SHE4AHA
Health throughout life

School Health in Europe for Active and Healthy Ageing (SHE4AHA)

Policy and Implementation Recommendations



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Acronyms

EC	European Commission
HPS	Health Promoting Schools
SDEO	The South Denmark European Office
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
WHO	World Health Organization

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1. Introduction

1.1. The SHE4AHA project

The European Commission's Green Paper on Ageing (European Commission, 2021), adopted on January 27, 2021, serves as a foundational document to initiate a comprehensive policy debate on the multifaceted challenges and opportunities presented by Europe's ageing population. By initiating this dialogue, the European Commission aims to prepare the EU for the profound demographic transformations anticipated in the coming decades, reinforcing the World Health Organization (WHO) United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030) (WHO, 2020) and the Age-Friendly City Framework (WHO, 2007) as international collaborative platforms to promote older people's rights, health and wellbeing, while contributing to the United Nations (UN) Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UN, 2015), in particular SDG 3 promoting healthy lives and wellbeing for all at all ages, and SDG 11 promoting inclusive and sustainable cities and communities.

Therefore, the European Commission's Green Paper on Ageing constitute the cornerstones of the life-cycle approach, having highlighted concerns about intergenerational solidarity and social sustainability (Costa, 2022) and underscored the European Union's proactive approach to demographic shifts, aiming to foster sustainable and inclusive strategies that address the implications of an ageing society. Therefore, it serves as a catalyst for collaboration among member states, stakeholders, and citizens, fostering the development of cohesive policies that promote active ageing, intergenerational solidarity, and economic resilience. This proactive approach ensures that the EU remains adaptive and responsive to the needs of its ageing population, securing social and economic wellbeing for all and, in this sense, the Green Paper draws attention to the important role of the WHO Global Platform for Monitoring School Health[1].

Health Promoting School initiatives adopt a comprehensive approach to health education, integrating health into all aspects of school life. This strategy not only benefits immediate student wellbeing but also lays the foundation for healthier adulthood, thereby contributing to the objectives outlined in the Green Paper on Ageing. The World Health Organization (WHO) has developed a series of documents to guide the implementation of Health Promoting Schools (HPS). Each document focuses on different aspects of the HPS approach. The Global Standards and Indicators (WHO & UNESCO, 2021a) establishes eight global standards aimed at creating a consistent framework for health promotion within schools. These standards include: Government Policies and Resources, which emphasizes the need for long-term government commitment and resource allocation to support HPS initiatives; School

[1] WHO Global Platform to monitor school health: https://www.who.int/teams/maternal-newborn-child-adolescent-health-and-ageing/adolescent-and-young-adult-health/school-health/global-platform-to-monitor-school-health

Policies and Resources, which means developing school-level policies that integrate health promotion into the school's ethos and operations (whole-school approach); School Governance and Leadership, to ensure effective leadership and governance structures to oversee the implementation of health promoting activities; School and Community Partnerships, i.e. fostering collaborations between schools, families, and the wider community to support student health and wellbeing; School Curriculum, which is integrating health education into the curriculum to equip students with knowledge and skills for healthy living; School Social-Emotional Environment, aiming to create a supportive environment that promotes mental health and social wellbeing; School Physical Environment, establishing that it is necessary to ensuring that the physical school environment is safe and conducive to health; School Health Services, advocating that HPS need to provide access to health services within the school setting to address students' health needs.

The Making every school a health-promoting school: Implementation guidance (WHO & UNESCO, 2021b) offers practical strategies for adapting and applying the global standards in diverse contexts. It outlines thirteen implementation areas, each associated with specific strategies to facilitate the integration of health promotion into school systems. The guidance emphasizes the importance of context-specific adaptation and provides a process for countries to tailor the HPS approach to their unique needs. Making Every School a Health-Promoting School – Country Case Studies (WHO & UNESCO, 2021c) presents experiences from eight countries implementing the HPS approach, particularly in low and middle-income settings (Bhutan and Indonesia, Asia; Paraguay, Latin America; Philippines, Western Pacific; Senegal, West Africa; South Africa; Tunisia, North Africa; and Ukraine, Eastern Europe. The case studies highlight practical examples, challenges faced, and lessons learned, providing valuable insights for other nations seeking to adopt similar initiatives. The document serves as a resource for stakeholders involved in planning, funding, implementing, and evaluating HPS programs.

Research evaluating Health Promoting Schools has also provided valuable insights. Langford et collaborators (2015) made a comprehensive review assessing the impact of the WHO's HPS framework on student health and academic achievement. The analysis included studies addressing various health topics, highlighting the framework's broad applicability. However, the review emphasized the need for more rigorous evaluations to strengthen the evidence base. In the same way, Grillich et collaborators (2016) carried out a cluster randomized controlled trial examining HPS program's effectiveness in primary schools. The study found that while the program was feasible to implement, more research is necessary to determine its impact on health outcomes. Pommier et collaborators (2010) advocate for using mixed-methods approaches to evaluate HPS initiatives, emphasizing the importance of context in understanding program outcomes. Such approaches can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how HPS programs function in different settings. A systematic review (Sadjadi, 2021) identified factors influencing the implementation of HPS interventions, underscoring the importance of addressing contextual challenges to enhance program

effectiveness. Mũkoma and Flisher (2004) highlighting the diversity in study designs and methodologies and call for more standardized evaluation frameworks in HPS.

Within this background, the ERASMUS+ School for Health in Europe for Active and Healthy Ageing (SHE4AHA) (ID KA220-SCH-2021-003) responds directly to the following ERASMUS + priorities, "Inclusion and diversity in all fields of education" and "Tackling learning disadvantage, early school leaving and low proficiency in basic skills", which specifically mentions social inclusion and the importance of creating early intervention approaches that promotes wellbeing and mental health for learners and teachers, as well as protection from bullying at school through a safe and protective school climate and environment, which are all aspects that are included in the HPS framework. The project also responds directly to the ERASMUS+ priority about "Environment and fight against climate change", as the project aims to work with behavioural changes within school environments and the development of empowerment within children and young people, not only related to their own health, but also as a citizen in a society, where responsible thinking and behaviour towards the local community and the environment in general, will be in the centre.

SHE4AHA objectives

The overall aim of the SHE4AHA project is to contribute to the implementation of the Green Paper on Ageing, by developing and presenting evidence, good practice cases and policy recommendations that promotes the HPS framework and the SHE Material, as a concrete answer to the three questions that the Green Paper puts forward:

- How can healthy and active ageing policies be promoted from an early age and throughout the life span for everyone?
- How can children and young people be better equipped for the prospect of a longer life expectancy?
- What kind of support can the EU provide to the Member States?

This evidence-based project argues that healthy habits early in life prevent or delay age-related health issues. Involving pilot schools across Europe, including Denmark, France, Iceland, Portugal and Slovenia, the SHE4AHA provides teacher training and support to integrate health-promoting strategies into the school curriculum. The SHE Material and the "Your Guide to Becoming a Health Promoting School" by the SHE4AHA team (Schulz et al., 2025), as well as The Good Practice Catalogue (Hansen et al., 2025) or the project website (https://healththroughoutlife.eu/) show the great flexibility and adaptability to different contexts of both the health promotion teacher training curriculum and the created teaching material, as well as their potential for teachers to co-create health promotion processes and maintain its sustainability.

The "Policy and Implementation Recommendations" document invites the European Commission and politicians at local and national levels to use the results from the SHE4AHA project to stimulate and motivate the member states to participate

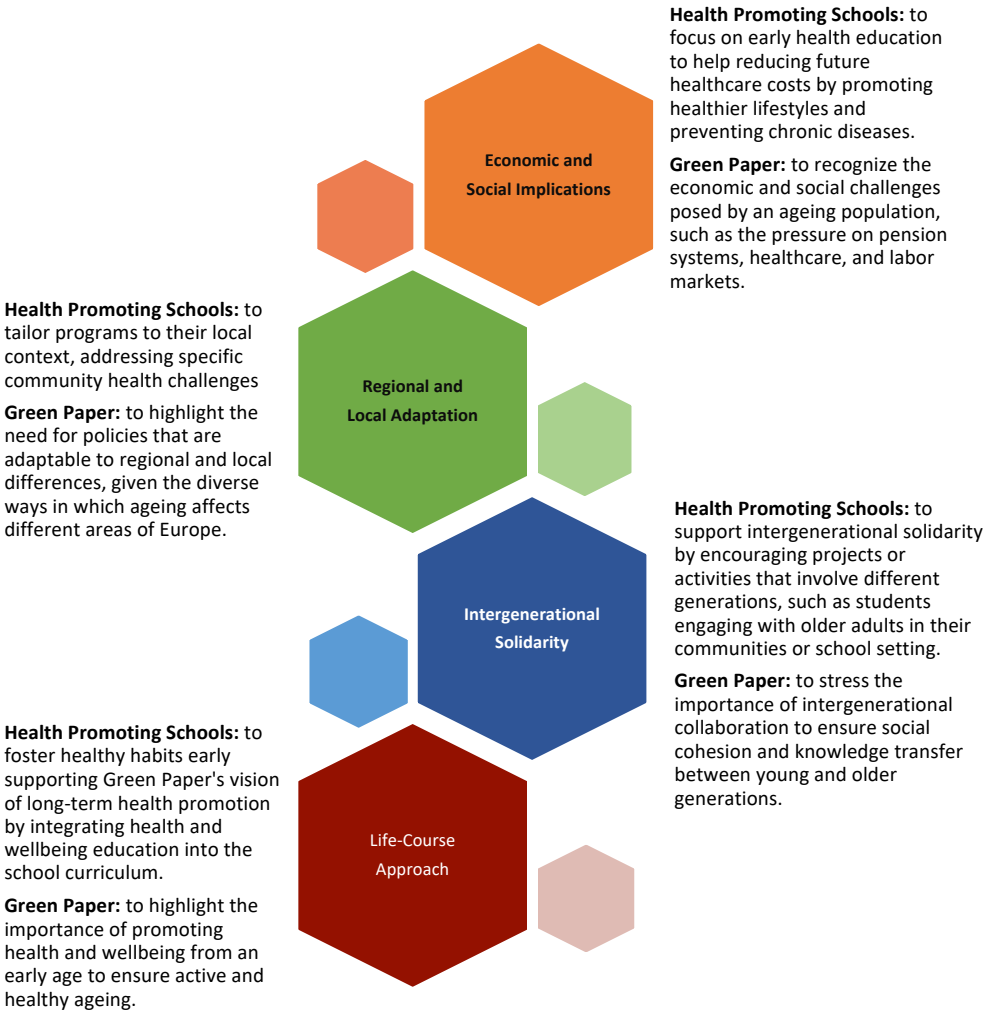
actively in common efforts towards the creation of a European society, where Active and Healthy Ageing is promoted, embraced and acknowledged as important from an early age within school environments around Europe.

1.2. Objectives of policy and implementation recommendations

The European Commission's Green Paper on Ageing and the Health Promoting Schools (HPS) paradigm can be connected through several key objectives, as both aim to promote health and wellbeing across the lifespan, with a particular focus on fostering positive habits from a young age that can support active healthy ageing.

Figure 1 shows the four most important objectives of the Health Promoting Schools directly linked to European Commission's Green Paper on Ageing.

Figure 1. *The key objectives of Health Promoting Schools directly linked to European Commission's Green Paper on Ageing*



Throughout this document recommendations for the creation of national and European policies that promote the implementation of school health in Europe for active and healthy aging focused on the following four main objectives will be presented: i) to create conditions for health and wellbeing promotion life-course approach; ii) to support intergenerational solidarity in health-promoting schools; iii) to support the implementation and monitoring of a flexible and adaptable health promotion teacher training curriculum to different local and regional contexts; iv) to advocate for the economic and social implications of early health education for active and healthy ageing.

1.3. Characterization of case studies from different countries

Denmark

In Denmark three case studies in different municipalities were developed: Fanø School, Vita School and Blåbjergskolen School (Figure 2).

Figure 2. *Case studies in Denmark*



Fanø School
Fanø Municipality



Vita School
Municipality of Esbjer



Blåbjergskolen School
Municipality of Varde

Fanø School[2], is located on a small island, which is at the same time the Fanø Municipality. The island is 16 kilometres long and 3 kilometres wide, and is located off the coast from the city of Esbjerg, in Region of Southern Denmark, where swimming, hiking, cycling, playing beach sports and looking for amber are possible.

