



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ACTION PLAN 2025 REPORT

The 2025 Report on the Physical Activity Action Plan was prepared in collaboration with the following ministries and partner institutions. In 2025, the Ministry of Climate and the Ministry of Defence joined the initiative, bringing the total number of ministries in the partner network to five, along with their partner organisations.

- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Education and Research
- Ministry of Climate
- Ministry of Defence
- Ministry of Social Affairs
- Competence Centre for Physical Activity
- University of Tartu Move Lab
- Estonian Transport Administration
- Defence Resources Agency
- National Institute for Health Development

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REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE

TERVE EESTI EEST!
Liikumisharrastuse kompetentsikeskus

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INTRODUCTION

In 2025, significant progress was made under the cross-sectoral Physical Activity Action Plan as the defence and mobility sectors joined the initiative. As a result, the action plan now encompasses the areas of responsibility of the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Climate and the Ministry of Defence. The third year of implementation of the action plan was characterised both by the expansion of the partnership network and by very positive developments in the physical activity levels of the population.

The Physical Activity Action Plan contributes to achieving the objectives of the priority development area 'the majority of the population is physically active and participates in sport' set out in the Fundamentals of Estonian Sports Policy until 2030. A brief overview of efforts to promote physical activity is also available in the Sport 2030 Report each year: [Sport 2030 Report](#)¹.

Government Action Programme and Coalition Agreement

The implementation of the Physical Activity Action Plan is outlined in the 2025–2027 Coalition Agreement and is also identified as an ongoing activity in the 2025–2027 Government Action Programme.

Minister responsible: Minister of Culture

MINISTRY OF CLIMATE – ESTONIAN CYCLING STRATEGY 2040

The Ministry of Climate joined the action plan through the Estonian Cycling Strategy 2040, whose objectives are closely aligned with the vision of the Physical Activity Action Plan. Cycling is recognised as an equally viable year-round mode of transport both for short everyday journeys and for leisure activities and sports. This, in turn, contributes to improving quality of life and people's mental and physical health. In addition, attention is given to the needs of cyclists as vulnerable road users.

Estonian Cycling Strategy 2040



Guiding principles of the Estonian Cycling Strategy 2040

Equal and fair treatment of cyclists – cycling is an equal mode of transport and cyclists are vulnerable road users.

Taking user diversity into account – cycling infrastructure must be suitable for both children and older people and be comfortable year-round.

Demand potential – the primary focus is on creating seamless urban routes.

Supporting the seamless integration of cycling and public transport, including so-called last-mile solutions.

Planning is collaborative and data-driven, involving a range of stakeholders and infrastructure owners.

Minister responsible: Minister of Infrastructure, who joined the ministerial-level meetings in 2025.

