended by about a hundred visitors from Estonian, Latvian, Russian and Lithuanian clubs. The best walkers from Estonia and neighboring countries are always present

11-time Estonian champion Margus Luik confirms that Fitwalking is one of the best hobbies to improve physical fitness. Compared to running, for example, you get a lot more muscle load. According to him, you can train both on the asphalt and on the terrain. You could start on straight lines of about 100 meters at a calm pace. You could walk three times a week, 40-50

minutes at a time, for a total of 15-20 km per week. You shouldn't get very exhausted with the first trainings. If you don't have a heart rate monitor, you could follow a simple rule: if you can still chat at a fast pace, everything will be fine. The heart rate could be a maximum of 150 beats per minute. If you are afraid that the heart rate is too high, you could stop for a while, count your heartbeats within 10 seconds and multiply the result by 6.

Methodology

1. Follow your posture

Keep your eyes forward, shoulders down and head straight. To activate the body muscles, pull in the navel to support the lower back. If you feel your upper body sinking while walking forward, stop and adjust your position. If you feel tension in the neck and shoulder girdle, relieve tension in the area and relax. Proper posture helps increase speed and prevent injuries.

2. Move your hands correctly

Bend your arms at a 90-degree angle and move them straight up and down in the same rhythm as you walk. This involvement of the hands helps to increase the speed. There is no need to wave with them very much - waving actually makes walking inefficient and even slower. Your hands are not a fist, but your fingers are in a position to hold a bottle of water. When the hand moves up, the palms must not rise above the shoulders, and when the hand moves down, the palm must not go beyond the hips behind the back.

3. Heels down, hips forward!

When walking, put your heel down first and take every step like that. Push your hips forward and do not move them from side to side.

4. Walk at a brisk pace

Aim for a faster pace than when walking normally. Studies have shown that increasing the number of steps per minute has a positive effect on insulin levels, body mass index and waist circumference. If you are new to walking, talk to your family doctor about the best walking pace for your health. As you develop a walking habit, you can already increase your pace.

Training zones on walking

- 1. **healing training** 50 60% of maximum heart rate, duration over 60 min, beginners in health sports.
- 2. **fat burning zone** 60 70% of maximum heart rate, duration over 45min, overweight, elderly people.
- 3. **aerobic zone** 70 85% of maximum heart rate, duration over 30 minutes, regularly practicing health athletes. A beginner has a suitable heart rate of 105 115 beats / min when practicing on flat terrain, 115 140 beats / min on alternating terrain.











7. TRAINING MATERIALS

TRAINING MATERIALS FOR TRAINERS Awareness raising activities targeted at young people

The target of young people will be intercepted through the school.

The first step is to identify the schools to involve and contact the management to present the project and propose the activities that will obviously be free and proposed, if possible, during school hours so as to guarantee maximum participation (and the insurance coverage).

In the presence of more school orders grades they can be subdivided into the three participatory actions, for example involving primary schools in the first, secondary schools in the second and any classes/institutions not previously involved in the third, alternatively it can be an opportunity to repeat activities with students already involved in the first two periods.

The activity includes a theoretical part/meeting and a practical/demonstrative part.

The **theoretical part** will have the nature of a meeting/seminar, will involve the largest number of students and will present the benefits deriving from the constant practice of a sports activity. Experts in the medical field will be involved and space will be left for interactions between the students and the speakers.

The **practical part** will contemplate an active involvement of the children, they will be involved in a walk to demonstrate in a practical way the benefits of physical activity on health. At the same time, will be indicated the consequences linked to inactivity and bad lifestyles, encouraging them to provide their opinions on the matter. The walk will be an aggregative moment to make the movement all together emphasizing how funny is, besides healthy, playing sports.

It is important let the children understand that it is essential for their future to adopt, even at their age, an active lifestyle that includes physical activity and proper nutrition, emphasizing that in addition to "organized" and competitive sport(certainly more in line with their age), there are small behaviors that if they become habitual and "normal" make the difference like go to school by walk or playing outdoors instead of watching television all the day.

TRAINING MATERIALS FOR TRAINERS

Awareness raising activities targeted at elder people and people with chronic diseases

The target of seniors and chronically ill patients will be intercepted through centers for the elderly and local public health.

The first step is to identify the local elderly centers/associations that work with the elderly and involve the local public health service.