Vita School (*Vitaskolen*[3]), in the municipality of Esbjerg, is part of a school collaboration of eight schools. It is located in the Gjesing district in northern Esbjerg and has 966 students divided into 44 classes. In grades 0-6, typically have three or four classes in each year group, and in grades 7-9, there are between six and eight classes group (*Vita*[4])

Blåbjerg School[5] (*Blåbjergskolen*), in the Municipality of Varde, is part of a collaboration between three departments: Blåbjerg Children's University in Lunde (LK),

[2] Fanø School Facebbok: https://fanoeskole.aula.dk/
[3] Vita School Facebbok: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100057120085187
[4] Vita School: https://skoler.esbjerg.dk/alle-folkeskoler/vitaskolen
[5] Blåbjerg School Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/blaabjergskolen/

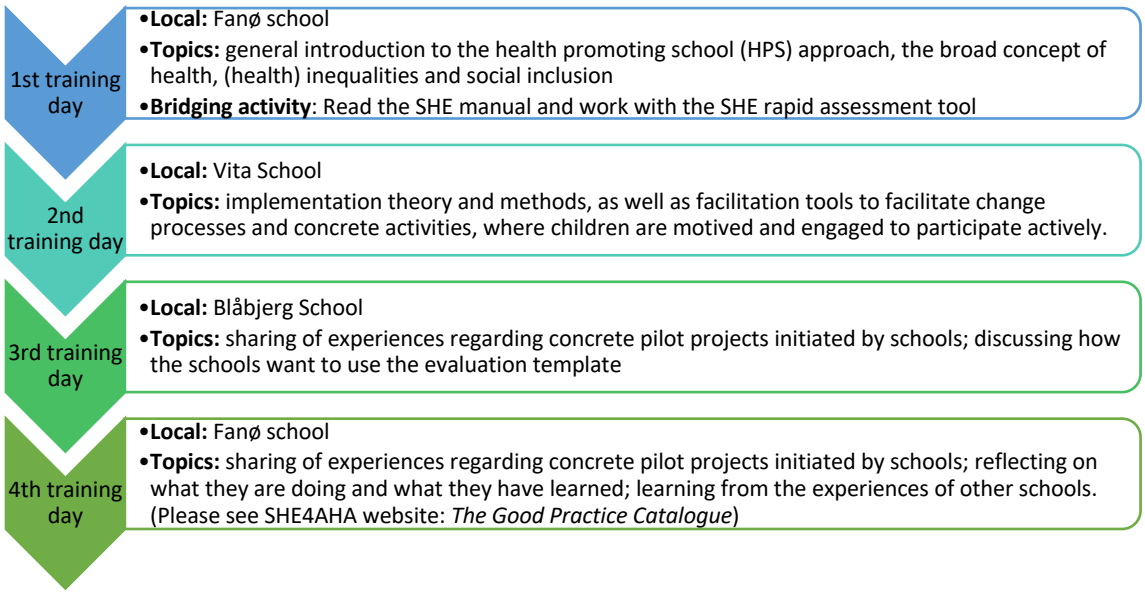
Blåbjergskolen Outrup department (OU) and Blåbjergskolen Nr. Nebel department (NN). The Blåbjerg School makes every effort to meet and challenge each child's social and academic wellbeing in communities consisting of motivated children aged 0 - 16 years, where committed and competent adults create coherence and wellbeing for daycare children and school students (*Blåbjergskolen - a whole with 3 advantages!*[6]).

The contact to the schools was especially established through the close network and collaboration that The South Denmark European Office (SDEO) has with the 22 municipalities in the region of Southern Denmark.

Into the SHE4AHA ERASMUS+ Project, all the material of the Schools for Health in European Network Foundation (SHE) was transformed into an easily accessible "pixie" version (Schulz, et al., 2025), supported with teaching material for three concrete and practical oriented training days, as school managers and teachers are busy people.

In Denmark the teacher training to test and use this material was organized over four days (Figure 3).

Figure 3. *Teacher training in Denmark to becoming a health promoting school*



France

The French team worked with three pilot schools in the region of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes at the Firminy Municipality. These schools were selected by the district inspector, where the school heads were motivated and engaged in the SHE4AHA project: Chazeau Primary School; Ecole Maternelle du Mas – Nursery School; Ecole Élémentaire du Mas, Primary School (Figure 4).

[6] Blåbjergskolen – A whole with 3 advantages! Facebook: https://blaabjergskolen.dk/om-skolen/

Figure 4. *Case studies in France*



Ecole Primaire Chazeau - Primary School, Municipality of Firminy



Ecole Maternelle Le Mas – Nursery School, Municipality of Firminy



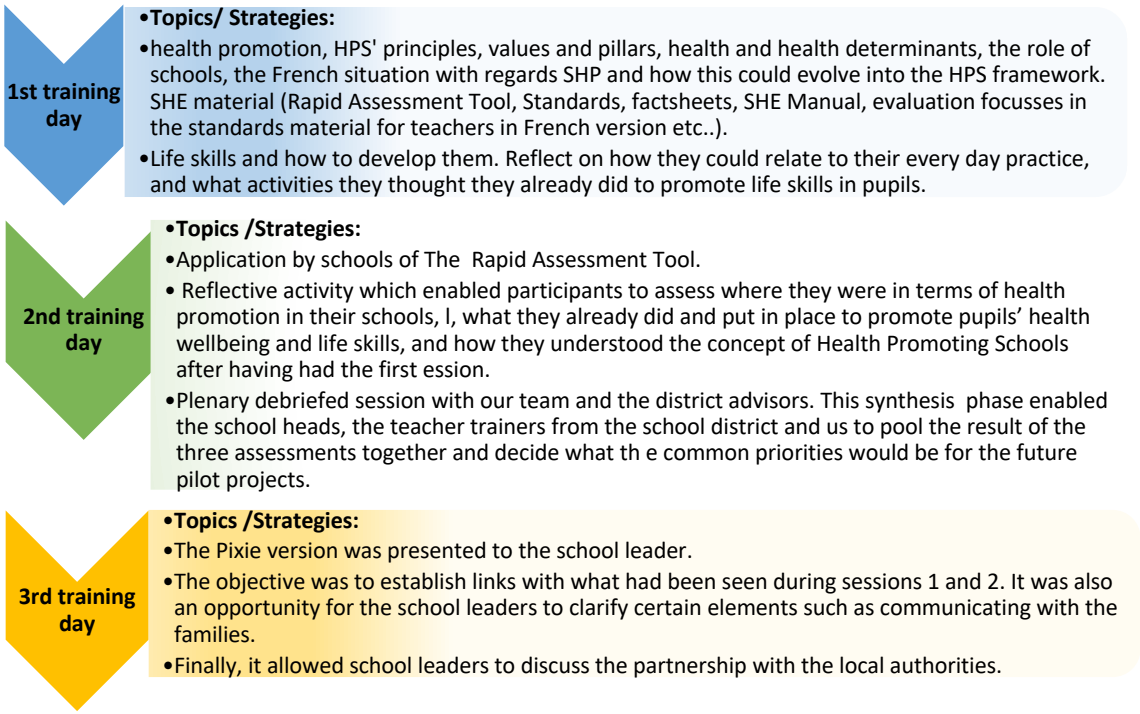
Ecole Élémentaire Le Mas, Municipality of Firminy

Chazeau Primary School (Ecole Primaire Chazeau), located in Firminy, provides Preschool education (Maternelle School) for children aged 3 to 5, and Primary School teaching (Élémentaire) that comprises five levels, for children aged 6 to 10. With a small student population of around 127 students, being 48 children in early childhood education, the school is part of the French public education system, ensuring free and equal access to quality education. It aims to foster academic progress, creativity, and social integration, preparing students for the next stages of their education.

École Maternelle du Mas of around 96 children and École Élémentaire Le Mas are public schools located in Firminy. They are part of the same educational complex, with École Maternelle du Mas serving as the preschool (ages 3-5) and École Élémentaire Le Mas providing primary education (ages 6-10). Students from École Maternelle du Mas typically transition to École Élémentaire Le Mas for their primary education that currently serves approximately 199 students. The school provides a canteen to offer meals to students during school hours. It also hosts a Localized Unit for School Inclusion (ULIS), designed to support students with special educational needs.

SHE4AHA teacher training was carried out for all schools together as they are based in the same municipality. The schools, the municipality, the daycare staff all work together on the priorities set together for the project. The training was based on the SHE manual (complete version) (Figure 5).

Figure 5. *Teacher training in France to becoming a health promoting school*



Iceland

In Iceland, three compulsory schools were involved as case studies: Hraunvallaskóli School; Fossvogsskóli School; and Djúpavogsskóli School (Figure 6).

Figure 6. *Case studies in Iceland*



Hraunvallaskóli School, town Hafnarfjörðu



Fossvogsskóli School, town Reykjaví



Djúpavogsskóli School, small village

Hraunvallaskóli School[7] is located in the capital in the town of Hafnarfjörður. Students from the 1st to 10th grades are over 800 (age 6-15). This school has been for many years a HPS and is working with the theory of growth mindset, as part of being a HPS.

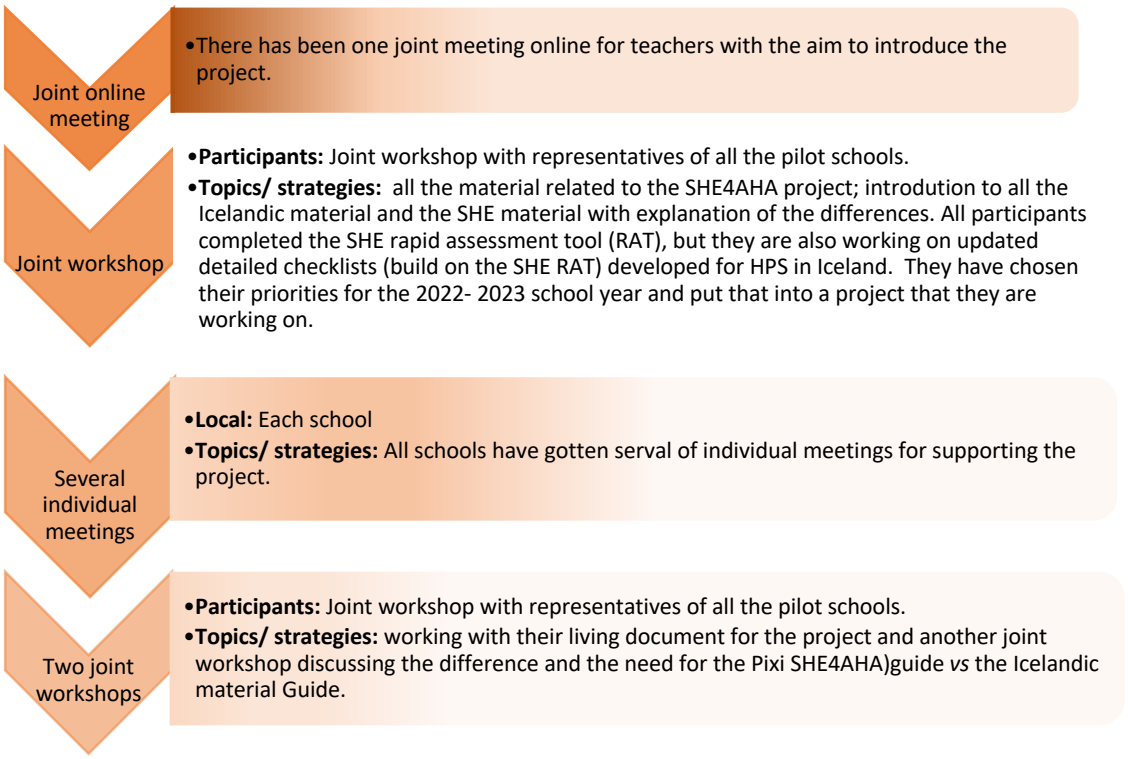
[7] Hraunvallaskóli Website: https://hraunvallaskoli.is/

Fossvogsskóli School[8] is in the capital Reykjavík. Students from de 1st to 7th grades are about 300 (age 6-12). It has been for many years a Health Promoting School. Now it is working with social relations and relationship building through physical activity during breaks and students' and parents' relationship through healthy diet, increasing fruit and vegetable intake.

Djúpavogsskóli School[9] is located on the eastern side of Iceland in a small village (550 km from the capital), but the village is now part of a larger community spread throughout the east with some distance between villages/ towns. Students from the 1st to 10th grades are about 90 (age 6-15). This school is taking the first step of becoming a health promoting school but has been a Cittaslow school for many years. Their aim is to combine that with the structure of HPS through the implementation.

SHE4AHA teacher training was developed in different phases with different target-population (Figure 7).

Figure 7. *Teacher training in Iceland to becoming a health promoting school*



Portugal

In Portugal four case studies in three different municipalities were developed: Monsenhor Elísio Araújo Elementary School; Basic School of Ribeira do Neiva; Basic School of Gualtar; and Vieira de Araújo Basic and Secondary School (Figure 8).

[8] Fossvogsskóli School Website: https://fossvogsskoli.reykjavik.is/
[9] Djúpavogsskóli School Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100057643320708

Figure 8. *Case studies in Portugal*



Monsenhor Elísio Araújo Basic (Primary) School



Ribeira do Neiva Basic (Primary) School



Gualtar Basic (Primary) School



Basic and Secondary School Vieira de Araújo

Monsenhor Elísio Araújo Elementary School is part of the School Cluster of Vila Verde[10]. Located in the parish of Regalados, about 5 km from the Municipality of Vila Verde, of which it is part, is a rural school from pre-school education to the 9th grade with over 700 students aged 6-14 years old (grades 1-9) and about 300 children from 3 to 5 years old. The school has several leisure clubs and projects, such as school sports, book restoration, theatre club, journalism club, constructions and model making, gardening club, science and sexuality education club. The SHE4AHA project was based in a whole school approach, continuing the dynamics of the school as a HPS.

Ribeira do Neiva Basic School is integrated in the School Cluster of Moure and Ribeira do Neiva[11]. It is located in the Union of Parishes of Ribeira do Neiva, about 14 km from the Municipality of Vila Verde, of which it is part. This rural schools with over 800 students aged 6-14 years old (grades 1-9) and about 300 children from 3 to 5 years old. This school is part of a community where agriculture and pastoralism play a fundamental role in supplementing family income. The school has several leisure clubs and projects, greatly appreciating its participation in the Eco-Schools Project. The SHE4AHA project was based in a whole-class approach.

