

# Integrating Physical Activity into Medical Curricula: Insights from the VANGUARD European Union Erasmus+ Project in Portugal

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- 85% of the students recognized the course topics as “very important” for medical education;
- 100% of the students agreed that the course content should be integrated into their Integrated Master’s degree in Medicine.

## BACKGROUND

Incorporating physical activity into the undergraduate curricula of healthcare professionals

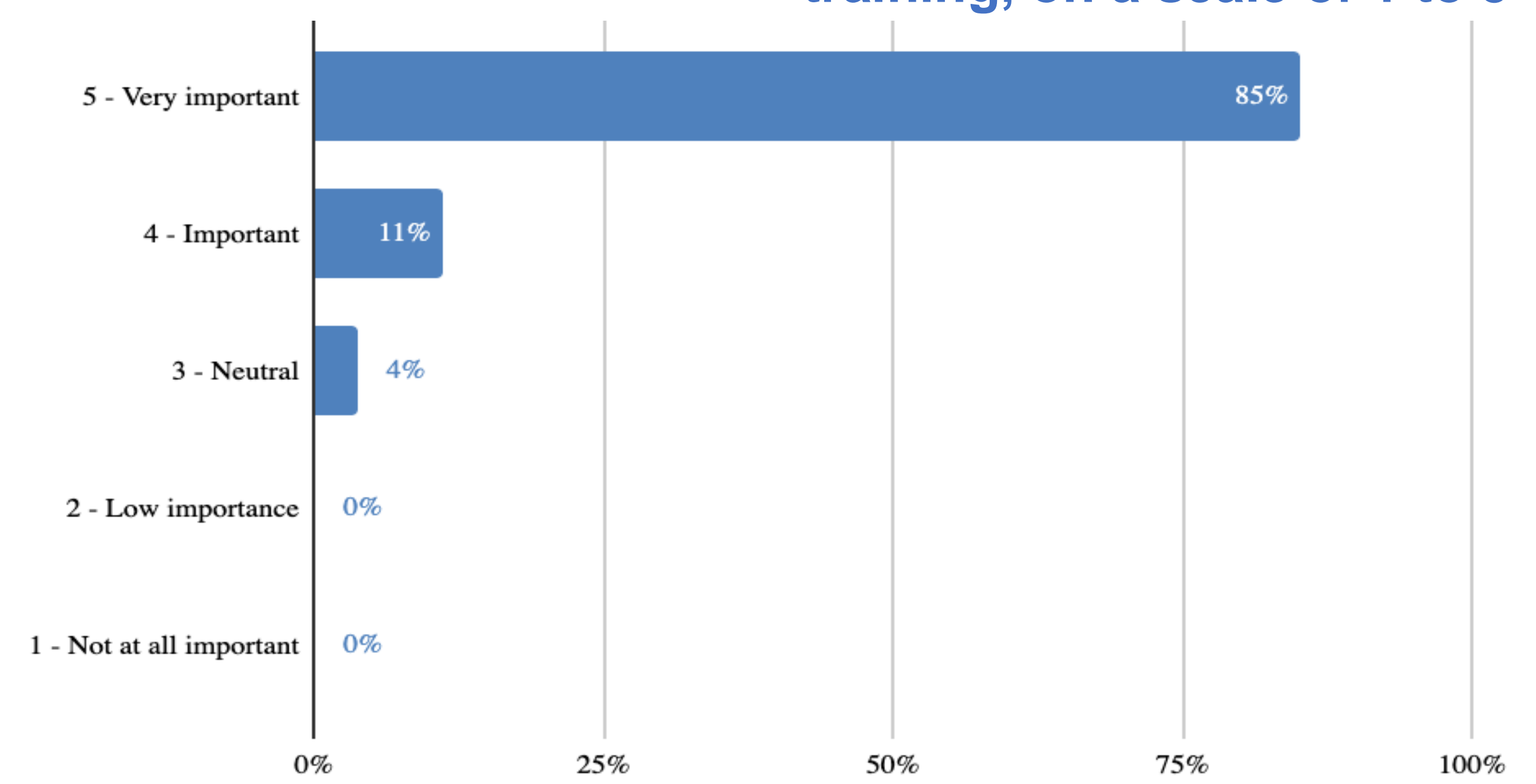
Key strategy to increase the population’s levels of physical activity  
(World Health Organization)

The VANGUARD project sought to embed physical activity content into the undergraduate curricula of healthcare professionals across European countries.

**Aim:** to analyze the importance of a physical activity and health course and its thematic sessions rated by medical students.

