

Qualitative Studies

Findings from the aforementioned activities described in previous Chapters were coupled with qualitative data reflecting **PE teachers' views** about the role of PE on PA promotion. Two qualitative studies were conducted reported below

Qualitative study 1: aim and method

During the partner meetings across four countries (FR, GR, IT, TU), partners visited some schools and **interviewed PE teachers**. The aim was to discuss with local PE teachers about their strategies to promote PA, the challenges that they face, the opportunities that they have, their needs in terms of training and support, etc. Following this discussion, partners hold a group discussion presenting their opinions about their impressions from their discussions with PE teachers, plus suggestions stemming from their experiences and knowledge from other examples of good practice. Interviews of PE teachers in Greece, Italy and France were recorded but the interview in Turkey was not allowed to be recorded. Then these recordings then were transcribed.

Qualitative study 1: Findings

Based on PE teachers' reports it can be concluded that the time allocated to PE in the four countries is limited to an average of two hours (maximum three) per week.

Additionally, PE teachers' reports revealed that the curriculum of the participating countries is focused on teaching specific skills in order to be competent to participate in sports-based activities. Arguably, PE teachers prioritize similar goals. For example, a French PE teacher stated, *"most of the time they focus on technique, skills, ability, and pleasant time in PE because they have no time to do more"*. However, according to studies and experts' views, the implementation of this type of PE curriculum may lead pupils who are less-skillful in sports to be inactive during PE lessons.

Furthermore, PE teachers reported that they are aware of their pupils' participation in out of school PA but in most cases, they based this awareness on their pupils' participation in PE lessons or on their pupils' reports about the time they spent in out of school PA. For example, a Greek PE teacher stated, *"I can identify which pupil participates in a sport at the beginning of the academic year by asking them one by one if they are an athlete or not and in which sport they participate in"*. Only the French teachers reported that they use a questionnaire in order to explore to what extent their pupils participate in after school PA. More specifically, they stated, *"At the beginning of the year, pupils fill in some questionnaires... and in this way, PE teachers discover the children who want to go to the sports clubs and the pupils who they don't want to go to the sports"*. PE teachers reported that the pupils who participate in after school sports are also more physically active during PE classes. This assumption is aligned with the findings of the IMPACT project.

PE teachers also reported that there is no provision for pupils in Greece and Turkey to participate in extra-curricular PA for pupils who do not participate in sport clubs. On the contrary, Italian and French PE teachers stated, *"we do also do school sport in the afternoon... we create teams and training our pupils to participate in school competitions. This is an after school program that some schools can do some sports or activities with the PE teacher, in the afternoon"*. Arguably, it can be also inferred that the purpose of these activities is to promote school sports rather than helping students who are rarely involved in PA. Finally, PE teachers in the participating countries reported that they organize activities to promote inactive or obese pupils' participation in PA. For example, a Greek PE teacher stated *"... they do some theory classes to promote health. In particular, at the beginning of the school year or when the weather is not so good, we introduce pupils to health-related issues such as healthy eating behaviors or teach them alternative ways of exercise that pupils can practice in their spare time"*.

Following these interviews, the researchers concluded that the PE teachers wanted to promote PA for pupils who need PA, however they do not have the appropriate training to do it.

Qualitative Study 2: Aim and method

Researchers from three countries organized interviews at the end of the project (2019) with the PE teachers that delivered the IMPACT project. The aim was to explore how these teachers perceived the IMPACT project training, what they found useful and what it can be further improved. Accordingly, 17 PE teachers (France = 5, Greece = 5, and Turkey = 7) randomly selected from these countries were interviewed. The interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Qualitative Study 2: Findings

The data analysis revealed that the majority of PE teachers in these three countries had randomly used the goal-setting theory and none of them used it in order to promote his/her pupils' PA. However, they reported that they used this strategy during the delivery of the project and thus they intend to use it in the future.