Basic School of Gualtar is an urban school which belongs to Carlos de Amarante School Cluster[12] located at the Municipality of Braga. It has around 700 students from the 5th to the 9th grade (10 to 14 years old). This school currently has the Healthy School seal and the Eco-Schools seal. The school has several clubs and projects, for example, the health education project, the school vegetable garden, the integrative project, the math

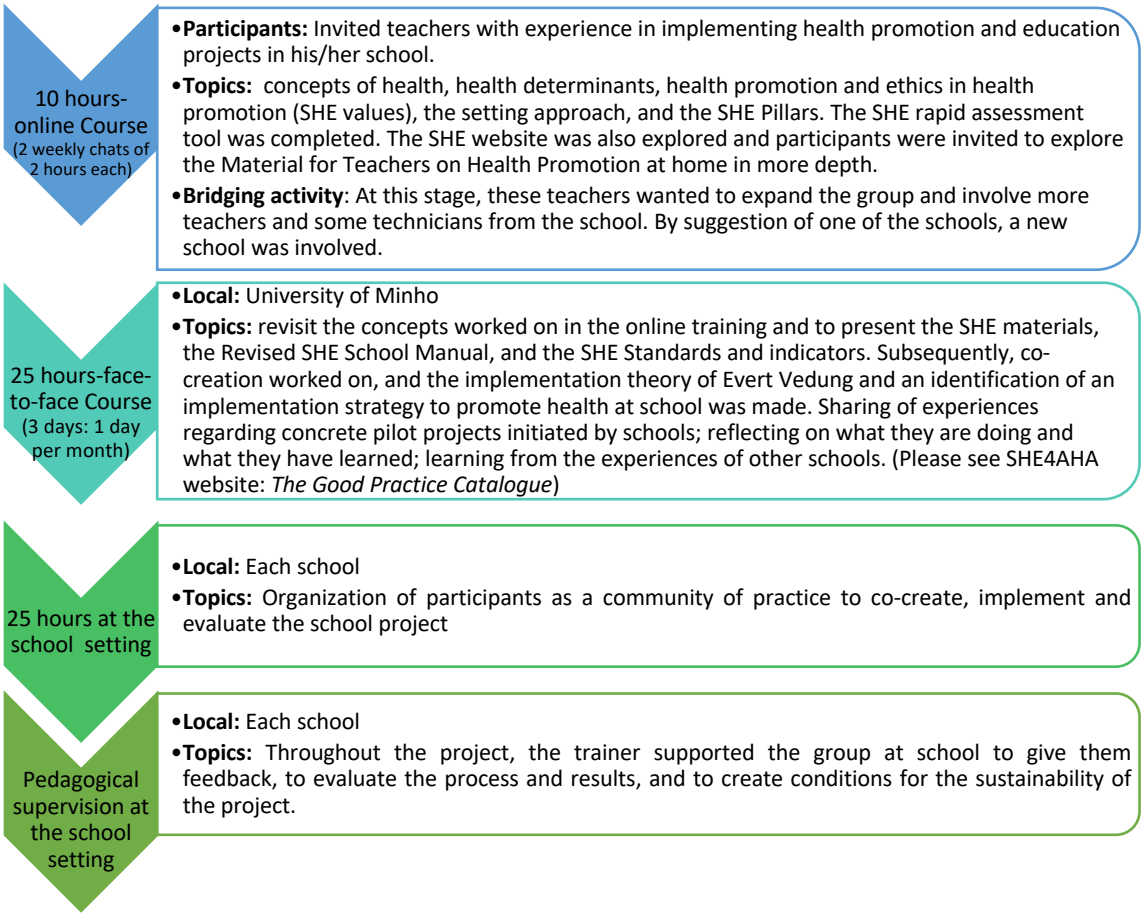
[10] School Cluster of Vila Verde Website: https://aevv.edu.pt/
[11] School Cluster of Moure and Ribeira do Neiva Website: https://www.aemourerneiva.com/
[12] Website Carlos Amarante School Cluster Website: https://aecarlosamarante.pt/

workshop and the music club. SHE4AHA project was based in a whole school approach, continuing the dynamics of the school as a HPS.

Vieira de Araújo Basic and Secondary School, from the Vieira do Minho Municipality, is a semi-urban preparatory and secondary school that belongs to the Vieira de Araújo School Cluster[13]. It has about 700 students from the 5th to the 12th grade (10 to 17 years old). The school has participated in several ERASMUS+ and eTwinning projects and has several clubs and other complementary activities, such as the arts club, school sports, robotics club and "living science" club. SHE4AHA project was based in a whole school approach, giving also continuity to the dynamics of the school as a HPS.

SHE4AHA teacher training was carried out at the Research Centre of Child Studies (https://ciec-um-minho.webflow.io/) of the University of Minho (Figure 9).

Figure 9. *Teacher training in Portugal to becoming a health promoting school*



Slovenia

The Slovenian team collaborate with the three primary schools case studies because they have been members of the network for many years. They are the following small

[13] Website Vieira de Araújo School Cluster Website: https://www.aeva.pt/site/

village schools quite far from Ljubljana: OŠ Bistricaob Sotli; Dutovlje Primary School; and Osnovna šola Toneta, Tomšiča Knežak (Figure 10).

Figure 10. *Case studies in Slovenia*



OŠ Bistricaob Sotli



Dutovlje Preparatory School



Primary School Tone Tomšič Knežak

Osnovna šola Bistrica ob Sotli (OŠ Bistrica ob Sotli)[14] , located in the Municipality of Bistrica ob Sotli, is a public preparatory school, from the 1st to the 9th grades, and had approximately 130 students enrolled. This school emphasizes a comprehensive educational approach, focusing on the holistic development of students and preparing them for further education. It offers various programs and activities aimed at fostering both academic and personal growth. The school actively participates in international projects to enhance educational experiences. In recognition of its innovative teaching methods, OŠ Bistrica ob Sotli received the European Award for Innovative Teaching in 2021. This accolade highlights the school's commitment to adopting creative and effective educational practices.

Dutovlje Preparatory School[15], located in the Municipality of Sežana, is a public preparatory school, from the 1st to the 9th grades, and had approximately 256 students enrolled. In the 2023/2024 school year, Dutovlje Elementary School strived to continue the tradition of a quality and locally recognizable school, trying to enable students to achieve optimal results according to their abilities and involving them in numerous projects that are the result of high-quality cooperation between students, teachers and external collaborators. The school place special emphasis on intergenerational cooperation and cooperation with other educational institutions, trying to encourage students to be open and accept diversity, to learn tolerance and help people.

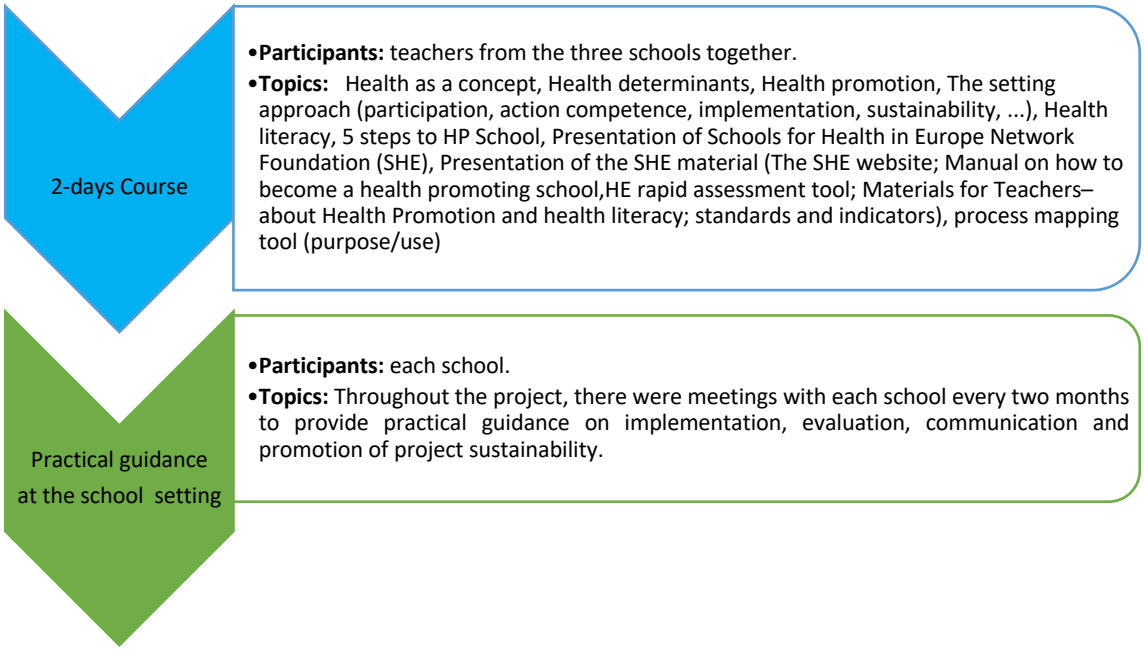
Primary School Tone Tomšič Knežak (Osnovna šola Tone Tomšiča Knežak)[16], in the Municipality of Ilirska Bistrica, is also a public preparatory school, from the preschool to the 9th grade. In the 2023/24 school year, the school has 129 students, 9 independent classes, three extended-stay classes, and four preschool classes. Classes are held in one shift according to the curriculum.

SHE4AHA teacher training was implemented by The National Institute of Public Health, which coordinates the HPS network, with the support of the Ministry of Health and the

[14] OŠ Bistricaob Sotli Website: https://www.osbistricaobsotli.si/
[15] Dutovlje Preparatory School Website: https://www.os-dutovlje.si/
[16] Osnovna šola Toneta Tomšiča Knežak Website: https://www.os-knezak.si/

Ministry of Education. Usually, these coordinators of the National Institute have regular meetings with the schools involved in the HPS network (every two months, occasionally even more or less often), training sessions, and regular contact via email or telephone. They also send all relevant materials to the schools. Into this SHE4AHA Teacher training 2 days-joint training were carried out followed by meetings with school every two month (Figure 11).

Figure 11. *Teacher training in Slovenia to becoming a health promoting school*

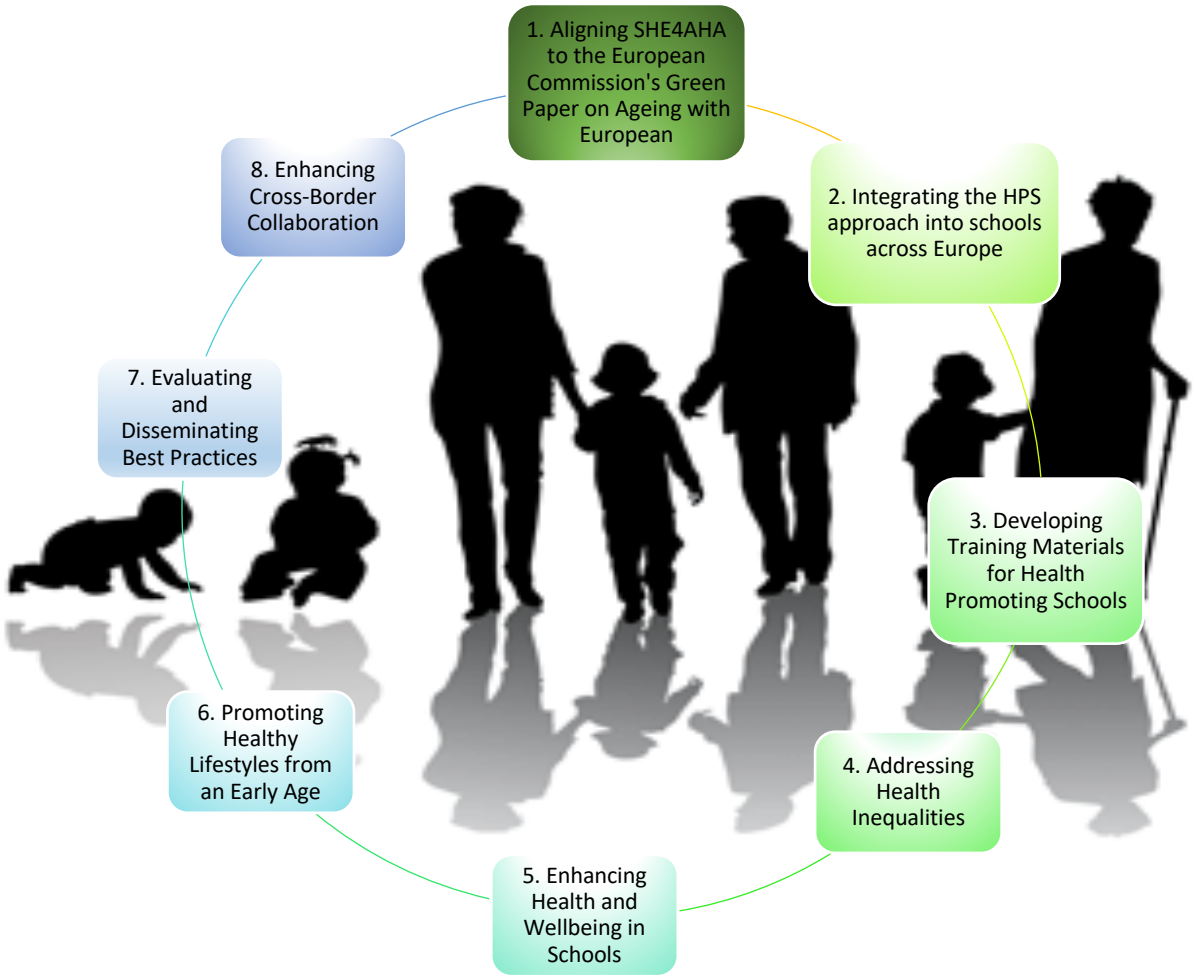


2. Context of SHE4AHA policy and implementation recommendations

2.1. Challenges addressed by the SHE4AHA project

The School Health in Europe for Active and Healthy Ageing project was initiated to tackle several challenges associated with the demographic changes in Europe, particularly the ageing population. The project addresses main eight interconnected primary challenges (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Main *challenges addressed by the SHE4AHA project*



The first challenge of the SHE4AHA project is to responded to Policy on Ageing by developing and implementing strategies that support active and healthy ageing from an early age. The second challenge is implementing the Health Promoting School framework across Europe, fostering environments that support students' physical, mental, social, intellectual, spiritual, occupational and environmental wellbeing throughout their educational journey. To cope with this challenge SHE4AHA team challenged itself to develop accessible and flexible training materials to assist schools in adopting health promoting practices, ensuring that teachers develop their knowledge and competences to implement these strategies.