Full text of the Estonian Cycling Strategy 2040²

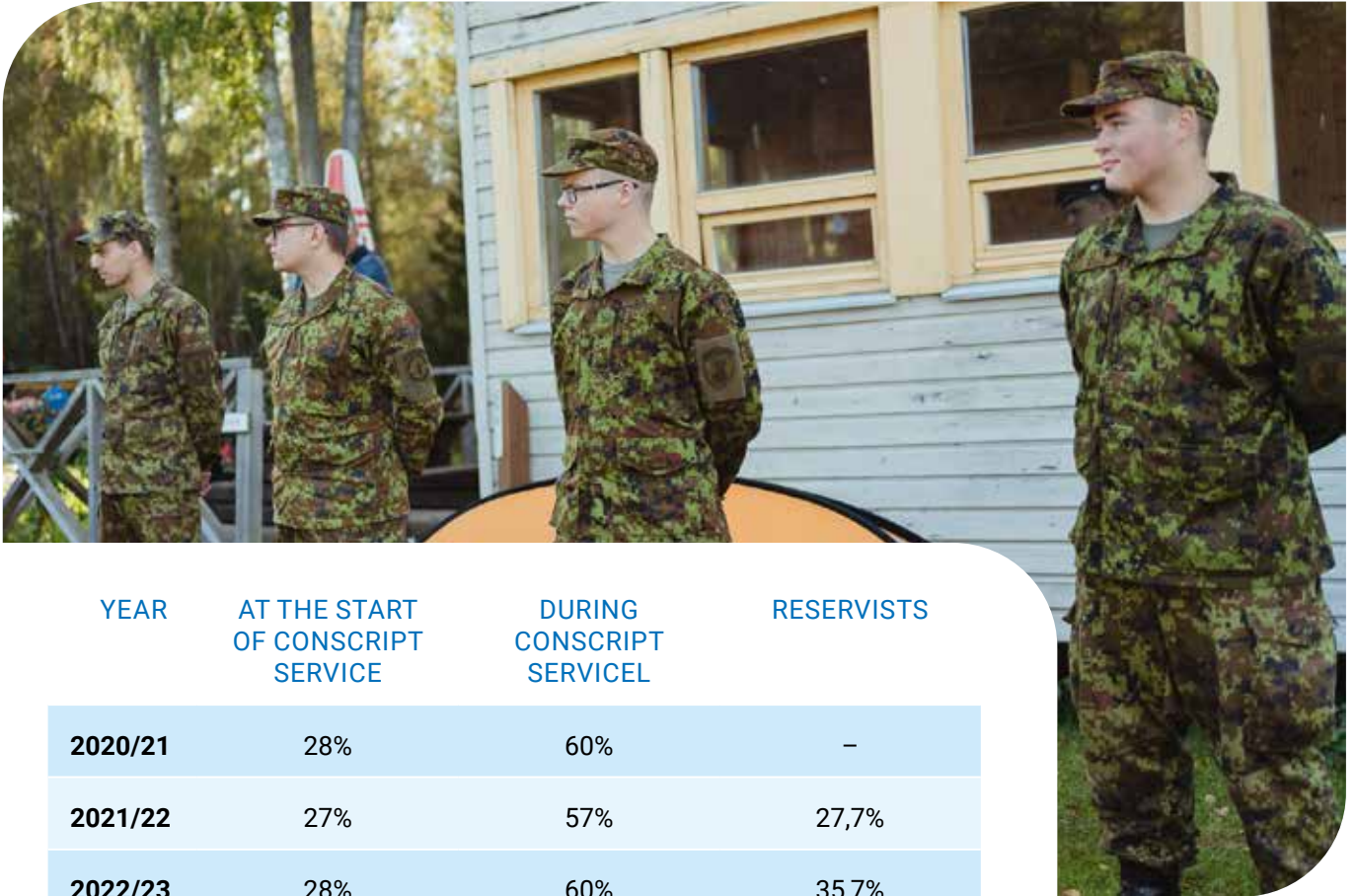
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE – DEFENCE CAPABILITY AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

From the perspective of the Ministry of Defence and the Defence Resources Agency, physical activity and physical capability must be improved for a very simple reason: physical fitness plays a crucial role in the defence capability of Estonia. It is important that conscripts are in sufficiently good physical condition both when they enter and complete conscript service. At the same time, it should be remembered that reservists form the backbone of Estonia's national defence. To ensure that those responsible for defending the country are fit to carry out their duties in both peacetime and wartime, efforts are made to develop their physical capabilities and promote physical activity.



„Spordivägi” app

- The Estonian Defence Forces have developed the sports app Spordivägi, which provides training plans and programmes primarily for call-up selectees and conscripts, enabling them to train under guidance and improve their physical fitness. The app is free of charge and is also available to anyone wishing to improve their health and fitness. As of the end of 2025, the app had been downloaded nearly 18,000 times. In 2025, this figure was 9,782.
- Amendments were made to Regulation No 10 of the Minister of Defence of 30 August 2021 'Conditions and Procedure for Supporting the Field of National Defence Studies' to expand the range of teachers eligible for support. In addition to national defence studies teachers, physical education teachers who have made an outstanding contribution to supporting young people's physical fitness can now also be recognised.
- One of the functions of the Estonian Defence League is to promote and foster physical fitness and sport among the population. The promotion and organisation of sport and recreational physical activity within the Estonian Defence League are based on the Estonian Defence League Act, [the Defence League Sports Concept](#)³, the guidelines and schedule governing sport within the Defence League, and other legal acts regulating sports activities.
- As of 2025, a bonus is paid to conscripts who pass the physical fitness test with a score of at least 240 points. The monthly bonus is €50, which is a significant sum considering the monthly allowance paid to conscripts. In 2025, a total of 1,409 out of 3,426 conscripts passed the test with more than 240 points. This is a strong result, increasing the average score among successful physical fitness test performances from 242 points in 2024 to 252 points in 2025.
- In 2025, an average of 185 competitors took part in the Estonian Defence Forces Championships across 11 sports. The



YEAR	AT THE START OF CONSCRIPT SERVICE	DURING CONSCRIPT SERVICE	RESERVISTS
2020/21	28%	60%	–
2021/22	27%	57%	27,7%
2022/23	28%	60%	35,7%
2023/24	31%	66%	27,4%
2024/25	25%	71%	33%

Trends in the physical fitness of conscripts and reservists (% of those who passed the Defence Forces physical fitness test)

average number of participants was 184 in 2024, 152 in 2023 and 139 in 2022. The Estonian Defence Forces actively work to ensure that sport and physical activity are valued.