Interestingly, many of PE teachers said that the duration of the IMPACT project program is not enough to change their pupils' attitudes towards PA. For example, a Turkish PE teacher reported, *"I liked this theory very much; I was not using it before. But I do not believe that it will settle with a one-time use. I think that if I apply this for 1 year, 2 years, maybe 3 years, it will have an important contribution to the child's life. Setting goals is perhaps one of the most important points of our job"*.

Additionally, PE teachers' reports indicated that there is no central policy or directive to guide them on how to identify students who are rarely involved in PA. For example, a Greek PE teacher stated, *"I did not use systematically a specific strategy in order to identify which of my pupils participate in after school PA. Only, in some cases I tried to discuss with my pupils to what if they participated in extracurricular activities, and /or they participated in sports clubs"*. Similarly, a French PE teacher reported, *"I had to do the class with him (an inactive student). Running with him or he wouldn't do it. I don't leave them alone facing their difficulty. I value them, I try to find things that could please them, where they feel well. I try regrouping them in groups to motivate them"*.

Most of the PE teachers reported that due to the program they adopted strategies that may urge pupils to participate in PA. More specifically, a Turkish PE teacher reported, *"... however, after involving this project I understand that every student can experience success and achievement. So it is not the right strategy to leave them alone sitting on the corner of the gym inactive. IMPACT also showed me the importance of the peer effect on motivation and learning"*. Similarly, a Greek PE teacher underlined that *"Of course (due to the IMPACT) it changed the strategy and lesson's structure. Before, I just urged my pupils to participate in after school PA. However, due to the program, we were in daily contact with the kids and they recorded the time they spent in PA. The most important was the recording"*. While another Greek PE teacher said *"Due to the program an overweight schoolgirl, who does not participate in any organized PA, after the program presentation said to me I want to contribute to the good of the team, but I can participate in intense exercise. Then I told her "you will start by walking in the beginning and that is a contribution to the group". The child was initially worried, but after that, I am very pleased with her effort and the fact that she is very active now and satisfied with the PE lesson."*

Furthermore, all of the PE teachers reported that they would like to participate in similar seminars in the future. For example, a Turkish PE teacher stated, *"I would definitely like to take part in the project that will support my own development"*. Additionally, a French PE teacher reported *"Yes! There are no training courses on how to promote after school PA"*. Finally, a Greek PE teacher reported, *"Certainly yes it was my honor to join this project because it makes me even better as a PE teacher and as a person"*.

Based on the aforementioned it can be concluded that these PE teachers were focused on promoting their student skills in order to participate in sports. Additionally, they provided activities for promoting inactive pupils' participation in PA, using self-regulation strategies (e.g., goal setting self-monitoring, self-recording) that effectively promoted participation in PA. Interestingly, a significant number of PE teachers had a lack of knowledge for significant concepts such as WHO's recommendation for PA, goal setting theory and empowering and disempowering motivational climate that could effectively help them to promote pupils' participation in after school PA. Thus, it can be concluded that before their training the aim of their teaching did not support effectively the promotion of pupils' PA. However, the IMPACT project helped them to adopt strategies that may effectively motivate pupils to participate in after school PA.

Summary

These complementary studies offered useful insight on specific issues of the IMPACT project and provided further boost to the importance of the aims, methodology and outcomes of this project. PE teachers and pupils found the online tools useful and they expressed their willingness to use them in the future for measurement, training and monitoring of PA. Although all PE teachers recognized the importance of promoting pupils' PA, almost all of them were several years in service but had not received contemporary training on how to motivate pupils and how to promote out-of-school PA. Most of the PE teachers did not have accurate knowledge concerning the recommendations of the World Health Organization for children's and adolescents' PA. Many of them reported that they had never received guidelines to identify inactive pupils and promote their PA. They all found the IMPACT monitoring tool and the goal-setting program very important to promote pupils' PA. In total, they found very useful the aims, content and methodology of the IMPACT project.