



## **Activating adolescents: MOVE4FUN – an innovative approach to boosting physical activities across Europe.**

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**Abstract:** The MOVE4FUN project aims to increase physical activity among European adolescents using evidence-based content through a dedicated mobile app. The initiative combines research, gamification, and expert collaboration to address the problem of low physical activity rates in this demographic. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), 81% of 11-17 year-olds don't get enough exercise, despite efforts from researchers and practitioners. The repercussions of inadequate physical activity can lead to an array of health issues, such as obesity, cardiovascular diseases, and mental health disorders, requiring extensive medical interventions and treatments, which can cause a substantial economic burden. The MOVE4FUN project aligns with recent WHO guidelines that emphasise the value of any physical activity, shifting focus from rigid interventions to personalised support. Research showed that incorporating gamification and augmented reality into strategies for increasing adolescent physical activity offers an innovative approach that taps into adolescents' digital affinity while simultaneously promoting healthier behaviours. MOVE4FUN seeks to engage adolescents by offering evidence-based content through gamified experiences to encourage more physical activity. The project also considers social inclusion, considering local differences and challenges from epidemics. The methodology employed in the project involved conducting a literature review and conducting qualitative research to address gaps in participating countries. Multiple focus groups were carried out to gain insights, encourage participant interaction, and explore the subject matter. These sessions followed established guidelines for effective focus group discussions (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Conducted in participants' native languages, each group comprised between six to ten participants in various countries in November 2022. A semi-structured interview script guided the discussions, which lasted around one and a half hours on average. All sessions were recorded and transcribed verbatim, with data anonymised. Currently, the project is in the content development phase, informed by research findings and a thorough literature review. Upon content finalisation, a pilot study will be conducted for evaluation purposes. After successful pilot testing, the project aims to release an open-access mobile app to share its findings and insights.

**Keywords:** Physical Activity, Adolescents, Gamification, Mobile Application.