- November is Men's Health Month, during which the Ministry of Defence, the Estonian Defence Forces and the Estonian Defence League encourage reservists and men across Estonia to pay greater attention to their physical fitness. As part of Men's Health Month, the competition Alexela Presents: Men's Health Month, organised by the NGO National Defenders Disc Golf Club, took place in

2025. Several sports and health product retailers offered special promotions, and well-known public figures introduced the Spordivägi app to a wider audience.

- From 20 October 2025, the television series Tippvormi(s)! was broadcast on ETV. The experimental series showed how ten people with below-average physical fitness embarked on a grueling journey. Through intensive training and a series of challenges, they pushed beyond their limits in order to achieve, within three months, the level of fitness required to pass the physical fitness test of the Estonian Defence Forces.



Increase of
5%

46%

of the Estonian population follows the physical activity recommendations of the WHO.*

2024, the corresponding figure was 41%. The WHO recommends that adults engage in at least 150–300 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity or 75–150 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity per week.

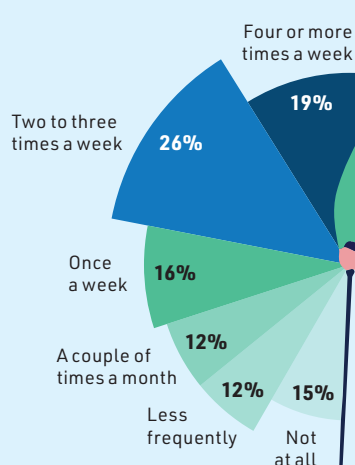
Increase of
5%

84%

of people engage in physical activity.

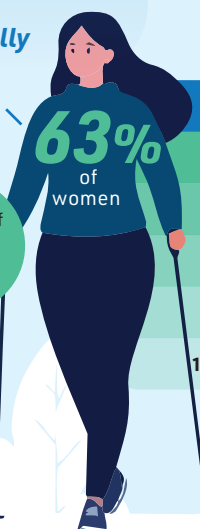
2024, the corresponding figure was 79%.

A total of 60% of people engage in physical activity every week and 44% do so more than once a week.

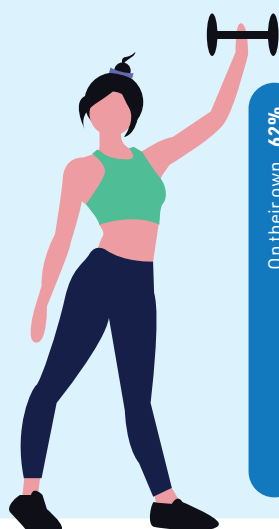
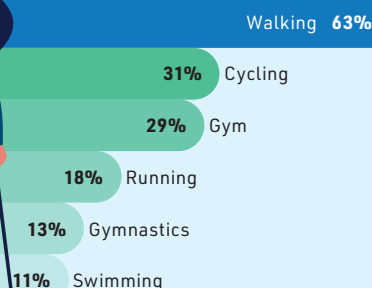


Physically active every week

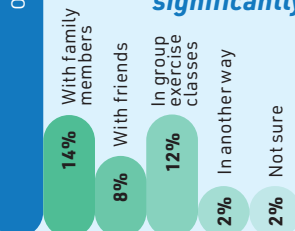
Increase of
3%



Walking remains the most popular form of physical activity among Estonians.



The proportion of people exercising on their own has increased significantly.



Technological support is increasingly being used to shape exercise habits

In 2025, 58% of the population used devices that track physical activity, compared to 54% in 2024. 7% of respondents use artificial intelligence to support their physical activity.

Increase of
4%



Regular exercise significantly promotes mental and physical well-being.



84% of respondents believe that physical activity has helped them **maintain their health**.



77% of respondents believe that physical activity **reduces stress** and improves work performance.



76% of respondents believe that physical activity **makes them happier** and more satisfied with life.



Sports opportunities are closer than ever.

A hiking trail or cycle and pedestrian track is located within a one-kilometre radius.

57%

A sports ground or outdoor gym is located within a five-kilometre radius.

76%

A sports hall, gym or swimming pool is located within a five-kilometre radius.

68%

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SURVEY 2025

According to a survey commissioned by the Competence Centre for Physical Activity and conducted by Turu-uuringute AS at the end of 2025, 84% of the population engage in some form of physical activity. This represents an increase of 5% compared with the previous year.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends that adults engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity per week. A total of 46% of respondents meet this recommended level of regularity and intensity. This figure has increased over time: in 2024 it stood at 41% and in 2023 at 40%.

