

**Poster title** → [Moving more every day to combat the sedentary lifestyle of students](#)

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**Aims and objectives**

The main goal of our project is to change the lifestyle of sedentary students of the University of Bologna by trying to motivate them to practice sport and eat healthier.

**Target group/ focus**

We chose as primary target the students of the University of Bologna aged between 18 and 26 as they are very close to us in terms of habits and age, and also because we can easily reach them through social media, like Instagram or Facebook.

We selected as second target the Pilates trainer A Le (from China), who gave his contribution by recording short Pilates workout videos (about 10 minutes each) for beginners to practice anytime at home, and we also chose Dr. Elena Poletti, who contributed giving information and relevant tips to combine proper nutrition with physical activity.

Finally, our third target group is represented by two gyms: Vin4You and

Dojo Equipe (our partners), that offer economic benefits to students.

**Project/Research focus**

The **In Forma(ti)** project has been created at the Social Marketing course of Alma Mater Studiorum-University of Bologna (Italy).

Our project name is a play on words combining the concept of “being aware” and “staying fit”, hence summarizing the goals our primary target group must achieve.

Physical activity and a sedentary lifestyle are two opposite concepts, closely linked to the quality of life and wellbeing. Everyone knows that in order to stay fit and have a healthy life, physical activity is very important, but few people know that leading a sedentary lifestyle can seriously damage health.

According to the WHO, physical inactivity is among the 10 leading causes of death and disability in the world, represents risk of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, obesity, and increases the risks of colon and breast cancer, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, lipid disorders, depression and anxiety.

Regular physical activity helps to:

- prevent chronic diseases
- regulate the production of neurotransmitters (serotonin, dopamine, oxytocin and endorphin)

- reduce risks of developing type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome
- strengthen your bones and muscles
- lose and keep weight
- reduce risks of developing cancers
- accelerate brain development and learning processes of motor skills, personal awareness, socialization
- reduce risks of depression and anxiety and sleep better

The project idea came from the awareness that our primary target group doesn't get physical exercise. We presumed to have a target who didn't have the proper knowledge about the risks of sedentary lifestyle, so we first came up with an information plan (on social media) to give students a conscious decision and to encourage them to practice physical activity.

### **Method/approach used**

We have decided to promote our initiative by the following ways:

- Communication on social media like Facebook or Instagram
- Leaflets in university areas and in public places frequented by students

On Instagram and Facebook, thanks to the contribution of qualified trainers, we created contents regarding the benefits of different types of sports. Besides that, trainer A Le created short video lessons

doing Pilates workouts to be easily practiced at home.

On the same media channels, Dr. Elena Poletti provided useful information about any doubts and curiosities about healthy eating.

We also published promotional content on the official project's accounts [@informati\\_bologna](#) (Instagram) and [InForma-ti](#) (Facebook) to make students aware of the economic benefits that our affiliated gyms had provided to them.

For those students who, despite the discounts offered by the affiliated gyms, couldn't afford a gym membership, we sponsored the Enecta Free Fitness events. This non-profit organization plans and manages outdoor training for free, except for requiring a small fee as health insurance at the time of registration.

Taking inspiration from the Enecta initiative, we created a Telegram channel where students could organize themselves to go running together or do outdoor sports, with the opportunity to socialize with people who share their same passion for sport.

After some weeks we noticed that no one from the University Facebook groups or Instagram joined the channel, and we decided to stop advertising it.

## Relevant data and graphics

Firstly, we extracted and analysed data collected by Italian Statistician Institute ISTAT about the number of people that don't practice any type of physical activity. The data show that 28.9% of the inhabitants of Emilia-Romagna has a sedentary lifestyle.

We noticed how sedentary behaviour is becoming the biggest threat to mankind.

To better understand the issue and to know our target audience, we decided to conduct a web survey on how much sport activity they do. The survey was shared with all Italian students of the University of Bologna, but we also had the chance to reach our Chinese students thanks to a member of the group who also comes from China.

The surveys revealed that Italian students are less sedentary than Chinese ones, with 45% for Italian students and 76% for Chinese students.

