

Strength in Old Age – Effective Model for Healthy Exercise



Strength in Old Age Programme

- ☞ Aims: to launch evidence-based counseling, guided strength and balance exercise training, and outdoor activities for independently living older adults (75+) with decreased functional capacity.
- ☞ Coordination and mentoring by Age Institute
- ☞ Financing: Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations (STEA) and Ministry of Education and Culture and Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

Three target groups



1. 75+ independently living physically inactive persons with

- ☞ early problems of mobility
- ☞ early signs of memory illness
- ☞ mild depression
- ☞ feelings of loneliness

2. Physically active 60+ volunteers

- ☞ functionally capable
- ☞ willing to act as exercise friends, peer leaders, communicators...

3. Cross-sectorial cooperation groups and coordinators in the municipalities

Municipalities are chosen on application to the Programme

- ☞ for the three-year mentoring in order to implement the best practices in:
 - ☞ exercise counseling
 - ☞ strength and balance exercise
 - ☞ outdoor exercise
- ☞ committed through intersectoral collaboration without extra funding.
 - ☞ Municipal sectors: social, health, education, culture, and sport
 - ☞ each sector appointed one of their regular staff to coordinate and cooperate with the Age Institute mentoring
 - ☞ NGOs essentially taking part
- ☞ Key role in the intersectoral collaborative group.
- ☞ Joint exercise councils of older adults and decision-makers

Strength in Old Age - municipalities

Chosen to the Program (see map)

- ☞ 38 municipalities 2010-2015
- ☞ 48 municipalities 2016-2021
- ☞ 23 municipalities 2021- on-going

Chosen to other forms of activities

Piloting new mentoring model

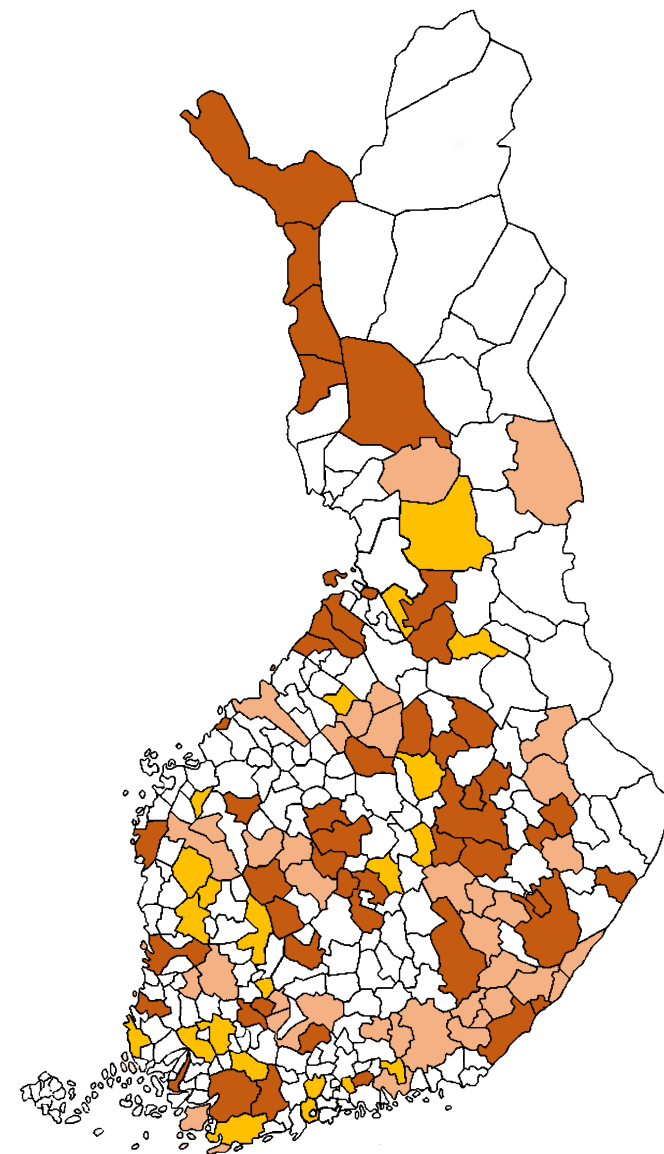
- ☞ 109 municipalities 2017-2019

Regional learning networks (14)