Sixty per cent of residents engage in physical activity every week, of whom 44% do so more than once a week. The amount of time spent being physically active has also increased. Twenty per cent of residents are physically active for at least five hours per week, compared with 14% two years earlier.

Walking remains the most popular form of physical activity and an increasing number of people exercise on their own. While 58% of respondents engaged in physical activity independently in 2024, the figure increased to 62% in 2025. Group-based or instructor-led exercise is considered the main form of physical activity by 12% of residents. At the same time, the survey shows that people who exercise in groups or under the guidance of an instructor are, on average, more active than those who train independently.

The desire to be physically active remains high among residents, with 62% of respondents wishing to be more active than they currently are. In addition, those who already engage in at least some physical activity

express the strongest desire to increase it, while those who are completely inactive express the least interest. The main barriers identified were fatigue and a lack of motivation, interest and time.

Technological aids are increasingly being used. Devices that track physical activity are used by 58% of people. Applications based on artificial intelligence are used by 7% of respondents.

Access to opportunities for physical activity close to home has also improved. A hiking trail or cycle and pedestrian track is located within a one-kilometre radius of 57% of residents' homes, and a sports hall, gym or swimming pool is located within five kilometres of 68% of respondents. Overall, 61% of residents believe that suitable opportunities for physical activity are available close to home.

The survey confirms the positive impact of physical activity on mental and physical health. Eighty-four per cent of respondents found that regular physical activity helps maintain health, 77% said that physical activity reduces stress and improves work performance, and 76% feel happier and more satisfied on days when they are physically active.

The full survey is available on [the website of the Competence Centre for Physical Activity](#)⁴.

CYCLING STRATEGY AND CYCLING DATA

The Estonian Cycling Strategy 2040 was completed in summer 2025, and in October 2025, the key state agencies signed a co-operation agreement supporting the implementation of the strategy. This laid the foundation for a co-operation network through which the strategy was formally endorsed.

An important component of developing the Cycling Strategy was [the preliminary study](#)⁵ completed in early 2025, which aimed to identify barriers to cycling and opportunities for further development. The preliminary study emphasises that the greatest obstacle to promoting bicycle use is not only a lack of infrastructure, but also fragmented responsibilities, inconsistent understanding and weak co-operation between national and local levels. A large number of stakeholders are involved in cycling-related matters, but few have clearly defined roles, resources and responsibilities. Therefore, terminology, expectations and guidance materials need to be harmonised, a clear national lead needs to be designated, and strategic objectives need to be linked to a concrete action plan, funding and monitoring. The study also identifies the need to streamline legislation and standards, discontinue the use of ambiguous umbrella terms such as 'kergliiklus' (non-motorised transport modes), and update design guidance documents so that cycling is treated as an independent and equally valid mode of transport.

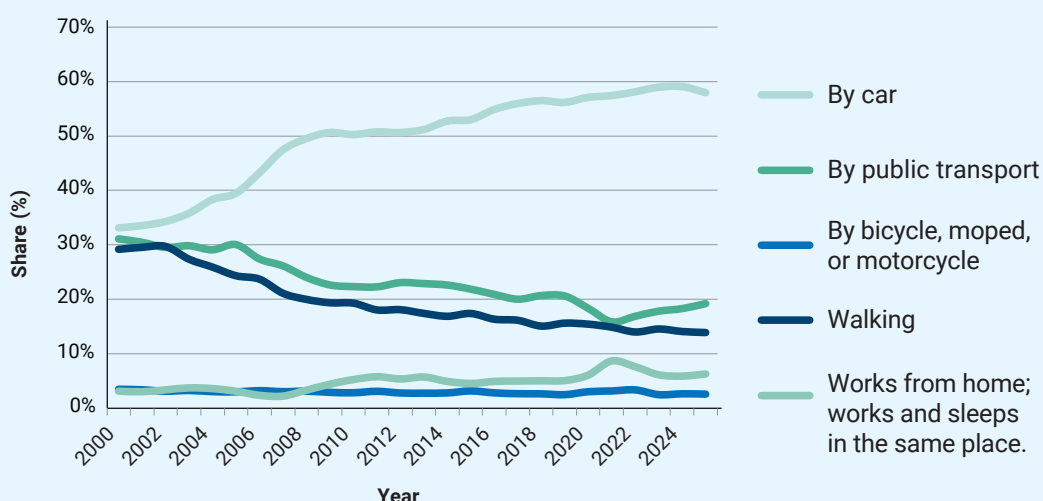
The study emphasised that an environment that supports cycling must be user-friendly, logical and functional throughout the year. This means creating a space suitable for cyclists with different levels of experience,

ensuring clear integration within the transport environment, and maintaining high standards of upkeep in both summer and winter. Clear maintenance rules, supervision, requirements for temporary traffic management and an improved feedback system for rapid resolution of issues are needed. In addition, infrastructure development alone is not sufficient. Growth in cycling is supported by informed and professional communication that shapes attitudes, improves traffic culture, helps garner public support and presents cycling as an attractive means of everyday urban transport.

