**European Week of Sport 2018**

How a continent-wide movement to #BeActive grew to reach nearly 10 million people

European Week of Sport is back! Now in its fourth year, the European Commission backed campaign for physical activity is borne out of a simple belief: that being active is for everyone, and exists everywhere – from education and the workplace, to the outdoors, and in the continent’s sport clubs and fitness centres. And it exists in a point of crisis: physical activity levels in Europe are at an all-time low, with inactivity estimated to directly contribute to 0.5m deaths each year across the continent, and costing around €80bn annually.

Launched in Vienna to coincide with Austria’s national Day of Sport, this year’s campaign is expected to reach almost 10 million people through more than 26,000 events in 32 countries across the continent. In the UK, the Week is being coordinated by ukactive, whose own National Fitness Day campaign marks the week’s UK flagship event, capitalising on a campaign that last year saw over 5m people across the nation involved getting active to celebrate fitness, sport and activity.

At a time where inactivity represents not merely a national challenge, but a true global crisis, the importance of policymakers championing physical activity has never been more apparent. As research makes an increasingly compelling case for the wide-ranging benefits of physical activity and sport, so the importance of applying these findings to practical policymaking increases. The success of European Week of Sport rests not only in its ability to reach people across the continent, but on the influence it helps to exert on national decision makers in Europe’s seats of power and the wider awareness of the positive role of physical activity in society.

European Week of Sport runs until Sunday 30 September, with events taking place across the capital.

London Sport will be supporting European Week of Sport at Friday’s *Active London* annual engagement event.

For more information on European Week of Sport in the UK, visit [www.ukactive.com/beactive](http://www.ukactive.com/beactive)