- ☞ 100 municipalities 2019-2020

Motion machine (Ikiliikkuja)

- ☞ Around 70 municipalities 2020



Implementation of good practices with the help of cross-sectorial cooperation and mentoring

Reaching the right target group for exercise

1. Successful **exercise counseling** and service guidance
2. Qualified **assessment of mobility**
3. Successful **strength and balance and outdoor exercise**
4. Solutions for **facilities, equipment, transportation, assistance and cooperation**
5. **Training** for group leaders
6. **Inclusion of the elderly** in development

Best practices

Hyviä toimintatapoja ikäihmisten terveysliikuntaan



Implementation

Joint exercise councils of older adults and decision-makers

- ☞ convey **older people's experiences** to providers of exercise and decision-makers
- ☞ increase older people's inclusion
- ☞ speed up fulfilment of older people's wishes



Go out with the elderly

Training of outdoor friends since 2007

Need for a campaign

Annual campaign promotes outdoor activities in safe company



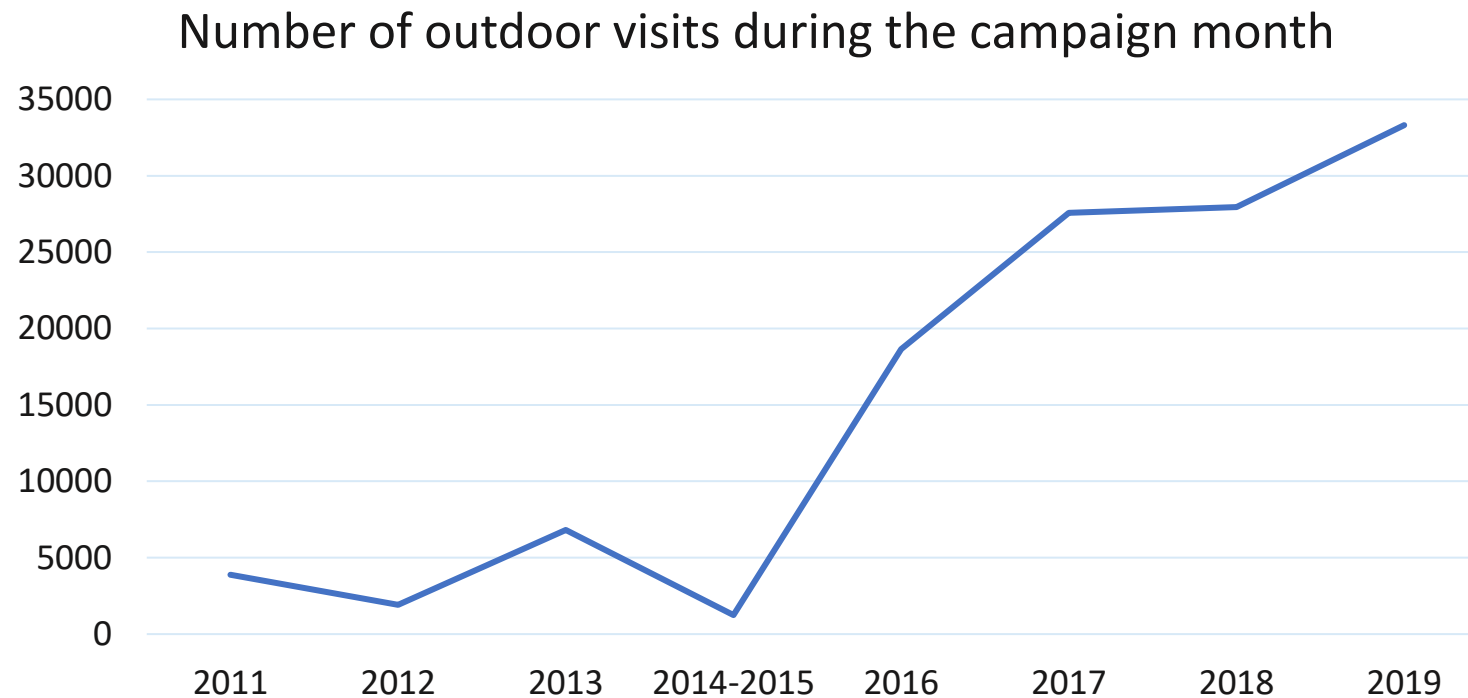
Goals

1. Challenge volunteers in NGOs, students, elder care professionals, families and neighbours to go out with older adults.
2. Older adults with decreased functional capacity around Finland have a possibility to go out regularly.



In 2019 – new records

- 🏖 33 311 recorded outdoor visits
- 🏖 146 municipalities
- 🏖 285 organisations
- 🏖 136 events on the main event day (Oct 9)

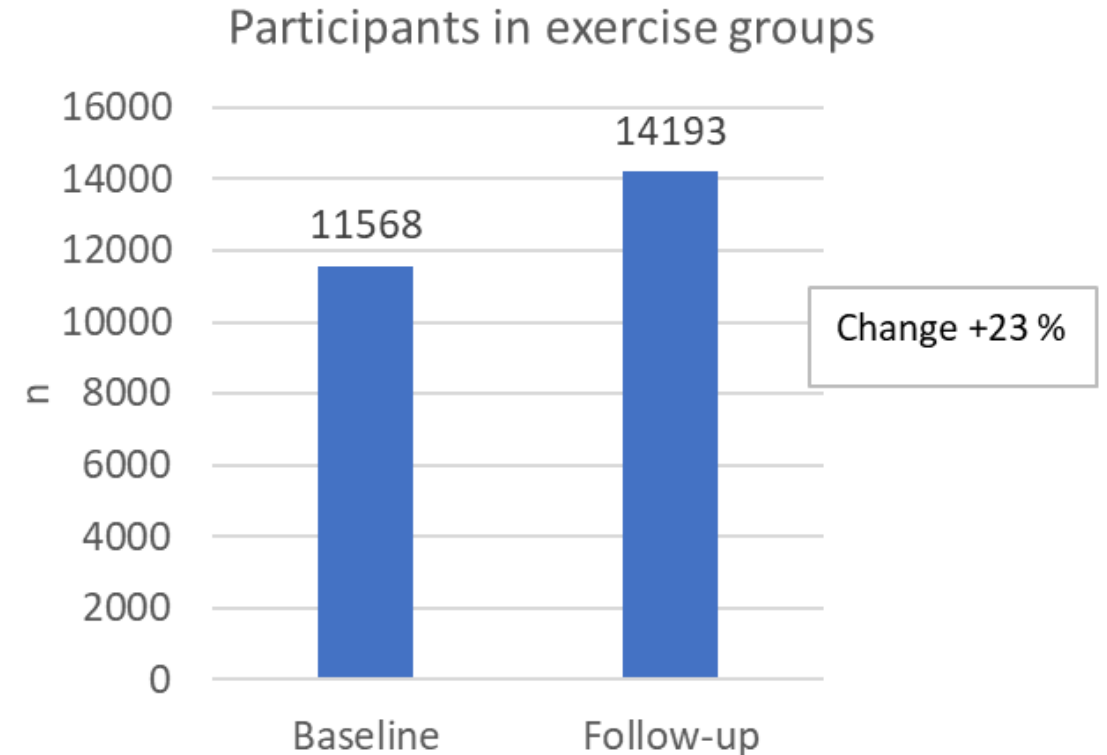
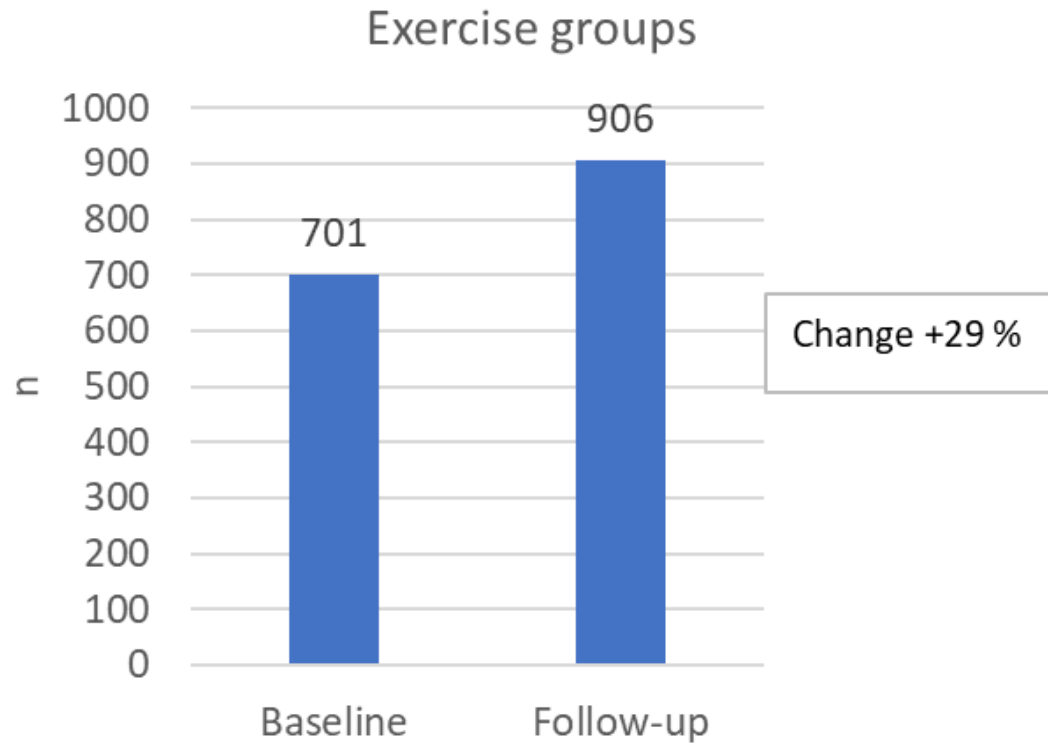