Through these services the elderly and the chronically ills will be involved, also in this case in two moments:

• a **theoretical** one to be held in the form of a meeting/seminar in which a trainer and a doctor will illustrate, as far as they are concerned, the importance of the practice of

- physical activity and specifically an activity such as walking, even for people older or with chronic conditions.
- and a series of practical meetings (from 5 to 10) to be held on a regular basis (or once or twice a week depending on availability) based on walking exits (walking groups) conducted by a trainer who will be reference and guide for the group, it will provide indications on the correct posture and dictate the timing of the exit which will be structured as follows:
 - 15 minutes of heating with simple body exercises on the spot
 - 35 minutes of vigorous walking
 - 10 minutes of regeneration / stretching / stretching

It is important that the trainer creates a cohesive group and incentives the constancy of participation, between one participatory action and another the group can continue the meetings identifying a volunteer - walking leader - within the group that conducts the walking exits.

For chronically ill patients the trainer will discuss with a referring doctor of the local public service about the intensity of activities to propose.

8. FEEDBACK

The Regione Piemonte assigns sport a decisive role in education and training and recognizes its fundamental value for the promotion of human growth (respect for the rules, loyalty, fairness ...), the improvement of lifestyles, psychological and physical well-being, health protection, relationship development, social inclusion and the promotion of equal opportunities.

It also promotes sports and recreational physical-motor activity, for all age groups, as well as for the needs of people with disabilities and integrates sports policies with social, tourist-cultural, mountain, environmental and health policies.

In this context, the Let's Fit project has contributed to integrate amateur sports practice with the enhancement of the territory; it has also contributed to increase collaboration between institutions, generating networks of fruitful collaboration between Municipalities, ASLs and local associations.

Many days of demonstration, walking groups and moments of enhancement of fitwalking were organized to involve individual participants and decentralized territories and marginal rural areas as active places to have an active and healthy lifestyle.

Thanks to the collaboration with the A.s.d. Scuola del Cammino Fitwalking Italia, project partner, and the ASL TO 4 it was possible to involve dozens of municipalities and hundreds of enthusiast people, satisfying the objectives that the project set itself.

9. MATERIALS USED AND REFERENCES

• National Sport walking and Fit walking materials from:

ITALY

LATVIA

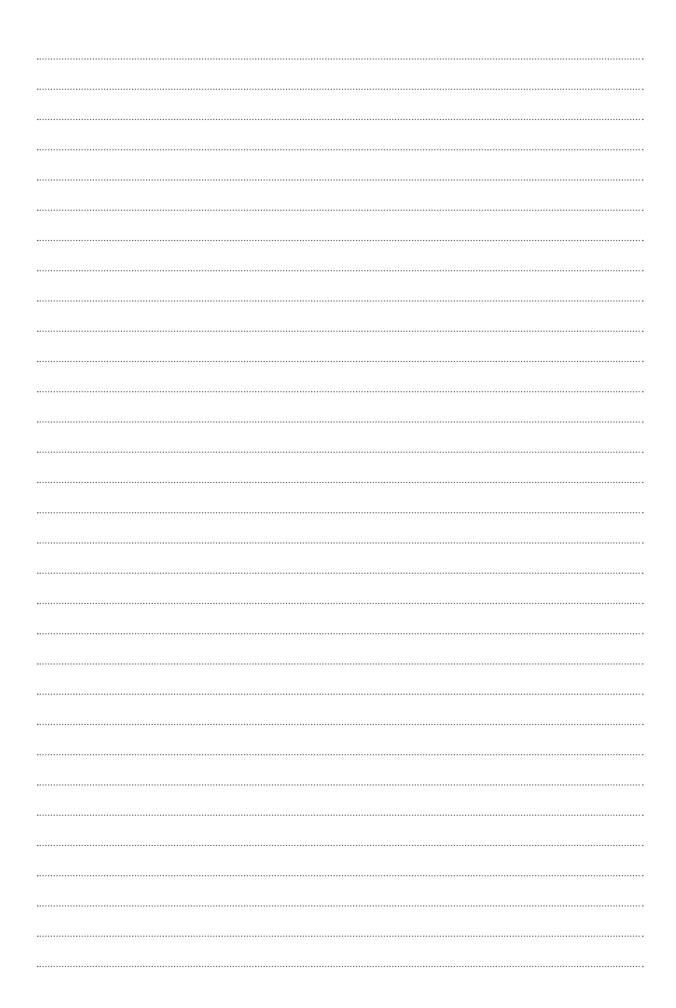
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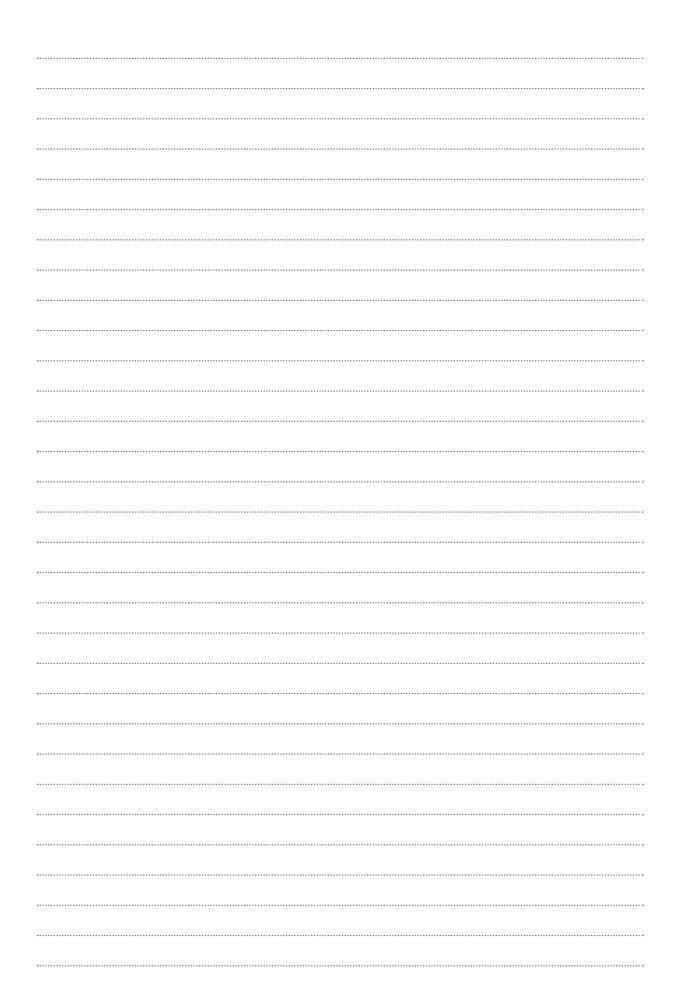
GREECE

