

0752 SPORT INJURIES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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The promotion of physical exercise is an essential strategy of health promotion. However, a sizeable proportion of health gains are lost due to sport injuries. As safety concerns are a factor in the decision to participate in sports, reducing the injury risk is also an essential strategy of public health policies. Prerequisite for targeted programmes is the assessment of injury risks associated with certain activities, facilities, products and services. Usual health statistics (deaths, hospital discharges, medical treatments) do not contain this kind of information. In order to compensate for this shortcoming, 12 EU-countries have implemented a monitoring system with the focus on external circumstances, based on samples of hospitals (A+E departments) – the European Injury Data Base (IDB). It allows for rough but comparable estimates of incidence rates. In the course of an ongoing EU project a survey on sport injuries in the European Union (500 million inhabitants) has been derived, for the first time. According to the IDB definitions of sports, annually about 4.5 million people aged 15 years and older have to be treated in EU hospitals for sport injury. Team ball sports account for 40% of all hospital treated sport injuries, uncontestedly led by football (soccer). Two third of injuries affects men, although with huge differences in the various types of sport. IDB data allow also for more detailed analyses of injury mechanisms. The potential of the IDB system for guiding prevention programmes will also be illustrated in an exemplary way.