Each year, data are collected in Estonia on [different forms of commuting between home and work](#)⁶. In 2025, for the first time in 15 years, the share of travel by car decreased by a statistically significant margin (1.1–1.2%). Compared with the previous year, approximately 10,000 fewer people identified the car as their main mode of travel to work and instead preferred public transport and other sustainable modes of transport.

The most recent general data on the use of modes of transport across all age groups comes from the 2021 [Estonian Mobility Survey](#) (a new survey is currently underway in 2026)⁷. Cycling is the most common mode

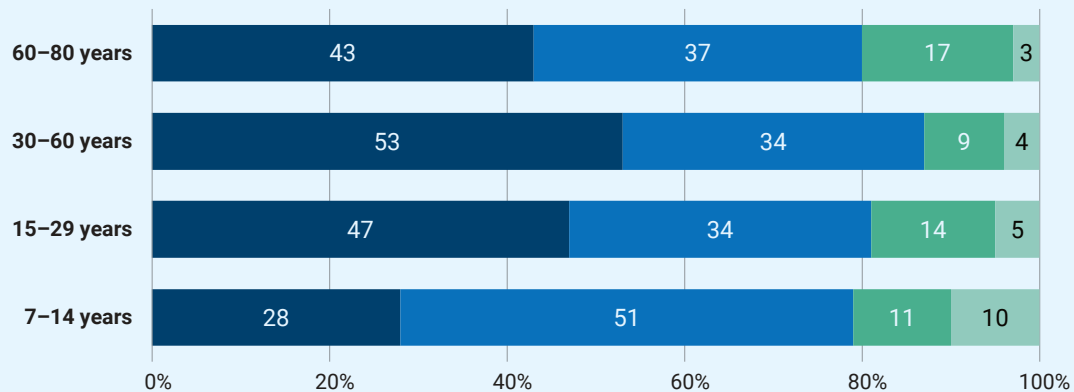
Trends in the share of modes of transport used for commuting



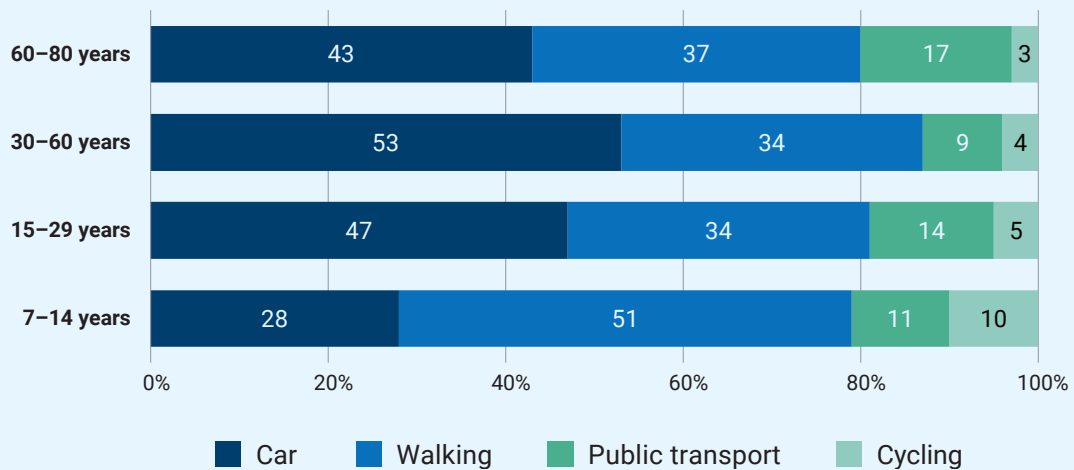
5%
Cycling is the main mode of transport.

27%
Walking is the main mode of transport.

***Distribution of modes of transport among rural residents in Estonia
(% of trips), 2021***



***Distribution of modes of transport among urban residents in Estonia
(% of trips), 2021***



of transport among children in Estonia, while its share in adults' everyday mobility is relatively low. Cycling is most prevalent among children aged 7–14, accounting for 10% of all urban trips and 8% of rural trips within this age group. Among young people and working-age adults, cycling is less common, accounting for around 4–5% of trips in both urban and rural areas. However, cycling remains an important mode of transport for older age groups, particularly in rural areas.