The fourth challenge of the SHE4AHA is to reduce disparities in health outcomes among different socioeconomic groups at local, national and international levels by starting with the promotion of inclusive health promotion strategies within schools. Therefore, it is also a challenge in the SHE4AHA project enhancing health and wellbeing in schools through the implementation of co-created projects aimed at improving students' wellbeing and creating supportive school environments.

Recognizing that habits formed during childhood significantly impact health in later years, SHE4AHA has as its sixth challenge to encourage the adoption of healthy behaviours early on to prevent age-related health issues. To face this challenge, SHE4AHA has also the challenge to evaluate and encourage schools to evaluate health promotion activities and sharing successful strategies among schools to encourage widespread adoption of best practices.

To finalize, the eighth main SHE4AHA challenge is to enhancing cross-border collaboration. The project facilitated cooperation among schools in various European countries, promoting the exchange of best practices and collaborative solutions to common health challenges.

By addressing these main challenges, SHE4AHA aimed to create a comprehensive framework for promoting health and wellbeing throughout individuals' lifespans, starting from early education laying a solid foundation for healthier, more active ageing across Europe by addressing key health determinants during the formative school years.

2.2. Target audience needs and SHE4AHA solutions

SHE4AHA ERASMUS+ project implementation found a multifaceted need of key target audiences involved in the school community: children and students, teachers, school leaders, parents, policymakers, and the broader school community.

Children and students' health and wellbeing needs and solutions

This project shows that most of health and wellbeing target audience needs and strategies to dealt with them are common in different European countries. Figure 13 shows solutions to reach these five key needs identified: "Need of a safe, inclusive, and active learning environment"; "Need of participatory and health and wellbeing action competences"; "Need for predictability and structure in school, family and society"; "Need of movement and engagement"; and "Need of social cohesion".

To deal with the first need requires a combination of strategies that address physical safety, a culture of respect, belonging and inclusion, the support of student mental health and wellbeing and a culture of respect, and making learning accessible to everyone. Specific strategies described on Figure 13 are part of the Health Promoting Schools Approach (Vilaça et al., 2017) and the majority of them were validated on the SHE4AHA project when schools implemented the "Your Guide to Becoming a Health Promoting School" (Schulz et al., 2025).To meet the second need, not only the SHE and SHE4AHA material is suitable, but also other ERASMUS+ projects involving members of the SHE research-group, such as the Co-creating Wellfare (KA202-2016-12), CoCreating Wellbeing (KA220-VET-ADD1022F) and the Rural eHealth Facilitators - REACT (KA220-ADU-2D9650FE) projects which, among others, are great sources of inspiration.

Figure 13. *Children' and students' health and wellbeing need and solutions*



Thirdly, students need school, family, and social environments that provide flexible and adaptable predictability and structure, ensuring children and students feel safe, supported, and prepared for changes, as these elements create a sense of security, reduce anxiety, and enhance learning. In the school, some strategies to meet this need are: well-defined schedules, behavioural guidelines that are consistently enforced; lesson plans that outline daily objectives to help students knowing what to expect; posting daily or weekly timetables in classrooms to provide students with a clear sense of what is coming next; countdowns, signals, or structured transitions between activities to minimize anxiety; and regular teacher check-ins, coaching-support, and mentoring programs to ensures students always know where to seek help.

Providing stability and emotional security in family is also crucial to answer this need. Regular meal times, bedtime routines, and study schedules help to create a stable environment as these strategies impose consistent routines at home. Parents should explain changes or upcoming events to children in advance to reduce uncertainty, communicating openly and honestly. Promoting regular family informal meetings to discuss about schedules, concerns, and expectations also create a sense of structure and inclusion. Emotional predictability of caregivers giving consistent emotional responses, also help children to feel secure.

Creating a stable and inclusive community implies that schools, parks, and community centres offer predictable environments where students can engage in safe, supervised activities. Governments and organizations can promote programs that assist families with childcare, mental health support, and academic resources. Public institutions, based on transparent social systems, should provide clear guidelines and consistent policies to help young people understand societal expectations and community should encourage student participation in local events, youth groups, or volunteer programs, fostering a sense of belonging and stability.

The need for movement and engagement can be met incorporating movement into lessons, using strategies such as role-playing, hands-on activities, and interactive games, brain breaks (short physical activities between lessons) to boost focus and energy and standing desks or flexible seating to allow movement while learning. It is also crucial to meet this need offering a variety of activities beyond traditional sports (e.g., water sports, yoga, dance, martial arts, or parkour, depending on the school context). In the same line of action providing student choice in Physical Education activities increases student motivation, participation and engagement. Lessons also could encourage students' movement teaching science, math, or reading lessons outside to make learning more dynamic or organizing nature walks or outdoor research activities. Encouraging team projects involving experimenting and using inquiry-based learning where students solve real-world problems is also a good strategy.

Movement also should be encouraged at home, for example creating a daily movement routine, such as family walks, bike rides, or dance breaks, using active transport (walking, biking, or scootering to school) and limiting screen time to balance sedentary activities with physical play. Encouraging gardening or cooking are also good strategies.

Local community should have safe playgrounds, parks, and sports facilities accessible to all and advocate for walkable and bike-friendly neighborhoods while providing access to sports teams, dance classes, adventure clubs and support after-school programs that integrate movement with learning, such as robotics clubs. Promoting social and cultural activities, such as community fitness events namely fun runs, dance nights, or park yoga and encouraging youth participation in volunteering activities that require physical involvement, such as environmental cleanups or construction projects, are also good community strategies to promote movement-friendly public spaces.

Teachers', school leaders' and parents' needs and solutions

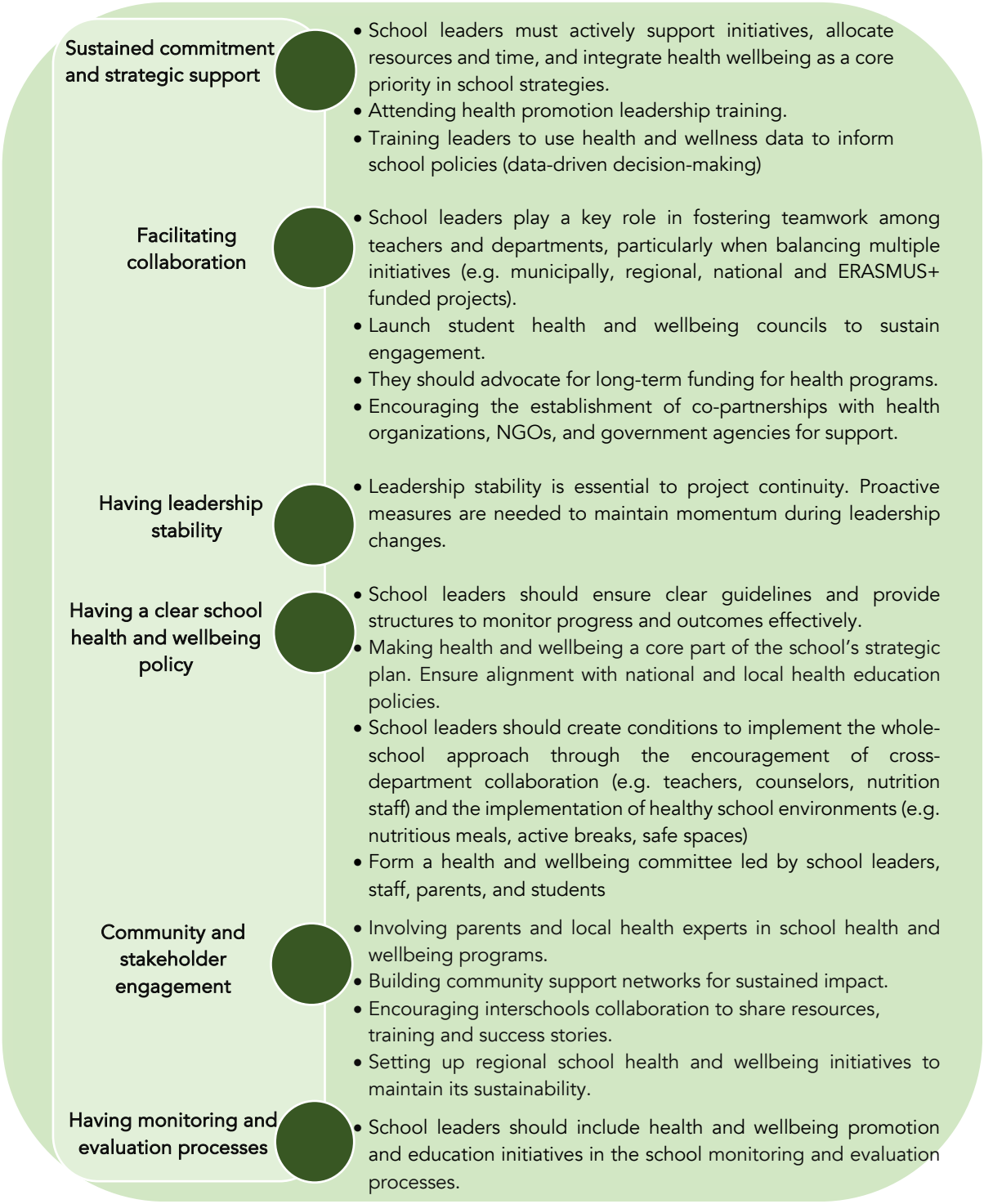
Table 1 presents a synthesis regarding teachers' needs and solutions to promote health and wellbeing which emerged in the SHE4AHA project in countries involved.

Table 1. *Teachers' needs and solutions for school health promotion*

Needs	Solutions
Practical tools and resources	• Tools, digital tools and Apps for promoting health and wellbeing, namely e-health Apps. • Guides to become a health promoting school and co-creation tools
Teacher training and professional development	• Developing competences of pedagogical supervision/ coaching in school context, self/ team reflexion on practices; collaborative work. • Learning classroom-based strategies (e.g. simple emotional check-ins; brain breaks; growth mindset activities) • Knowing what is a HPS, whole school approach, co-creation and health and wellbeing promotion programmes (e.g. Social-Emotional Learning; Sexuality Education; Gender Equity Education; Nutrition Education; Physical Education & Active Learning (Movement-based Learning); Mental Health and Addiction Education) • Developing competence to support or be part of support networks (e.g. school counselors or health and wellbeing teams; partnering with families for holistic health and wellbeing promotion; creating helplines and online resources such as APPs, websites, e-forums, blogs, Facebook)
Education to promote his/her own health	• Training on health-promoting practices, including movement-based learning and mindfulness, nutrition, physical activity and work addition to enhance their health skills and self-confidence and prevent Burnout. • Encouraging teachers collaborative work.
Time and flexibility	• Educating teachers on time management is essential to help them balance lesson planning, grading, classroom management, and personal wellbeing (e.g. prioritization, scheduling, and efficiency techniques; time-wasting habits; differentiation between urgent vs important tasks; peer collaboration; encouraging setting clear boundaries for work hours and self-care and reflection techniques to maintain productivity). • Teachers need sufficient time and space in their schedules to effectively implement new initiatives without increasing workload stress.
Recognition and collaboration	• Acknowledging teachers' existing wellbeing efforts. • Encouraging shared learning fosters a collaborative culture and ownership of new initiatives.
Consistency across grades	• Standardizing lesson routines and sharing practices across teachers create a unified approach, benefiting both pupils and staff.

To promote health and wellbeing in schools, school leaders' needs to be supported to maintain: a sustained commitment and a strategic support; facilitating collaboration; having leadership stability; having clear school health and wellbeing policies; and having monitoring and evaluation processes including health and wellbeing promotion (Figure 14).

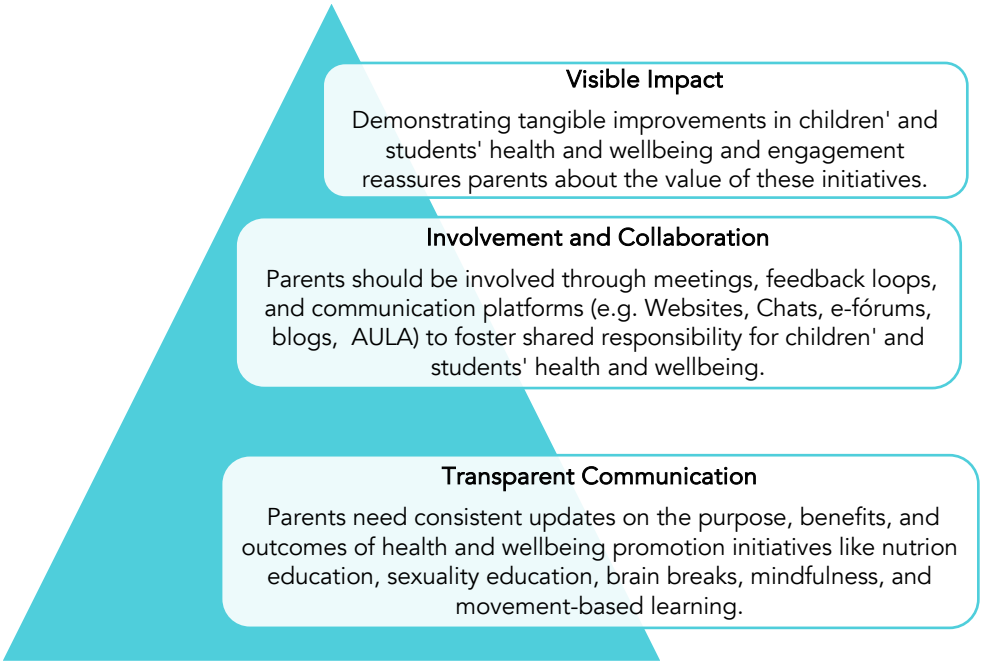
Figure 14. *School leaders' needs and solutions for school health promotion*



Summing up, to maintain the sustainability of health promoting schools is crucial school leaders recognize the importance of health and wellbeing promotion in the school environment and the aims of the whole-school approach, supporting teachers and no-teaching staff in actively creating a healthy and safe school environment for students (enabling the implementation of measures, identified and systematized status of a HPS team leader, recognized role of members of the HPS team and fostering a healthy and supportive work environment for all.