The majority of the students (85%) recognized the topics of the course as “very important” (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Importance of the Course theme for medical training, on a scale of 1 to 5**



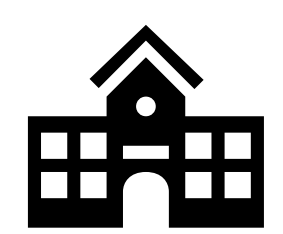
## DESCRIPTION



2022/2023 academic year



Integrated Master’s Degree in Medicine – 2<sup>nd</sup> year



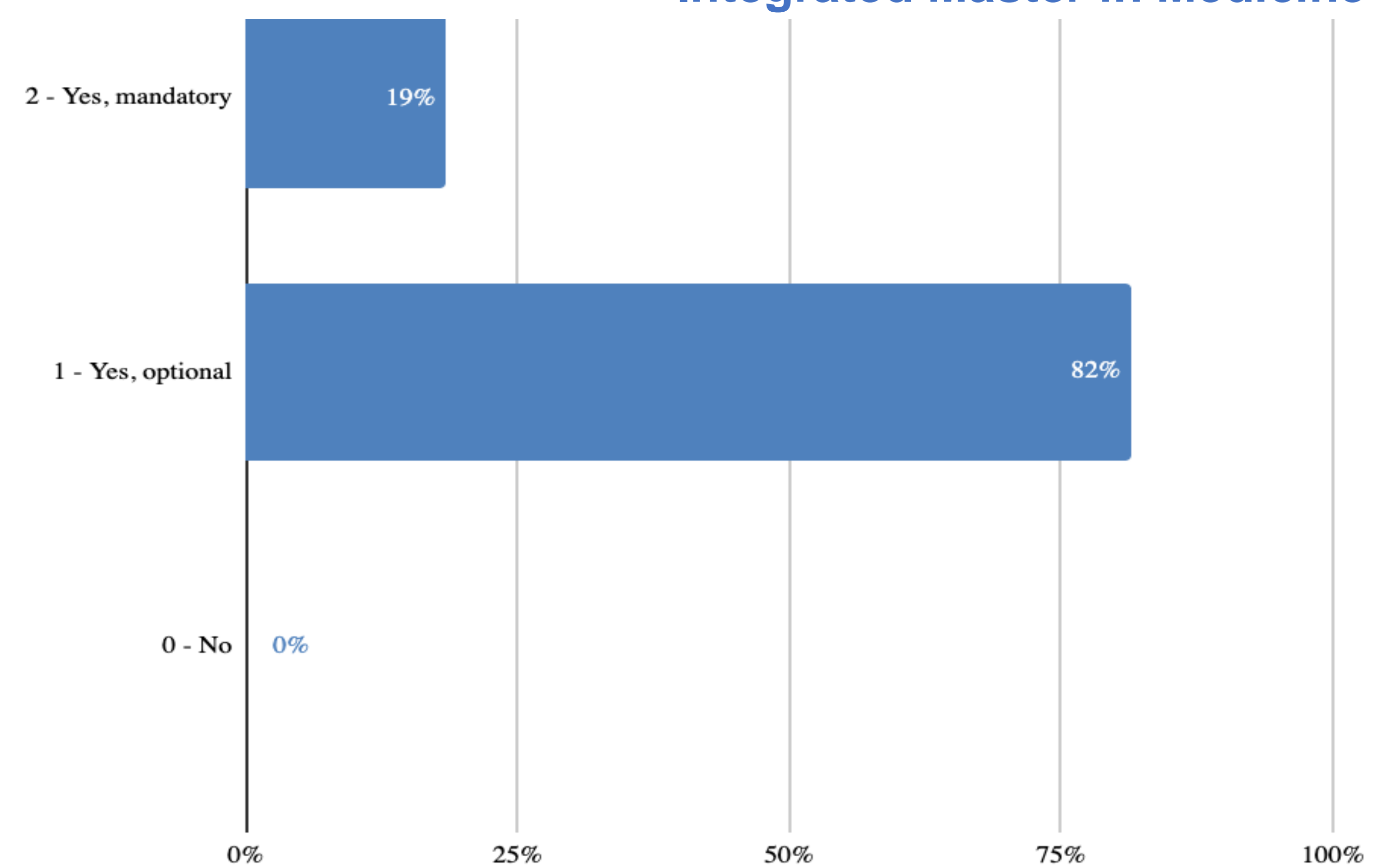
School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences of the University of Porto