According to the vision of the Estonian Cycling Strategy, by 2040 cycling in Estonia will be a natural, convenient and safe mode of transport, used daily and year-round to travel between different destinations and

in combination with public transport. The share of cycling is expected to increase to at least 13% of all trips. The development and maintenance of cycling infrastructure will be integrated into the day-to-day organisation of mobility and infrastructure at both national and local levels. The key indicators for monitoring the Cycling Strategy are:

- the share of cycling in total trips (Estonia, urban and rural settlements);
- the share of bicycle use in summer and winter periods (data collection to begin);
- the share of people cycling to work and school;
- the number of people injured and killed in cycling-related traffic incidents.

3

PROJECTS AND IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES

This chapter provides an overview of projects implemented in 2025 and those currently underway, as well as new legislation and campaigns.



~300
ball boxes
across Estonia

BALL BOXES – CO-OPERATION WITH MUNICIPALITIES

At the beginning of the summer, the Competence Centre for Physical Activity, in co-operation with the Ministry of Culture, called on municipalities to install ball boxes at public sports facilities. Municipalities responded positively to the initiative and there are now *more than 300 ball boxes across Estonia*⁸.

The ball boxes have been installed at public sports facilities and contain four footballs and four basketballs for on-site use. The aim is to make spontaneous physical activity easier and to encourage group play.



A SURVEY ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORTS OPPORTUNITIES IN KINDERGARTENS

From May to June 2025, the Estonian Foundation of Sports Education and Information conducted a nationwide survey to map the opportunities for physical activity and sports in Estonian kindergartens. A total of 463 kindergartens participated in the survey, representing 88% of all kindergartens in Estonia. This result exceeded all expectations and reflects the strong motivation of kindergartens to contribute to improving opportunities for physical activity.

The survey was jointly carried out by the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the University of Tartu Institute of Sport Sciences and Physiotherapy, the National Institute for Health Development, and the Competence Centre for Physical Activity. The nationwide survey report will be completed in 2026 and each participating kindergarten will receive feedback comparing its performance with that of other kindergartens. This data will help them reflect on their activities and plan further steps to develop environments that support physical activity.

RITA+ PROJECT – EVIDENCE-BASED INTERVENTION PROGRAMME IN SCHOOLS

The Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education and Research, together with the Competence Centre for Physical Activity, successfully secured funding from the RITA+ 2023–2029 programme of the Estonian Research Council.

The project 'Evidence-Based Intervention Programme to Promote Physical Activity and Agency among Students in the Second Stage of Study' aims to increase the physical activity levels of students in the second stage of study to improve their mental well-being and physical fitness. The project is implemented by the University of Tartu (lead partner), Tallinn University and the University of Ljubljana.



SCHOOLS IN MOTION – NETWORK GROWTH AND RESULTS

Schools in Motion (SiM) is a comprehensive, cross-curricular programme co-ordinated by the University of Tartu Move Lab, aimed at creating a school environment that supports physical activity.

Training sessions and seminars in 2025: four introductory seminars for schools that joined the network, five training sessions on active lessons, three training sessions for game leader instructors, and several training sessions and seminars for different target groups (team leaders, physical education teachers etc). A separate kick-off seminar was held for upper secondary schools. In autumn and spring, the now-traditional outdoor learning weeks took place.

In 2025, a doctoral thesis was defended on schoolyard infrastructure, its use during outdoor recess and students' phys-

ical activity. The dissertation provided scientific evidence on the importance of outdoor recess in increasing physical activity during the school day.

'SPORT IN SCHOOL' PROGRAMME

Since 2021, the Estonian Olympic Committee (EOK) has been piloting a programme aimed at increasing students' physical activity and encouraging them to make exercise and physical activity a habit, as well as introducing students in the first stage of study to as many different sports as possible. The EOK provides co-financing for the programme on the condition that municipalities contribute at least an equal amount. In the 2025/26 academic year, the 'Sport in School' programme is implemented in 41 schools across 13 counties and 27 municipalities. As of 2026, the programme is co-ordinated by the Competence Centre for Physical Activity.

222

schools in the SiM
network (by the
end of 2025)

380

participants at
the autumn
seminar in
Tallinn

3,60

satisfaction
(4th grade, SiM)
vs 3.53
(non-SiM)*

3,25

satisfaction
8th grade, SiM)
vs 3.18
(non-SiM)*



NEW LEGISLATION IN 2025 – A LEGAL FRAMEWORK THAT SUPPORTS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Use of schoolyards – removal of temperature restrictions

A *new law*⁹ regulating health protection requirements for schools has entered into force. The law no longer specifies temperature thresholds for outdoor lessons. This gives schools significantly more freedom to take students skiing and ice skating.