Parents and guardians need transparent communication, to become involved and collaborate, and understand the visible impact of health promotion at school to become involved in its dynamic and advocate for HPS (Figure 15).

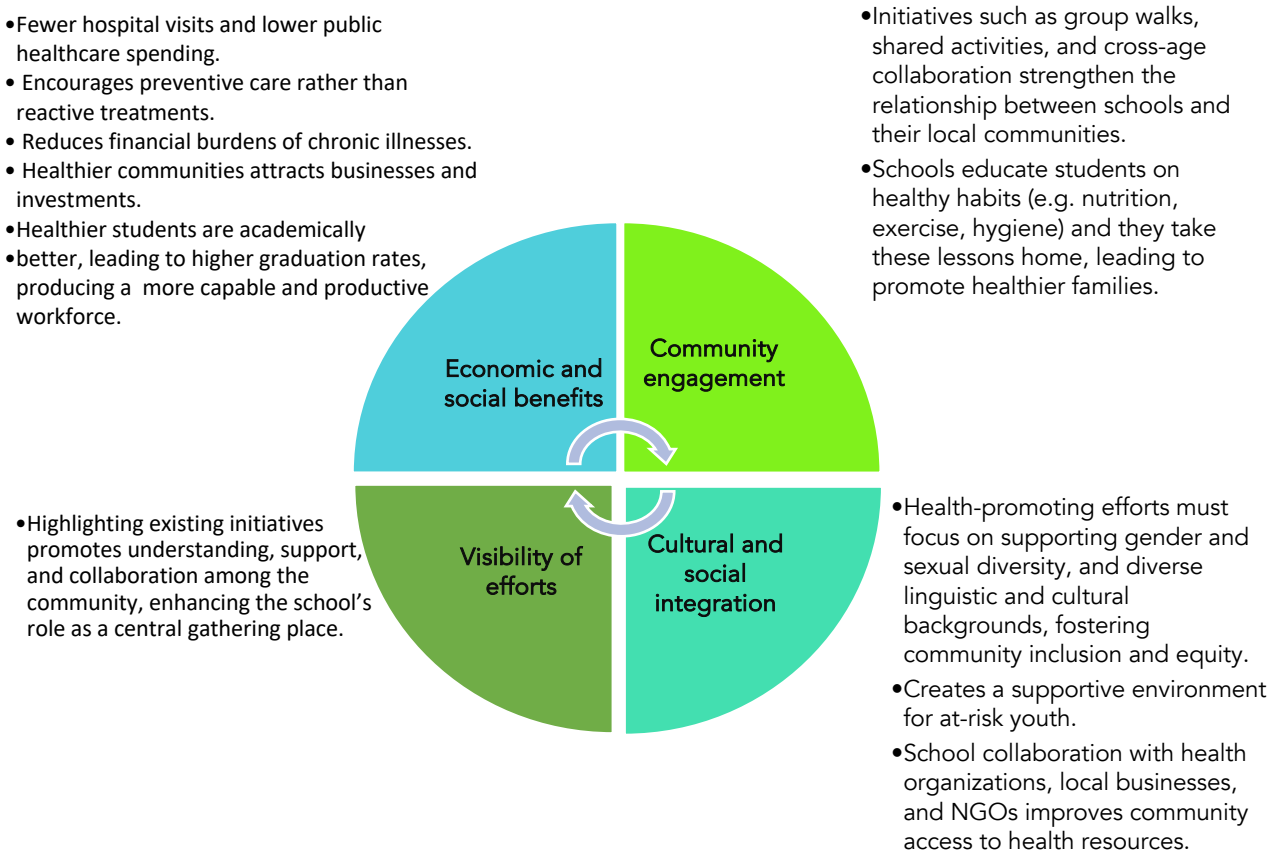
Figure 15. *Parents' needs and solutions to become involved on school health promotion*



Broader school community' need and solutions

A Health Promoting School benefits not only students but also the broader community by fostering a culture of wellbeing. Collaboration with the school, supporting schools in activities for health and wellbeing promotion and a healthy school environment (including financial support), co-promotion of school activities and joint activities can create an environment of co-partnership between the school setting and those of the community (e.g., traditional market, health centre, non-governmental organizations, local sports clubs) that supports an inter-setting approach to health promotion and a lifelong health and learning. In the SHE4AHA project we found four main interchangeable needs of the extended community that must be met to strengthen school-community interaction in promoting health and wellbeing (Figure 16).

Figure 16. *Broader school need and solutions to become involved on school health promotion*



In summary, the SHE4AHA results show several pieces of evidence that Health-Promoting School is not just beneficial for students but positively transforms the entire community by improving health, education, economic stability, and social wellbeing.

Key policy needs and police recommendations to support school health promotion

National and European policymakers play a crucial role in supporting school health promotion through legislation, funding, and strategic programs. Figure 17 presents an overview of key policy needs and police recommendations to support school health promotion which we consider crucial to break down in at a European and national levels in all countries, based on the evidence we have gathered from the SHE4AHA project.

Starting with the key policy needs identified in some countries involved in SHE4AHA when compared with the countries' advantages in promoting health and wellbeing when these needs did not exist, we propose to the European Union and National Governments a set of strategies that should be adopted to promote an improvement in health promoting schools and a strong contribution to the European Commission's Green Paper on Ageing.

Figure 17. *Key policy needs and police recommendations to support school health promotion*

Need: Long-term Political Commitment

Police recommendations

- Prioritize health and wellbeing promotion as a sustained, systematic focus in education policies to ensure long-term impact.
- Recognizing and reward schools and leaders excelling in health promotion.
- Providing certifications or awards to reinforce long-term commitment.

Need: Establish national comprehensive, standardized frameworks for school health promotion.

Police recommendations

- Adopting EU-wide guidelines for Health-Promoting Schools to national guidelines integrating health and wellbeing into curricula.
- Establishing health literacy as a core subject in primary and secondary education.
- Prioritizing preventive approaches to wellbeing (e.g. early mindfulness, movement integration) to reduce long-term challenges and resource demands.

Need: Ensure sufficient funding and resource allocation for school health programs.

Police recommendations:

- Expanding national and EU funding for school health initiatives, prioritizing disadvantaged regions.
- Schools require funding for training and tools (e.g., Brain Break Wheels, activity cards), and time allocation to implement initiatives effectively.
- Investing in school infrastructure, including sports facilities, green spaces, and health and wellbeing school promotion facilitator team.

Need: Promote cross-sector collaboration between education, health, and social policy sectors.

Police recommendations

- National policy should encourage partnerships between schools, health agencies, NGOs, and private sectors to enhance resources and expertise.

Need: Implement equity-driven policies that address socio-economic and regional disparities.

Police recommendations

- Implementing regular school health assessments and student, teachers and non-teaching staff wellbeing surveys across EU member states
- Establishing a European school health monitoring framework to track health outcomes and policy effectiveness.
- Facilitating EU-wide collaboration to share best practices and research on school health promotion.

Need: Leverage data, research, and technology to drive evidence-based national and European decision-making.

Police recommendations

- Implement regular school health assessments and student health and wellbeing surveys across EU member states.
- Leveraging digital health tools for real-time monitoring of student health and wellbeing indicators.

A coordinated policy approach at national and European levels is essential to sustain and expand school health promotion. By implementing these recommendations, policymakers can create healthier, more inclusive learning environments that support long-term student and community wellbeing.

3. Evidence-based policy and implementation recommendations

3.1. Top ten contributions of health promoting schools to the implementation of the Green Paper on Ageing

The Health Promoting School framework not only promotes health and wellbeing within school environments but also lays a strong foundation for lifelong health. These contributions align directly with the European Commission's Green Paper on Ageing, which focuses on intergenerational solidarity, lifelong learning, and preventive health measures to address the challenges of an ageing population. Therefore, SHE4AHA team advocate for Top 10 contributions of health promoting schools to actively act to the implementation of the Green Paper on Ageing (Figure 18).

Figure 18. *Top 10 contributions of health promoting schools to Green Paper on Ageing*

1. Early introduction of physical activity, healthy nutrition, mental health, sexuality and wellbeing promotion practices.
2. Developing lifelong healthy and wellbeing habits.
3. Promoting mental health and resilience across the lifespan.
4. Developing action competence in all individuals towards ownership of health.
5. Supporting lifelong learning and cognitive health.
6. Strengthening social inclusion and intergenerational solidarity.
7. Strengthening community cohesion.
8. Addressing health inequities.
9. Building policy alignment and sustainability.
10. Advocating for health promotion as social HUB where individuals of all ages can gather for health, education, and recreation.

Contribution 1. Early introduction of physical activity, healthy nutrition, mental health, sexuality and wellbeing promotion practices

Health Promoting Schools emphasizes health and wellbeing promotion practices as preventive efforts like movement-based learning, mindfulness, and health and wellbeing practices from a young age.

Impact

Promoting long-term physical and mental health, reduces the risk of chronic illnesses and mental health challenges in older age.

Examples of SHE4AHA

In Danish schools, initiatives like Brain Breaks, yoga, and mindfulness were implemented, improving pupils' readiness for learning while establishing habits that can prevent health decline later in life.

In France, The Flexible Classroom Project at the Ecole Primaire du Mas is also a piece of good-evidence regarding student wellbeing. With the objective to work school climate, it was set up a flexible classroom. This involved installing equipment and physically organizing the classroom to best meet the needs of the pupils.

Hraunvallaskóli in Iceland shows a piece of good evidences regarding how to promote mental health and resilience with the Growth Mindset implementation program that is a four-year intervention among all staff and students at the compulsory level of the school. The implementation seeks to use both a growth mindset and mindfulness to create a learning community that is characterized by trust, a positive mindset, individual self-confidence and good relationships among students and staff. With a strong mindset, everyone will be better equipped to take on their tasks and challenges. All of this is aimed at increased wellbeing and better accomplishment.

In Portugal, at the Basic School of Gualtar, mindfulness was also implemented and an action-oriented project inter-classes was develop regarding "Affections at School". In this project, students suggested a set of actions[17] to promote socio-affective health that included: sessions of the promoting socio-emotional skills program "Slow we go far away"; the "Week of Affections"[18], with exchange of messages, clothesline of compliments, music and emotions, relaxation, origami of gratitude, meditation on self-esteem, walking in pairs, friendship workshop, friendship tree, mail from friends; peer education on "Love is in the decisions we make every day"; development of a "Youth Space"[19] by students, and participation in the "Youth Parliament" with the theme "Mental health - what challenges and answers".

In Slovenia, a big project was carried out at the Primary School Dutovlje, involving children from the 1st to the 5th grade (from 6 to 10 years old). The main goal of this project was to create a booklet to promote a healthy lifestyle called "Dutomajček in the

[17] Socio-emotional actions: https://padlet.com/martakrus/jovens-em-a-o-rzvqenfoglh6vmxf
[18] Week of Affections: https://padlet.com/martakrus/semana-dos-afetos-e1u73lbhlkuwps73
[19] Youth Space: https://padlet.com/martakrus/espa-o-jovem-mx2mkmtmggchzkau

Healthy School," which introduces children to a healthy lifestyle in entertaining and playful way, with the help of Dutomajček - the bunny from Karst region in Slovenia, called Karst. During this time, few charity events at school, allowing pupils to complete some tasks of the book at school were organized. However, for certain tasks, parents helped the children, or they completed the tasks together. Over the course of a day, seven workshops for children and parents, all thematically related to the tasks from the booklet were also implemented by teachers, psychologists, and nurses from the local Health Centre in Sežana. The day concluded with exchange of books, board games, and toys, along with the announcement of the results of the physical activity challenge.

A second project carried out in Slovenia entitled "Let's walk around Slovenia", at the Bistrica ob Sotli Primary School, aimed at encouraging all students at the school to be more physically active. The staff began to encourage them to be physically active during their free time (waiting for classes in the morning or afternoon waiting for the bus and during long breaks). They came up with the idea of walking around the school playground for a distance equivalent to the length of the Slovenian border (1370 km). The activity was presented to all pupils, and all staff were involved. Pupils were instructed to walk two laps around the playground track each day in their free time. After completing the task, they could engage in any activity of their choice. The goal set at the beginning of the task was not only achieved, but exceeded. The length of the Slovenian border was covered almost three times. In addition to the students, teachers, school visitors (parents, local community, etc.) also contributed to the kilometer count.

Another project "Let's get active on Friday!", carried out at the Slovenian Primary school Tone Tomšič Knežak, aimed at involving on physical activity as many students and employees at the school as possible. The main break on Fridays for the activities was chosen, and each class, together with their class teachers, prepared a 10-15 minute-physical activity based on a predetermined list performed in the school gym. The oldest pupils started, and the youngest - first graders finished. Students chose and organized very different physical activities (stretching exercises, strength exercises, breathing exercises, games, and dance...). The pupils were enthusiastic about active Fridays and considered them important for better physical health, increased their productivity in subsequent school hours, and reduced stress.

Contribution 2. Developing lifelong healthy and wellbeing habits

Health Promoting Schools encourage healthy lifestyle habits such as **physical activity, healthy nutrition, and mental wellbeing practices** early in life. Integrating movement into education, demonstrate how physical activity supports both physical and mental health.

Impact

Encouraging sustainable behaviors that carry into adulthood and old age, support active and independent living. Establishing lifelong physical activity habits, reduce risks of cardiovascular diseases, obesity, and mobility issues in older age.