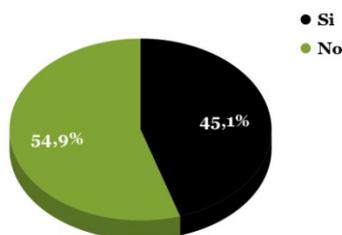


Figure 1 - Italian students

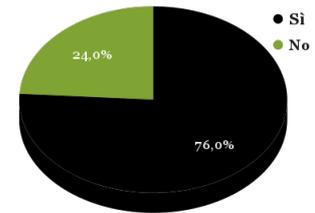


Figure 2 - Chinese students

In addition to that, we noticed that some of the discouraging factors to practice sport on a daily basis, are high prices, lack of dedication, lack of motivation and limited time.

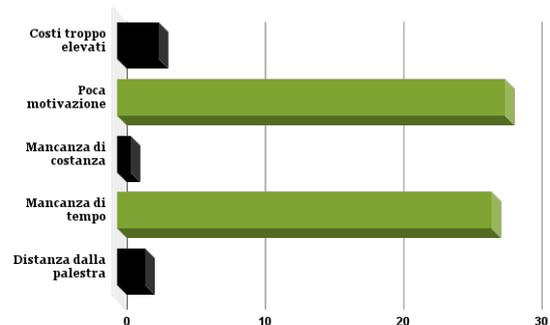


Figure 3 - Italian students

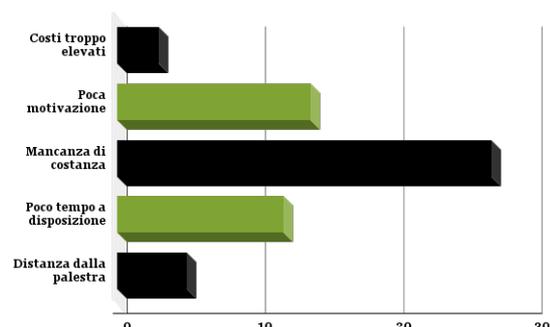


Figure 4 - Chinese students

Besides, the data showed again a difference between Italian and Chinese

students, highlighting a higher lack of dedication among Chinese students.

But the fact that a lot of students are not willing to practice sport for different reasons confirmed us that our project was right for them.

### **Findings / evaluation → Results:**

- **Process:** Several people have shown interest in our project by following our Instagram and Facebook pages, and liking our posts. In addition, some people have asked us about our project and the economic benefits offered by our affiliated gyms.
- **Outcome:** Some people shared on their Instagram stories how they were achieving to make more than 10.000 steps per day. On the other hand, others have shared photos and videos while they were doing the Pilates exercises of trainer A Le.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

The human organism works as an integrated network that combines our organs, our systems and apparatuses. Body and mind influence each other, and that is the reason why a simple walk surrounded by nature has a great rebalancing power from a psychic point of view.

In fact, physical activity is not just about sport, it goes far beyond simple motor exercise. It is about the relationship of human beings in their environment, the strengthening of which strongly affects human wellbeing.

In other words, doing physical activity every day is essential for the psycho-physical health of human beings.

Besides, some studies (Eime, 2013) show that people who practice sport are less likely to develop non-communicable diseases, and they also benefit more than sedentary people in the following conditions:

- Wellbeing
- Stress reduction
- Less anxiety
- More vitality
- Fun and pleasure
- Sense of belonging
- Life satisfaction
- Less depression
- Mental health
- Emotionality
- Sense of community

The main message is that we need to be active to stay healthy, thus **In Forma(ti)** is our solution to go in this direction.

## Link for further information

- [Sorveglianza Passi \(iss.it\)](#)

## Our references:

[Risorse | Marketing sociale](#)

[Bologna: 10 selfie di salute per i giovani |](#)

[Giovani: 10 opportunità di salute \(web2salutegiovani.blog\)](#)

## Bibliography

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- **G.Fattori, J.French, C.Blair-Stevens**, Guida operativa al marketing sociale

## Web references

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- Ministero della salute: [Rapporti internazionali \(salute.gov.it\)](#)
- [Sedentarietà - Rischi - Malattie associate - Salute nella scienza \(salute-nella-scienza.it\)](#)
- [Stile di vita sedentario - Wikipedia](#)
- [Attività fisica - Sorveglianza Passi \(iss.it\)](#)