Key provisions of the Regulation (physical activity)

§ 13. Planning of health promotion: health promotion objectives are set out in the development documents of the school. Developing skills for maintaining health forms part of the school curriculum.

§ 14 (2). The daily schedule of the school must provide students with an opportunity to be physically active outdoors for at least 20 consecutive minutes (for example, through outdoor recess or lessons).

§ 14 (3). Students must have the opportunity to move around while completing assignments during lessons or take separate breaks to stretch.

§ 14 (1). When designing the physical learning and educational environment, it is important to provide diverse and safe opportunities for physical activity and to offer access to play and sports equipment both outdoors and indoors.



Government of the Republic Regulation No 52 (7 July 2025) – requirements for the learning environment

Initiated by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Regulation No 52 of the Government of the Republic 'Requirements for the Learning Environment in General Education Schools in the Form of Full-time Study, the Management of Health Risks and the Reduction of Risk Factors in the Learning Environment, and the Organisation of Teaching and Education' entered into force on 1 September 2025.

Professional standards for teachers (as of 1 September 2025)

In co-operation with the working group on professional standards for teachers, new professional standards for teachers entered into force on 1 September 2025. The standards specify that supporting learners through activities that promote health and physical activity is a mandatory competency for teachers. The Praxis study on the effectiveness of interventions, commissioned by the Ministry of Social Affairs, is also noteworthy.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS' TRAINING DAY AT THE ESTONIAN ACADEMY OF SECURITY SCIENCES

As a new initiative, a training day for physical education teachers was developed from an idea proposed by the interministerial working group and held at the Estonian Academy of Security Sciences. The event introduced the physical fitness tests used by the Estonian Defence Forces and the Estonian Academy of Security Sciences, as well as expected performance levels. Representatives also visited summer courses for physical education teachers to present the testing systems of the Defence Forces and the Academy to provide teachers with a realistic understanding of expectations.

Impact and next steps

Co-operation with the Ministry of Defence and the Estonian Academy of Security Sciences provides physical education teachers with a new perspective on the physical fitness requirements of the Estonian Defence Forces.

Follow-up activities are planned for 2026.

LIISU SUMMER SCHOOL FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

From 10 to 12 June, the ninth LIISU Summer School for Physical Education Teachers took place at Kääriku Sports Centre in Valga

County, bringing together nearly 100 participants from across Estonia, including physical education teachers, class teachers, kindergarten teachers, instructors of extracurricular physical activity groups and coaches. The guiding principle of the summer school is peer learning and practical activities. This year, participants were able to choose from 14 different sessions and create a suitable programme based on the age group of their students. Participants rated the LIISU programme highly, particularly its sense of community and the opportunity to share experiences, learn from one another and, through this, support teachers' enjoyment of movement and well-being.

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR 'B-EST WAY TO MOVE – HOW TO MAKE ESTONIA MOST ACTIVE NATION IN EUROPE?'

Led by the Competence Centre for Physical Activity, the international seminar 'How to Make Estonia Most Active Nation in Europe?' took place in Tallinn on 14–15 January. Its aim was to share best practices from different countries and exchange experiences in increasing physical activity. The seminar featured presentations by promoters of physical activity from Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Latvia, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, the Netherlands, Italy, the United Kingdom, Estonia and elsewhere. Initiatives were presented that would make public spaces more inviting for physical activity, create opportunities for outdoor exercise, increase physical activity through play and recreation, as well as other programmes and projects.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CONFERENCE 'KÄÄRIKU KÄRAJAD – TERVE EESTI EEST!'

On 8–9 October, the Kääriku Sports Centre in Valga County hosted, for the third time, the physical activity conference 'Kääriku Kärajad – Terve Eesti eest!', organised by the Competence Centre for Physical Activity. The conference drew approximately 120 participants and brought together representatives from ministries, research institutions, municipalities, educational institutions, sports unions, sports centres and other partners. The conference focused on Estonian identity, public space, the role of municipalities and the joint promotion of physical activity across Estonia.

Over the course of two days, speakers included Minister of Culture Heidy Purga, Minister of Defence Hanno Pevkur, Minister of Infrastructure Kuldar Leis, Minister of Regional Affairs Hendrik Johannes Terras, and President of the Estonian Olympic Committee Kersti Kaljulaid, as well as researchers, writers and practitioners. At the conference, the Estonian Cycling Strategy 2040 was presented and signed, and future directions of the Physical Activity Action Plan were introduced. The conference was moderated by ERR journalists and fitness enthusiasts Margit Kilumets and Juhan Kilumets.