Examples of SHE4AHA

Schools like Blåbjerg Children's Universe in Denmark combine physical activity with learning, encouraging pupils to see movement as a lifelong, enjoyable practice. Programs like daily group walks and "Walk of the Day" at Blåbjerg Children's Universe, in Denmark, also create a culture of movement and wellbeing.

In France, the Ecole Maternelle du Mas developed the "The Breakfast Activity", focused on education to food and taste to strengthening and promoting the partnership with pupils' families. In this school children (3 to 6 years old) were educated about food and taste, after the breakfasts were launched in the school on the Fridays before the school holidays and then implementation was carried out in two stages: during Taste Week, breakfast was offered with the help of the families, and every day a different culinary culture explored based on the families' backgrounds and origins, and in the stage 2, in the day before each school holiday, breakfast was also organized.

In Iceland, the Djúpavogsskóli project intitled "Implementing Health promoting school approach and integrating to Citta-slow approach", with the primary goal of aligning it with the Citta-slow philosophy, focused the pilot project into three themes: Theme 1- Nutrition and Physical Activity; Theme 2- Mindfulness and Mental WellBeing; Theme 3- Togetherness and Cooperation. The target group included students, staff, and the broader community, ensuring active participation from all stakeholders in creating a healthier and more supportive environment. The school's engagement with the movement enhanced both staff and community interest in the project. The assessment results (checklists baseline) highlighted opportunities for strengthening the HPS approach further. Staff interest in the project has grown as positive outcomes have been achieved, with increasing participation from students and parents in initiatives like school gardens, mindfulness programs, and physical activity projects.

Contribution 3. Promoting mental health and resilience across the lifespan

Health Promoting Schools integrates mindfulness and mental wellbeing initiatives to build emotional regulation and resilience.

Impact

Strengthening mental health and coping strategies as well as personal and social competences, contribute to reduced risks of depression and anxiety in ageing populations.

Examples of SHE4AHA

Mindfulness practices at the Danish Vitaskolen Bohr helped students to develop tools to manage stress and maintain mental wellbeing throughout their lives.

At the Fossvogsskóli, in Iceland, the "Leisure activities during recess, healthy morning snacks and health information to parents" project shows a lot of evidences in this group of contributions. The goals were to foster a healthier, more supportive school

environment that prioritizes the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of students. The primary goals included reducing instances of bullying, enhancing student wellbeing, and promoting healthier nutritional habits through increased consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables. Additionally, the project sought to provide staff and parents with the tools and knowledge necessary to support students' wellbeing effectively, while creating a framework that ensures the long-term sustainability of these efforts.

More examples emerged from the Portuguese context. One of them is the Monsenhor Elísio Araújo Basic School project "Healthy cell phone-free breaks"[20], where students created board games, traditional games and dances to liven up breaks between classes and socialize with classmates in a healthy way without using cell phones. Concerns about excessive cell phone excessive use were also evident at the same school in the project "Breaks away from social media and impact on mental health"[21], in which students decided to spend more time cycling with friends in their free time outside of school, instead of using video games or online social media. Another Portuguese project regarding cell phone excessive use was implemented at the Basic and Secondary School Vieira de Araújo based in a whole class approach, entitled "Raise Your Head: Danger of Excessive Use of New Technologies 11th Grade"[22], where students from the 11th grade encourage schools' colleagues to think critically on this topic.

Contribution 4. Developing action competence in all individuals towards ownership of health and wellbeing

Health Promoting Schools actively involve pupils in health decisions, fostering a sense of ownership and empowerment in maintaining their health and wellbeing.

Impact

Encouraging individuals to take responsibility for their health as they age, improves quality of life and reducing healthcare dependency.

Examples of SHE4AHA

In Denmark, tools like the Brain Break Wheel show good results to enable pupils to make health-related choices, and building confidence in managing their wellbeing.

In Portugal, a good example of a participatory and action-oriented project with positive results in the development of student action competence was the class-based project "It's in DATING that everything BEGINS... and only YOU can decide when it ENDS!"[23]. With the goal of preventing dating violence, a 7th grade class acted organizing a

[20] Healthy Cell Phone-Free Breaks: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eqRPgZyqZdM
[21] Breaks away from social media and impact on mental health: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vdjwBS_mb6E&t=9
[22] Raise Your Head: Danger of Excessive Use of New Technologies 11th Grade: https://www.canva.com/design/DAFk5Gexx_s/C3J3x_FzitOhj4Jp6VHIuA/watch?utm_content=DAFk5Gexx_s&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink
[23] Padlet of the It's in DATING that everything BEGINS Project: https://padlet.com/manuelasousa9/no-namoro-que-tudo-come-a-e-s-tu-podes-decidir-quando-acaba-rvgmidssg8b11r4l

workshop for older students and repeated it with their parents. The workshop included the presentation of the theme by the students with two communications, "Don't confuse love with abuse" and "Stop dating violence", a shadow theatre, which they wrote and dramatized: "Step onto the stage against dating violence: close the door against dating violence"; a little musical moment; a debate with experts moderated by students; and the final signing of a contract drawn up by those present, which described the behaviours that everyone committed to adopting in the future in order to prevent or report dating violence.

Contribution 5. Supporting lifelong learning and cognitive health

Health Promoting Schools cultivate critical thinking, adaptability, and a love for learning through innovative teaching methods and movement-based education.

Impact

Encourages continuous learning and intellectual stimulation, reducing the risk of cognitive decline as individuals age.

Examples of SHE4AHA

Combining learning with movement in "Learning through Movement" at Blåbjerg Children's Universe, in Denmark, school enhanced cognitive engagement and retention, preparing individuals for lifelong adaptability.

At the Monsenhor Elísio Araújo Basic School in Portugal, the school projects integrated into the SHE4AHA project, with the aim of motivating students to learn natural sciences, develop critical thinking, and love for learning and environmental sustainability, show a large body of evidence on the importance of including health promotion throughout the teaching of the subjects. The following projects developed in this context can be consulted online: "Biodiversity is art"[24]; "Scientific Illustration"[25]; "Investigative Activity in the 8th grade of the Natural Sciences subject"[26]; "Study Visit to the Cávado Estuary"[27]. These students also participated with their research projects in the Science Fair at the Vila Verde Municipal House of Knowledge.

More evidences to support lifelong learning and cognitive health were found in the project "Feet in the Sand and in the Sea: Knowledge, Health, Leisure and Wellbeing"[28] developed at the Basic and Secondary School Vieira de Araújo, in Portugal, in which the school's 12th grade students did fieldwork on the beach with their teachers, participated

[24] E-book of the Biodiversity is Art Project: https://issuu.com/felgueirasaragao/docs/biodiversidade_arte2
[25] Padlet of the Project Scientific Illustration: https://padlet.com/eugeniaaragao/erasmus-languages-learning-zaa4z5arj6sd1h9t
[26] Padlet of the Investigative Activity in the 8th grade of the Natural Sciences subject: https://padlet.com/lgbtqformacaoa22/atividade-investigativa-ci-ncias-naturais-8-ano-s1flvcmsxdsd4wsz
[27] Padlet of the Study Visit to the Cávado Estuary: https://padlet.com/lgbtqformacaoa22/visita-de-estudo-g19fmk976hv7qlzi
[28] Feet in the Sand and in the Sea: https://view.genially.com/6479a59d932cbb0012a04c37/presentation-watery-presentation

in a lecture on sustainability, surfed, went hiking and walking on the beach, identified different species of fauna and flora, collected trash on the beach to indirectly educate other people and had lunch and dinner outdoors in a happy social gathering.

Contribution 6. Strengthening Social Inclusion and Intergenerational Solidarity

Health Promoting Schools promote social wellbeing through initiatives fostering community, cooperation, and trust, strengthening interpersonal skills and inclusiveness.

Impact

Reduces loneliness and social isolation across life stages, a critical issue for older populations.

Examples of SHE4AHA

Shared reading programs and group walks at Blåbjerg Children's Universe in Denmark encourage inter-age group collaboration and mutual support, modeling intergenerational solidarity.

At the Monsenhor Elísio Araújo Basic School in Portugal, the projects "Gymnastics with grandparents"[29], "Vegetable-garden with grandparents"[30], involving respectively students and children in kindergarten in interaction with their grandparents, and student visits to the Day Centre for Older People to do activities with them, add some evidence that shows the important contribution of HPS to intergenerational solidarity.

Contribution 7. Strengthening Community Cohesion

Health Promoting Schools fosters a sense of community and shared responsibility, engaging schools, families, and the broader community in health-promoting efforts.

Impact

Creates inclusive, supportive environments that connect people across life stages, reducing age-related isolation.

Examples of SHE4AHA

Another Danish example is the Fanø School's focus on TOGETHERNESS which strengthens relationships between pupils, teachers, and parents, establishing values of support and connection.

Another example was found at the Basic and Secondary School Vieira de Araújo in Portugal, with the project "Ecoculture: Healthy and sustainable food" which involved the entire school and extended community in valuing the cultural and natural heritage of the region and advocating that a healthy lifestyle is fundamental for good mental health that promotes the general wellbeing and reduces the level of stress and anxiety.

[29] Gymnastics with grandparents: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ciMxrIoAWb4&t=7s
[30] Vegetable-garden with grandparents: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KJeZGawPL4&t=4s

The celebration of World Food Day with artisanal yogurt production[31], a mycological walk[32], a reading session in the school library about cultural heritage and a field trip to learn about sustainable tourism in the region were the actions carried out. With the same objective of strengthening community cohesion and quality of life, two 10th grade classes and one 11th grade class worked together on the project "We Propose!"[33] to identify problems in their community, propose solutions and initiate actions to resolve them. Thus, they presented proposals at the level of the environment and mobility, social solidarity, tourism and culture, quality of life, valorisation of local heritage, creation of a bank of volunteers at the school and valorisation of the regional market.

Contribution 8. Addressing health inequities

Health Promoting Schools provide targeted support for diverse pupil needs, including those **from lower socio-economic and ethnic minority backgrounds,** to promote equity in health education.

Impact

Reduces health disparities, ensuring that healthy practices and opportunities extend across the lifespan, especially for vulnerable populations.

Examples of SHE4AHA

Danish Vitaskolen Bohr addresses integration and inclusion through movement, mindfulness, and shared activities, ensuring all pupils develop essential skills for lifelong health.

Contribution 9. Building policy alignment and sustainability

Health Promoting Schools initiatives align with national and municipal policies on health promotion, education, and community development.

Impact

Demonstrates the long-term societal value of investing in preventive health initiatives, reinforcing the role of schools in fostering healthier future generations.

Examples of SHE4AHA

Danish Fanø School's focus on creating systematic wellbeing structures showcases how schools can act as models for embedding health promotion into policies.

[31] Ecoculture: Healthy and sustainable food- artisanal yogurt production: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BcUgSiraBs
[32] Ecoculture: Healthy and sustainable food- mycological walk: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s75WRiqPios
[33] We Propose!: https://www.canva.com/design/DAFk5Mqtrnc/N4wIcccdEH4nvqSjj-5y_A/watch?utm_content=DAFk5Mqtrnc&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink

Another good example is the Healthy and Sustainable Food Project[34] of the Portuguese Gualtar Basic School developed with the objectives of promoting healthy and sustainable eating habits and lifestyles in the educational community and enhancing the acquisition of skills for young people to act as agents promoting health and wellbeing.

Contribution 10. Advocating for health promotion as a school social HUB where individuals of all ages can gather for health, education, and recreation

HPS can function as health promotion social HUB incubators which brings together people of all ages for health, education, and recreation having a wide-reaching and transformative impact on both individuals and the broader community health and wellbeing, are align with municipal and/ or national policies on health promotion.

Impact

Provides access to HP and empowers individuals to make informed decisions, reducing health disparities by providing equitable access to resources for underserved groups, and fosters intergenerational connections, reducing loneliness and isolation, especially among seniors and youth. Furthermore, promotes mental health by providing a safe, supportive space for socializing, group activities, and peer support, and encourages inclusion and community belonging, key protective factors for mental wellbeing.

Examples of SHE4AHA

During the SHE4AHA project, Monsenhor Elíseo Araújo Basic School in Portugal rethought itself as a HPS and established itself as an embryo of a social HUB for health promotion in the school and local community, involving the Municipal Council, the Health Centre and specialists from several universities in a process of integrating several projects already existing at the school and creating others. This reorganization of health promotion at school led to the creation of the following action networks[35]: 1) "Manual Network", where people of all ages can learn to cook and do more manual work and crafts to promote mental health and wellbeing, with participants choosing to make keychains, dream catchers and spirit killers, painting, sculpture, photography and crochet with science; 2) "Interactive Network", where students investigate problems with the help of experts and then explain to people of all ages how society and politics work so that these people can intervene and give new ideas, with the students carrying out investigative work and debating ideas in Forum Theatre, to end with the dissemination of their work at the annual municipal Science and Technology Fair; 3) "Sports Network", which includes all school sports activities provided by the school, in collaboration with the community, and which include: mountain biking, swimming, badminton, athletics, canoeing, gymnastics with grandparents and work in the healthy vegetable garden at the school; 4) "Volunteer Network", where participants can choose

[34] Healthy and Sustainable Food Project: https://padlet.com/martakrus/alimenta-o-saud-vel-e-sustentabilidade-8lssv670htba9njw

[35] https://view.genially.com/648dc5abaf5ef000138c71ff/guide-lacos-vivos

to volunteer in catteries, kennels, nursing homes, orphanages, plant trees, collect garbage from oceans and forests, among others, such as holding a charity Christmas and visiting the Senior Citizens Day Center; 5) "Healthy Breaks Network" which includes people interested in livening up recess by creating board games and traditional games; organizing dances, promoting craft activities at school (crochet, embroidery, cooking...) or group cycling activities; 6) "Teachers' Health and Wellbeing Network" brings together people interested in sharing crafts, books and movies from their youth to liven up school breaks, promoting the adults' wellbeing and serve as inspiration for students; 7) "Health and Leisure Network with Heritage", organized by the Bernardino Machado Basic School in collaboration, to value the sustainability of local heritage and health and environmental sustainability through guided physical exercise practices.