Age-friendly environment

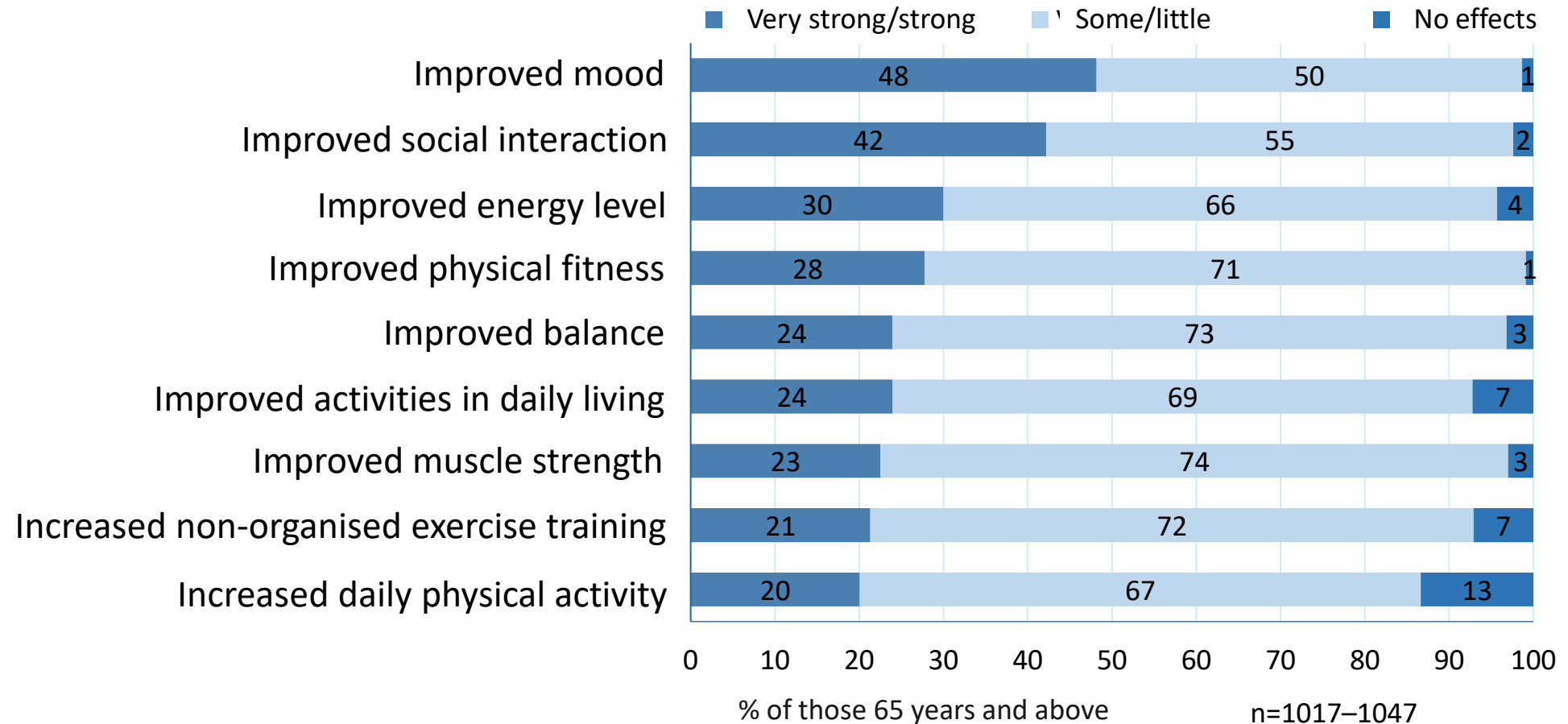
- 🦑 To have access
 - 🦑 Every day
 - 🦑 Easy to move around and orientate directions
 - 🦑 Safety first: surface/terrain, routes, benches, lighting, sanding, etc.
 - 🦑 Transition from indoor to outdoors often difficult
- 🦑 To have assistance (friends, family members/relatives, professionals)
- 🦑 To design
 - 🦑 facilities that meet older persons' needs
 - 🦑 by using co-design with older persons themselves
- 🦑 Promote walking and outdoor activities, as they are most common types of activity among older people in Finland.
- 🦑 Large proportion of older persons would like to exercise but they are home-bound due to barriers in the environment.



Change in the number of exercise groups and participants from baseline to follow-up (18 municipalities 2016-2019)



Perceived effects from participating in the exercise group



Ref: Saloranta et al, 2020: Strength in Old Age Participant Survey 2019

The success factors and challenges of cross-sectorial cooperation

Success factors

- 🐚 Willingness to cooperate
- 🐚 Common targets
- 🐚 Strong coordination and clear roles
- 🐚 Support from decision-makers
- 🐚 Mutual respect between actors and respect for older people
- 🐚 Mutual familiarity in small municipalities
- 🐚 Good 'flow' in communication
- 🐚 Suitable conditions for action
- 🐚 Perceived benefits of collaboration

Challenges

- 🐚 Lack of time
- 🐚 High turnover of workers
- 🐚 Negative attitudes
- 🐚 Lack of courage
- 🐚 Bureaucracy
- 🐚 Lack of support from decision-makers
- 🐚 Inadequate resources
- 🐚 Difficulties in getting key persons

Laulainen Sanna ym. 2016:
Good and active aging by intersectoral collaboration.
University of Eastern Finland and Age Institute