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ABSTRACT

Programmatic research process in the study of policies – a case study on physical exercise policies and the use of research evidence. This article describes the programmatic research process and methods of finding use for research evidence in policy making. The five year project, involving six EU member states and Canada, also aims to increase the use of this research evidence. The research is funded by the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development. In the programmatic research process, various stages of research involving various research questions and methods provide results to be used and applied in the subsequent phases of research. The programmatic research process entailed a content analysis of 21 policy documents and 86 semi-structured interviews to find out how research evidence was used in policy making. Thereafter, two interventions were conducted in three countries to find out the ways in which tailor-made interventions and game simulations can increase the use of research evidence in policy making. The results of the content analysis of the policy documents and interviews, tailored interventions, game simulations, and indicators of the enhanced use of research evidence in policy making were tested in Delphi panels. The programmatic research process required a multidisciplinary approach to prepare consistent research questions, methods, and actions.