3.2. Top ten evidence-based recommendations to use the pixie Health Promotion School Guide and SHE material to create or maintain HPS

Throughout the implementation of the SHE4AHA project, as already explained, key-professionals at the pilot schools of Denmark, France, Iceland, Portugal and Slovenia, the SHE4AHA attended the SHE4AHA teacher training to integrate health-promoting strategies into the school curriculum. The SHE Material and the "Your Guide to Becoming a Health Promoting School" by the SHE4AHA team (Schulz et al., 2025) were critically analysed and implemented in all schools. Evidences collected brought out the Top ten evidence-based recommendations to use the pixie Health Promotion School Guide and SHE material to create or maintain HPS listed in Figure 1.

Figure 19. *Top ten evidence-based recommendations to use Your Guide to Becoming a Health Promoting School and the SHE material*

1. Establish a clear vision and goals for health promotion
2. Form a health-promoting steering group
3. Prioritize Active Pupil Involvement
4. Integrate health promotion into daily routines
5. Provide professional development for teachers and non-teaching staff
6. Create accessible tools and resources
7. Foster parental involvement and support
8. Embed health promotion into school policies and leadership priorities
9. Monitor progress and share results
10. Foster collaboration and knowledge sharing

Table 2 summarizes the reasons for proposing these recommendations, based on evidence from the projects developed in the pilot schools described in the previous section.

Table 2. *Reasons to recommend using Your Guide to Becoming a Health Promoting School and the SHE material*

Recommendation	Why?
1. Establish a clear vision and goals for health promotion Use the SHE Guide to define a shared vision and specific, measurable goals for health promotion that reflect the needs of pupils, staff, and the broader school community.	A clear purpose aligns stakeholders and ensures wellbeing becomes a core priority in the school's culture.
2. Form a health-promoting steering group Follow the SHE Guide's advice to create a steering group consisting of teachers, leadership, parents, and pupils to drive and monitor HPS initiatives.	A dedicated team ensures ongoing commitment, resource allocation, and accountability.
3. Prioritize active pupil involvement Use SHE materials to involve pupils in planning, decision-making, and evaluating health-promoting activities.	Active participation enhances pupil ownership, motivation, and engagement in health initiatives.
4. Integrate health promotion into daily routines Follow the SHE Guide to embed health-promoting practices, such as movement breaks, mindfulness, and healthy habits, into the school's daily timetable.	Consistency creates lasting habits, supports readiness for learning, and fosters stability.
5. Provide professional development for teachers and non-teaching staff Use the SHE materials to organize training sessions and professional development opportunities for teachers and staff. Focus on health education, movement integration, and mindfulness practices.	Equipping teachers and non-teaching staff with the knowledge and confidence to implement HPS practices is critical for success.
6. Create accessible tools and resources Develop and share practical tools, like playbooks, activity catalogs, and ready-to-use materials, to streamline implementation for teachers and staff.	Simple, accessible resources reduce workload and encourage consistent use of health-promoting activities.
7. Foster parental involvement and support Use the SHE Guide's strategies to communicate the purpose, benefits, and progress of HPS initiatives to parents and encourage their involvement.	Parental engagement builds trust and ensures alignment between home and school environments.
8. Embed Health Promotion into School Policies and Leadership Priorities Use the SHE Guide to align HPS initiatives with school policies and leadership goals, ensuring wellbeing is a long-term strategic priority.	Strong leadership commitment ensures continuity, resource allocation, and systemic change.
9. Monitor Progress and Share Results Use SHE materials to establish clear monitoring and evaluation frameworks to assess the impact of health-promoting initiatives. Share progress with stakeholders to maintain momentum.	Evidence of success builds trust, secures ongoing support, and informs necessary adjustments.
11.Foster Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing Use SHE materials to organize collaborative workshops, partnership meetings, and study visits with other schools to exchange ideas and best practices.	Cross-school collaboration fosters creativity, innovation, and shared learning to strengthen HPS initiatives.

3.3. Recommendations on how to mainstream and implement the SHE4AHA resource package into already existing initiatives

As European regions increasingly face the challenges of an ageing population, the need for inclusive, gender-sensitive, and innovative approaches to active and healthy ageing has never been more pressing. This set of recommendations aims to guide policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders at regional and local levels in effectively mainstreaming and implementing the SHE4AHA resource package within their existing initiatives. By embedding the principles and tools provided by SHE4AHA into ongoing policies, programs, and services, regions can foster more equitable and sustainable environments for ageing well. The recommendations enumerated in Figure 20 are grounded in practical insights, collaborative experiences, and best practices gathered across European pilot cases and are intended to support meaningful, context-sensitive integration of the SHE4AHA resource package.

Figure 20. *Recommendations on how to mainstream and implement the SHE4AHA resource package into already existing initiatives*

1. Align HPS with existing educational policies and programs
2. Embed HPS practices into existing routines and structures
3. Link HPS to existing health and wellbeing programs
4. Integrate HPS into professional development and teacher training
5. Leverage leadership and governance structures
6. Use HPS tools to enhance existing inclusion and social programs
7. Integrate students voices into existing initiatives
8. Highlight synergies between HPS and local community efforts
9. Showcase the Impact of health-promoting initiatives
10. Position HPS as a tool for achieving existing school goals

Table 3 summarizes the reasons for proposing these recommendations and how they can be put into practice, based on evidence from the SHE4AHA project.

Table 3. *Reasons for proposing recommendations on how to mainstream and implement the SHE4AHA resource package and how they can be put into practice*

Recommendation	Why?	*How?*
1. Align HPS with existing educational policies and programs Map HPS objectives to existing educational policies and programs (e.g., wellbeing frameworks, inclusive education, and social-emotional learning).	Policy alignment ensures that health promotion complements ongoing initiatives without creating duplication.	• Identify overlaps with school policy goals (e.g., pupil wellbeing, preventive initiatives, academic engagement). • Integrate health-promoting tools, such as Brain Breaks, mindfulness, or physical activity programs, into already lesson plans.
2.Embed HPS practices into existing routines and structures Use the SHE Guide to integrate health-promoting activities into daily routines, transitions, and classroom structures.	Embedding HPS into existing routines ensures seamless implementation without overwhelming teachers or pupils.	• Include mindfulness sessions or Brain Breaks as part of standard lesson transitions. • Use wellbeing playbooks or activity catalogs to offer ready-to-use tools for teachers.
3. Link HPS to existing health and wellbeing programs Align HPS activities with ongoing health and wellbeing programs, such as nutrition education, physical activity campaigns, and mental health support initiatives.	Leveraging existing programs avoids redundancy and amplifies the impact of health promotion.	• Integrate HPS tools like the Brain Break Wheel into existing physical activity programs. • Use mindfulness practices to complement mental health programs or support students during transitions.
4. Integrate HPS into professional development and teacher training Include HPS frameworks and SHE materials as part of existing teacher training and professional development programs.	Teachers are key drivers of change; equipping them with HPS knowledge ensures effective and sustainable implementation.	• Offer workshops on using SHE materials, such as wellbeing catalogs, activity cards, and structured lesson tools. • Encourage peer learning and knowledge sharing through collaborative sessions.
5. Leverage leadership and governance structures Integrate HPS goals into school leadership strategies and governance structures to ensure sustained support.	Leadership backing legitimizes health promotion efforts and secures long-term resource allocation.	• Assign health promotion tasks to existing steering groups or committees. • Align HPS goals with ongoing leadership initiatives, such as school improvement plans or strategic goals.
6. Use HPS tools to enhance existing inclusion and social programs Incorporate HPS practices to strengthen inclusive education and social programs focused on diversity / community-building.	Health promotion initiatives support social inclusion, emotional wellbeing, and positive relationships across diverse pupil groups.	• Implement trust-building exercises and group activities (e.g., shared walks, reading buddies) to promote community cohesion. • Use movement-based activities to engage all pupils, regardless of ability or background.
7. Integrate pupil voices into existing initiatives Use SHE tools to promote active pupil involvement in existing school initiatives and programs.	Involving pupils fosters ownership, relevance, and engagement, enhancing the effectiveness of ongoing initiatives.	• Collect pupil feedback through questionnaires, focus groups, and interactive tools like the Brain Break Wheel. • Encourage pupils to co-create activities and share ideas to improve school practices.
8. Highlight synergies between HPS and local community efforts Collaborate with local stakeholders, such as community organizations, cultural institutions, and businesses, to align HPS initiatives with existing community efforts.	Community engagement amplifies resources, visibility, and support for health promotion.	• Partner with local health professionals, cultural programs, or businesses to support HPS implementation. • Use the school as a hub for health promotion events and activities.
9. Showcase the impact of health-promoting initiatives Use SHE tools to document and showcase the success of HPS initiatives alongside existing programs.	Evidence of impact builds momentum, secures continued support, and demonstrates the value of health promotion.	• Monitor progress using surveys, observation logs, and feedback sessions. • Share positive outcomes with parents, leadership, and policymakers to create buy-in.
10.Position HPS as a tool for achieving existing school goals Present HPS initiatives as an effective means of achieving broader school improvement goals, such as academic performance, pupil wellbeing, and retention.	Framing HPS as a solution to existing priorities ensures alignment with current school agendas.	• Use data from HPS projects (e.g., improved focus, reduced disruptions) to show alignment with academic goals. • Highlight connections between health, wellbeing, and learning outcomes.

3.4. Top ten evidence-based recommendations on the role of the different stakeholders of the wider school community towards HPS

Creating a HPS requires the active engagement of the entire school community, including not only teachers and students, but also families, local authorities, health professionals, and other key stakeholders. A whole-school approach to health and wellbeing fosters supportive environments where learning and health are interconnected. To support the effective development and sustainability of HPS, this document presents ten evidence-based recommendations highlighting the vital roles different stakeholders play in building and nurturing a health-promoting culture within and around schools. These recommendations, summarized in Figure 21, draw from the SHE4AHA pilot cases, offering actionable guidance for collaborative efforts.

Figure 21. *Top ten evidence-based recommendations on the role of stakeholders towards HPS*

1. **School leadership:** provide strategic support and commitment
2. **Teachers:** implement health-promoting practices in daily teaching
3. **Children and Students:** actively participate and take ownership
4. **Parents:** engage in communication and support
5. **Students' support staff:** facilitate inclusive health promoting practices
6. **School health coordinators:** drive systematic implementation
7. **External partners:** support health initiatives with expertise and resources
8. **Policymakers:** prioritize resources and frameworks for HPS
9. **School boards:** Support strategic integration and communication
10. **The local community:** Promote synergies between school and community health initiatives

By clarifying responsibilities and encouraging shared ownership, these recommendations aim to strengthen partnerships and empower all members of the school community to contribute meaningfully to the health and wellbeing of children and young people, as explained in Table 4.

Table 4. *Reasons for proposing recommendations on the role of stakeholders towards HPS and how they can be put into practice*

Recommendation	Why?	*How?*
1.School leadership provide strategic support and commitment Leadership must prioritize HPS initiatives by integrating them into the school's strategic goals, annual plans, and policies.	Leadership sets the tone for prioritizing health promotion and ensures the allocation of time, resources, and personnel.	• Actively participate in HPS steering groups. • Embed health-promoting activities into daily school operations and long-term plans.
2.Teachers: implement health-promoting practices in daily teaching Teachers should integrate movement, mindfulness, and other health-promoting strategies into their daily lessons using tools like Brain Breaks and wellbeing catalogs.	Teachers are central to creating a supportive and engaging learning environment that promotes health and wellbeing.	• Use resources such as the Brain Break Wheel, activity cards, and movement-based learning strategies. • Engage in professional development to enhance skills in implementing health-promoting practices.
3.Pupils: actively participate and take ownership Encourage students to give ideas and participate in the planning and evaluation of health-promoting activities.	Active involvement fosters ownership, engagement, and responsibility for personal health and wellbeing.	• Include pupils in decision-making processes (e.g., Brain Break activities or group walks). • Gather feedback via questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups to tailor initiatives to their needs.
4.Parents: Engage in Communication and Support Parents should be informed, involved, and engaged in the school's HPS activities to foster a shared understanding of HP.	Collaboration with parents ensures consistent health promotion at school and home.	• Use communication platforms (e.g., AULA) to provide updates and gather feedback. • Organize parent meetings to share goals, successes, and benefits of HPS initiatives.
5.Pupils' support staff: facilitate inclusive health-promoting practices Support staff, such as wellbeing teachers and classroom assistants, can help integrate inclusive activities that promote mental and physical wellbeing for all pupils.	Support staff play a key role in creating an inclusive, accessible environment for pupils with diverse needs.	• Assist with implementing activities like group mindfulness, children's yoga, or trust-building exercises. • Support pupils who need individualized approaches during wellbeing activities.
6.School health coordinators: drive systematic implementation Assign a health coordinator to ensure consistent and systematic implementation of school health-promotion activities.	A dedicated coordinator provides structure, ensures accountability, and supports staff.	• Oversee initiatives, including the creation of wellbeing catalogs and activity plans. • Collaborate with teachers, leadership, and parents to refine and monitor outcomes.
7.External Partners: Support Health Initiatives with Expertise and Resources Collaborate with external partners (e.g., consultants, local health organizations, cultural institutions) to strengthen HPS initiatives with expertise and resources.	Partnerships broaden the school's capacity to implement effective, evidence-based health-promotion activities.	• Invite external consultants to provide teacher training, workshops, and guidance. • Partner with local organizations to integrate community health resources into school programs.
8.Policymakers: prioritize resources and frameworks for HPS Policymakers should integrate HPS into educational policies and allocate funding and frameworks to support health promotion in schools.	Policy-level support ensures that health-promoting initiatives are sustainable and prioritized across all schools.	• Provide funding for training, tools (e.g., Brain Break Wheels), and health education programs. • Include health promotion in national or local curricula.
9.School boards: support strategic integration and communication School boards can play a key role in endorsing HPS goals and ensuring communication with stakeholders.	School boards provide oversight, legitimacy, and strategic alignment of HPS efforts.	• Act as advocates for health-promoting initiatives within the school community. • Ensure health promotion aligns with school development plans and parental expectations.
10.The local community: promote synergies between school and community health initiatives Engage the broader local community (e.g. businesses, health services) to support and co-create health-promotion activities.	Building local partnerships creates synergies that amplify the impact of health initiatives and provide real-world connections for pupils.	• Collaborate with local health professionals, businesses, or cultural groups to organize events, workshops, or health campaigns. • Use community resources, like parks or sports facilities, for movement-based activities.