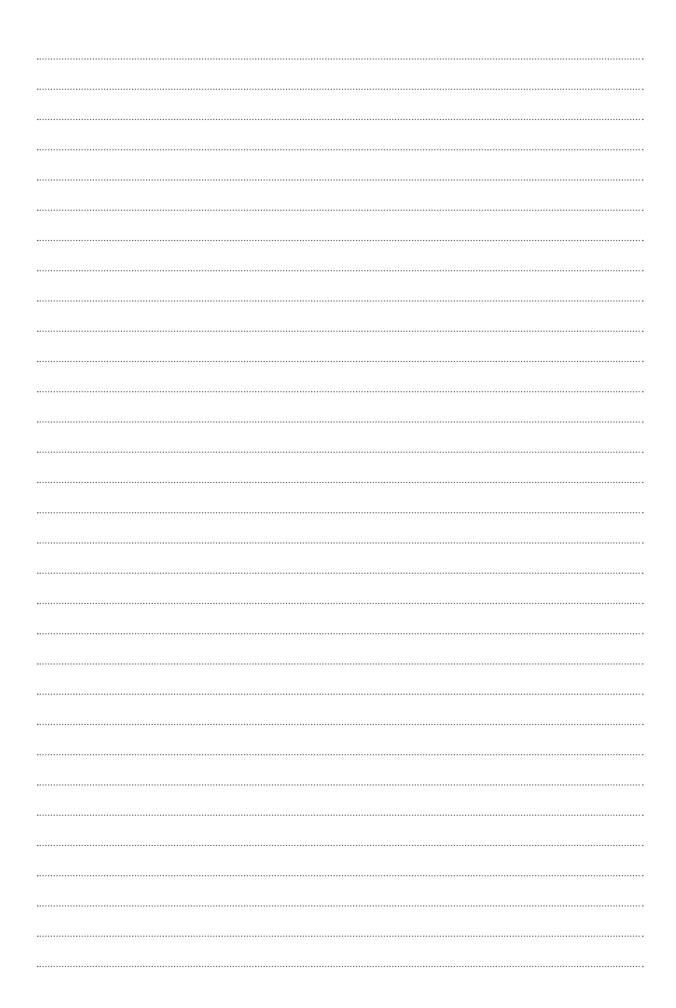
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- Greek National TV Channel ERT









www.piemonteitalia.eu www.regione.piemonte.it







Palencia Nordic Walking









La Regione Piemonte ringrazia per la collaborazione

























This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.