### Physical Activity and Health Course

	Online training platform
	Available for 6 weeks
	Self-paced learning method
	26 lessons
	Continuous evaluation
	Final case study

All students agreed that course topics should be integrated into their curricula as optional or mandatory (Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Inclusion of the Course in the contents of the Integrated Master in Medicine**



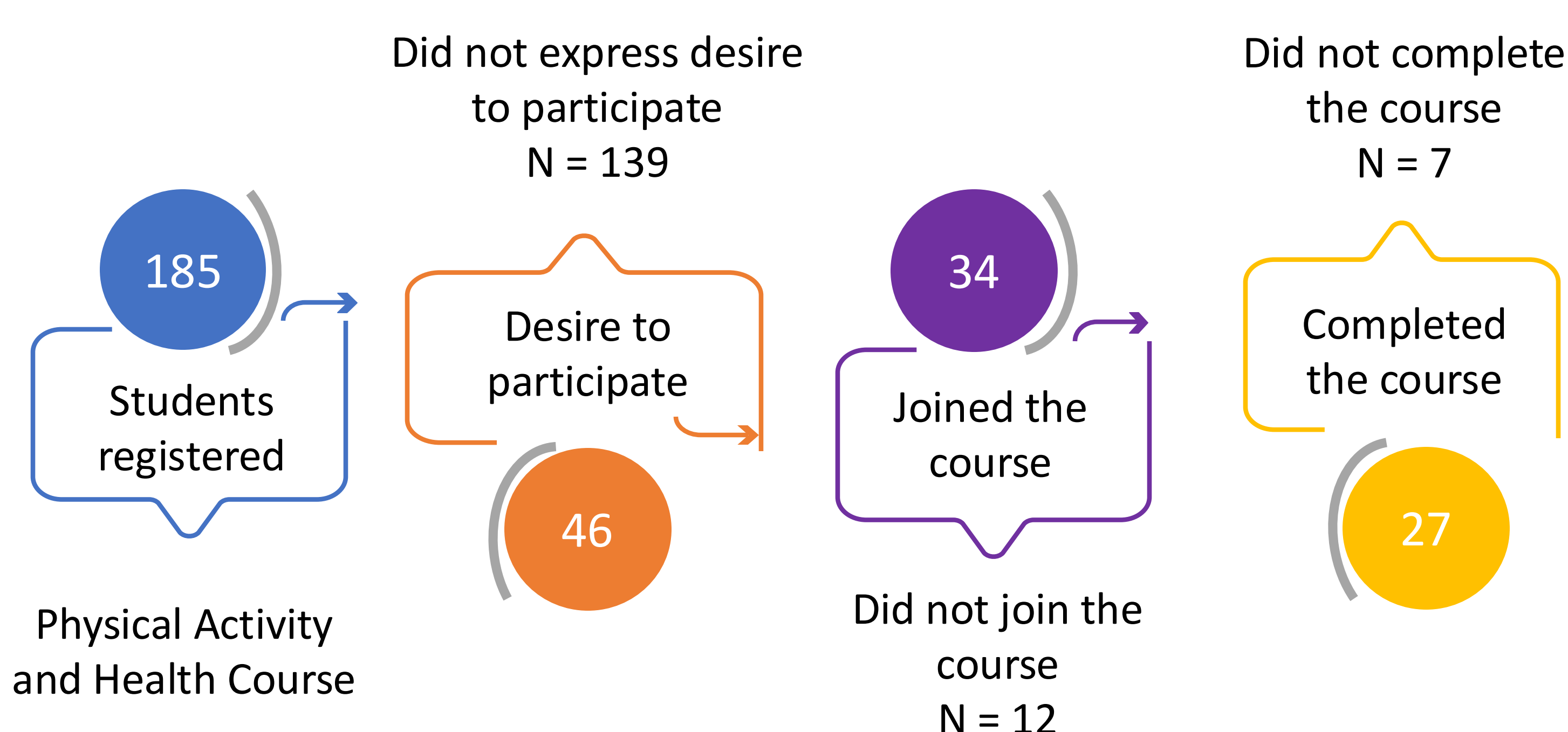
## Evaluation



→ Importance of the course;  
→ Importance of each thematic session to medical curricula.

## OUTCOMES

**Figure 1. Flow diagram of students’ enrolment in the course**



## IMPACTS & LESSONS

Medical students provided:

- Considerable acknowledgement of the importance of integrating physical activity into their curricula, contributing to accomplishing one of the WHO best buys to tackle noncommunicable diseases – brief counselling and referral for physical activity by health professionals.
- Guidance on improving the course in future editions.

## FUNDING

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