3.5. Strategies for a successful sustainability of SHE4AHA website

The SHE4AHA website serves as a central platform for knowledge exchange, resource sharing, and community engagement around inclusive approaches to active and health promotion. As a key outcome of the SHE4AHA initiative, the website brings together stakeholders across regions, sectors, and disciplines to support the uptake and implementation of smart, healthy environments for students.

To ensure the long-term value and impact of the platform, it is essential to adopt clear strategies that support its ongoing relevance, accessibility, and usability beyond the project's initial timeline. Figure 2 outlines practical strategies for the successful sustainability of the SHE4AHA website, focusing on content maintenance, stakeholder engagement, technical upkeep, and governance models.

Figure 22. *Strategies for a successful sustainability of SHE4AHA website*

1. **Regular content updates:** ensure the website offers updated, evidence-based resources, case studies, and tools to remain relevant.
2. **User-friendly design:** create an intuitive, accessible, and mobile-friendly interface with clear navigation and multilingual options.
3. **Technical maintenance:** provide ongoing technical support, security updates, and performance monitoring to ensure reliability.
4. **Active user engagement:** include forums, feedback tools, newsletters, and interactive features to foster community involvement.
5. **Clear governance:** assign a dedicated team for content management, technical support, and oversight.
6. **Integration of existing resources:** position the website as a central hub, linking to SHE guides, toolkits, and international HPS networks.
7. **Inclusive accessibility:** offer multilingual content, screen-reader compatibility, and inclusive language to reach diverse audiences.
8. **Data monitoring:** use analytics to track user behaviour, inform updates, and improve user experience.
9. **Promotion and outreach:** actively promote the website via newsletters, events, social media, and partnerships to enhance visibility.
10. **Sustainable funding:** secure long-term funding and partnerships to ensure continued operation, content development, and upgrades

3.6. Recommendations for a sustainable use of SHE4AHA results by project partners

The SHE4AHA project has generated a valuable set of resources, tools, and insights aimed at fostering inclusive, and innovative approaches to active HPS to contributes to healthy ageing across Europe. To maximise the long-term impact of these results, it is essential that project partners continue to integrate and apply them within their ongoing work, policies, and regional strategies. The set of recommendations presented below provides practical guidance for ensuring the sustainable use and uptake of SHE4AHA outcomes by project partners. By embedding the project's results into existing structures, initiatives, and networks, partners can help maintain momentum, amplify impact, and contribute to systemic change in the field of active and healthy ageing.

Therefore, to support continuous collaboration, capacity-building, and visibility of the SHE4AHA approach well beyond the lifespan of the project the following recommendations were designed:

1.Integrate SHE4AHA results into SHE-core framework by:

- Incorporating key findings and tools (e.g., case studies, evidence-based practices) from SHE4AHA into the SHE Health-Promoting Schools (HPS) framework.
- Using results to update the SHE materials, including the SHE School Guide and training resources.

2.Disseminate results through the SHE Network by:

- Sharing SHE4AHA results with national SHE coordinators to promote their implementation across participating countries.
- Hosting webinars, workshops, and conferences within the SHE network to highlight successes and lessons learned.

3.Embed results into capacity-building efforts by:

- Integrating SHE4AHA tools, methods, and findings into training programs for schools and national coordinators.
- Developing professional development modules to support implementation at the school level.

4.Create an accessible resource hub by:

- Hosting SHE4AHA materials (e.g., playbooks, case studies, tools) on the SHE website for open access.
- Maintaining a dynamic, user-friendly repository to ensure results remain relevant and widely used.

5.Support cross-country implementation by:

- Facilitating knowledge exchange by encouraging national coordinators to adopt SHE4AHA practices.
- Organizing peer-learning activities, such as study visits or collaborative projects between countries.

6.Promote evidence-based advocacy by:

- Using SHE4AHA results as evidence to advocate for integrating health promotion into national policies and curricula.
- Highlighting the benefits of health-promoting schools for improving wellbeing, readiness to learn, and sustainability.

7.Monitor and evaluate impact by:

- Developing indicators and tools to monitor the long-term implementation and outcomes of SHE4AHA practices within the network.
- Collecting feedback and evidence from schools to continually refine and improve tools and strategies.

8.Engage policymakers and stakeholders by:

- Sharing SHE4AHA results with European policymakers to demonstrate the importance of health promotion in schools.
- Advocating for continued funding and policy support for health-promoting schools across Europe.

9.Leverage partnerships for sustainability by:

- Collaborating with international organizations (e.g., WHO Europe, UNESCO) to mainstream SHE4AHA outcomes into broader health and education initiatives.
- Forming partnerships with research institutions to develop further studies and tools based on SHE4AHA findings.

10.Highlight success stories for visibility by:

- Using the SHE website, newsletters, and social media to share success stories from SHE4AHA pilot schools.
- Showcase schools as role models for implementing sustainable health-promoting practices.

3.7. Actions and policies that can benefit from the SHE4AHA results

The SHE4AHA results provide evidence-based practices and tools that can influence and strengthen actions and policies aimed at promoting health, wellbeing, and preventive education within schools and broader educational systems. The following key actions and policies can directly benefit:

1. National and regional education policies

Benefit: Integrate HPS approaches into national and regional educational frameworks.
Action:

- Mandate the inclusion of health, wellbeing, movement, and mindfulness practices in school curricula.
- Align policies with evidence-based tools like Brain Breaks, mindfulness sessions, and movement-based learning to improve learning outcomes.

Impact: Improves pupils' readiness to learn, wellbeing, and engagement while reducing health inequalities.

2. Health and wellbeing policies

Benefit: Support preventive health approaches within schools as part of national public health strategies.
Action:

- Promote HPS initiatives that address mental, physical, and social health (e.g., mindfulness, movement, community-building).
- Encourage cross-sector collaboration between education, health, and local government sectors.

Impact: Reduces long-term health burdens and fosters healthy habits from an early age.

3. Teacher training and professional development programs

Benefit: Enhance teachers' capacity to implement health-promotion strategies in daily teaching.
Action:

- Integrate SHE4AHA tools and results (e.g., Brain Break Wheels, wellbeing catalogs) into teacher education programs.
- Provide ongoing professional development on implementing movement, mindfulness, and trust-building activities.

Impact: Empowers teachers to deliver effective health-promoting practices that benefit pupils' health and academic outcomes.

4. School improvement plans

Benefit: Use SHE4AHA results to prioritize pupil wellbeing as a key indicator of school success.

Action:

- Include specific wellbeing initiatives (e.g., shared reading, group walks, structured lesson starts) in annual school plans.
- Create steering groups to oversee the implementation of health-promoting activities across school levels.

Impact: Creates sustainable, school-wide approaches to fostering health and wellbeing.

5. Policies addressing mental health in schools

Benefit: Utilize evidence from SHE4AHA to inform national and local strategies on mental health promotion.

Action:

- Introduce mindfulness and stress-reducing activities as part of the mental health curriculum.
- Provide tools for early intervention and preventive measures to reduce stress and anxiety.

Impact: Enhances pupils' emotional regulation and resilience while reducing mental health challenges.

6. Inclusive education policies

Benefit: Use health-promotion practices to create inclusive learning environments that support diverse pupil needs.

Action:

- Promote activities that foster trust, cooperation, and togetherness (e.g., shared walks, cross-grade collaborations).
- Implement physical and mental activities to engage all pupils, including those with additional needs.

Impact: Reduces isolation, builds community cohesion, and supports equity in education.

7. Physical activity and health promotion policies

Benefit: Align school-based health initiatives with national physical activity and nutrition guidelines.

Action:

- Implement movement-based programs (e.g., Brain Breaks, "Learning through Movement") across schools to increase daily physical activity.
- Use tools like the Brain Break Wheel to integrate activity into academic lessons.

Impact: Promotes healthy lifestyles, reduces sedentary behavior, and supports physical and cognitive development.

8. Parental engagement and family policies

Benefit: Encourage parental involvement in health-promotion initiatives as part of broader family policies.

Action:

- Use platforms like AULA to communicate health-promoting activities and progress.
- Encourage collaboration between schools and families to align wellbeing efforts at school and home.

Impact: Strengthens the school-home connection, ensuring a holistic approach to pupil wellbeing.

9. Community development policies

Benefit: Use SHE4AHA results to align schools with local community health and development efforts.

Action:

- Promote partnerships with local organizations, businesses, and health services to support HPS practices.
- Use schools as hubs for community events that promote health and wellbeing.

Impact: Builds healthier, more resilient communities while extending the reach of school initiatives.

10. European and international education policies

Benefit: Incorporate SHE4AHA findings into European Union and international frameworks on education and health.

Action:

- Use the results to advocate for HPS as a standard approach in education policies across Europe.
- Share evidence-based tools and success stories to inspire cross-country implementation.

Impact: Promotes consistency in health promotion across schools, fostering a healthier European school network.

4. Visions and challenges for future: International strategies for action

To ensure the continuous impact of HPS and build on the results of SHE4AHA, the following international strategies for action outline a vision for future development while addressing key challenges:

Vision 1. Integrating HPS into global education and health policies

Strategy: Collaborate with international organizations (e.g., WHO, UNESCO, EU) to position HPS as a core component of educational and health systems globally.

Action:

- Advocate for HPS integration into global frameworks like the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 3: Health and SDG 4: Quality Education).
- Develop policy recommendations that align HPS with global health promotion strategies.

Challenge: Achieving policy alignment across diverse cultural, political, and economic systems.

Vision 2. Building cross-sector collaboration

Strategy: Foster partnerships between education, health, and community sectors to implement sustainable HPS initiatives.

Action:

- Encourage multi-sectoral partnerships to fund, develop, and evaluate HPS programs.
- Connect schools with health services, mental health professionals, and local organizations for shared initiatives.

Challenge: Establishing effective coordination between multiple sectors with differing priorities and resources.

Vision 3. Establishing long-term funding mechanisms

Strategy: Develop sustainable funding frameworks at national and international levels to ensure HPS programs can scale and endure.

Action:

- Advocate for dedicated funding streams for health promotion within education budgets.
- Engage with EU funding programs and international donors to support HPS expansion and capacity-building.

Challenge: Overcoming financial constraints and ensuring funding continuity beyond short-term projects.

Vision 4. Ensuring equitable access to health-promoting initiatives

Strategy: Embed equity into HPS strategies to ensure inclusion of diverse, marginalized, or under-resourced communities.

Action:

- Develop adaptable tools and materials that address cultural, socio-economic, and linguistic diversity.
- Promote HPS practices as a means to close health and education equity gaps.

Challenge: Addressing disparities in resources and capacity between high- and low-resource regions.

Vision 5. Strengthening teacher and school leader capacity

Strategy: Expand professional development programs to equip teachers and leaders with health-promotion skills.

Action:

- Integrate HPS principles into teacher education programs at national and international levels.
- Offer train-the-trainer programs to build local capacity for sustainable HPS implementation.

Challenge: Ensuring teachers have the time, training, and motivation to prioritize health promotion.

Vision 6. Embedding monitoring and evaluation into HPS initiatives

Strategy: Establish standardized frameworks for monitoring, evaluation, and research on HPS outcomes.

Action:

- Develop international indicators to assess the impact of health-promotion activities on pupil wellbeing and learning.
- Share best practices and results through international knowledge-sharing platforms.

Challenge: Ensuring consistency in data collection and evaluation across countries with varying capacities.

Vision 7. Leveraging technology to expand reach

Strategy: Use digital platforms to disseminate HPS tools, resources, and knowledge globally.

Action:

- Develop an accessible online repository for SHE materials, case studies, and HPS frameworks.
- Leverage e-learning tools to provide professional development and peer collaboration across borders.

Challenge: Addressing the digital divide and ensuring equitable access to technological resources.

Vision 8. Promoting active pupil and community involvement

Strategy: Foster meaningful involvement of pupils, parents, and local communities in HPS initiatives.

Action:

- Implement participatory approaches, where pupils and communities co-create health-promotion strategies.
- Develop international networks for sharing pupil-led health promotion initiatives.

Challenge: Balancing top-down policies with grassroots participation and ensuring meaningful engagement.

Vision 9 Scaling successful practices internationally

Strategy: Identify, document, and share successful HPS models to inspire and guide schools globally.

Action:

- Use platforms like SHE to showcase scalable solutions and tools developed through SHE4AHA.
- Facilitate study visits, exchanges, and collaborative learning opportunities across schools and countries.

Challenge: Ensuring scalability while adapting practices to local contexts and challenges.

Vision 10. Advocating for health promotion as a global priority

Strategy: Highlight the evidence-based impact of HPS on wellbeing, academic success, and long-term health outcomes.

Action:

- Advocate for HPS to be recognized as a global best practice for achieving healthier and more sustainable societies.
- Use evidence from projects like SHE4AHA to influence international decision-makers and policies.

Challenge: Maintaining political will and demonstrating HPS as a cost-effective and essential strategy.

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