The conference also received media attention. A member of the board of the CCPA spoke on Kuku Radio's Hommikuraadio and on Kanal 2's morning programme about how to encourage people in Estonia to be more physically active. The event was covered live on social media. Impressions and quotes from the event were shared live on Liigume Instagram, the conference was streamed live on sport.delfi.ee, and the event was covered by sport.postimees.ee. After the event, impressions from the Kääriku seminar were shared on Raadio 2's sports news, on Vikerraadio's Spordipühapäev programme together with psychologist Andero Uusberg and actor Hendrik Kalmet, and on Vikerraadio's Võimla programme.

ORGANISATION OF CYCLE TRACK AND FOOTPATH INFRASTRUCTURE DATA

Commissioned by the Ministry of Climate and the Transport Administration, preparations began in 2025 to update the map of cycle track and footpath infrastructure and other related data. The aim is to organise the dataset and map layers of the current state of the infrastructure and identify missing connections. Preparations for the study took place in 2025 and a procurement process will be conducted in 2026 to select a contractor to carry out the work by the end of the year..

Relevance for the Action Plan

A comprehensive dataset of cycle tracks enables the assessment of cycling potential and the setting of priorities for infrastructure development. The data will be integrated into the monitoring system for the implementation of the Estonian Cycling Strategy 2040.

CAMPAIGNS AND COMMUNICATION

Advertising and communication campaign for Physical Activity Month and European Week of Sport

The European Week of Sport is a Europe-wide campaign aimed at drawing greater attention to physical activity and healthy lifestyles. It takes place every year from 23 to 30 September and is intended for everyone, regardless of age, gender or physical ability. Launched by the European Commission in 2015, the European Week of Sport has seen a steady increase in participation each year. Last year, the European Week of Sport was held in 40 countries, with nearly 50,000 physical activity events involving more than 15 million participants.

Led by the Competence Centre for Physical Activity, September in Estonia has been designated as Physical Activity Month, one component of which is the European Week of Sport held from 23 to 30 September. In this context, 1,185 physical activity events were organised last year, with 234,436 participations recorded (230,579 in 2024, representing a 1.7% increase). A total of 702 organisations contributed to the events, including schools and kindergartens.

The central message of the communication and advertising campaign for the 2025 European Week of Sport was 'Movement is social!', emphasising the social and community value of physical activity. Communication and advertising activities were primarily aimed at three target groups: women aged 25–45 as leaders of families and communities, young people aged 18–29 as messengers, and the 45+ age group, with the aim of increasing participation in physical activity among this group.

In co-operation with the advertising agency Vatson and the media agency MediaBroker, the campaign ran from 8 to 30 September and included television, radio, digital and outdoor media, social media, PR activities, and the involvement of spokespersons, including conductor Kuldar Schütz, Kätlin Hõbemägi from the Kopli Sörk running club, cycling club leader Hanna Taaramäe, President of the Estonian Olympic Committee Kersti Kaljulaid, writer Valdur Mikita, the Ministers of Education, Culture and Social Affairs, representatives of county sports unions, and others.

Thanks to carefully selected communication and marketing activities, the campaign achieved wide visibility despite a limited budget. Outdoor LED media generated 3.1 million impressions, while television achieved a 40.6% reach with prime-time visibility and 1.9 million impressions. On the radio, 177,390 people heard the campaign.



Online media reached 485,000 people and generated 4.7 million impressions. The click-through rate of 0.60% exceeded the forecast by twofold. The European Week of Sport was covered by nearly 30 media outlets and, in co-operation with ERR, ten one-minute segments were broadcast on ETV's morning programme Terevisioon during the autumn season. During the Physical Activity Month and the European Week of Sport, 11 press releases were published through official channels and approximately 500 social media posts were shared on Facebook and Instagram, reaching 151,000 people through paid and organic channels.

European Mobility Week

European Mobility Week takes place annually from 16 to 22 September. It is a European Commission-led awareness-raising campaign focused on sustainable urban mobility. The theme for 2025 was 'Mobility for Everyone', meaning that transport should be available, accessible, affordable, safe and sustainable for all people, regardless of income, location, gender or ability. This year, a record number of municipalities from Estonia (9) participated in Mobility Week. A more detailed overview of their activities can be found in the [European Mobility Week 2025 Summary Report](#).¹⁰

(Social) media campaign for Physical Activity Awards

The Physical Activity Awards are an initiative of the Competence Centre for Physical Activity aimed at recognising people, organisations and initiatives that inspire people of all ages to be more physically active and help shape a healthier and more active society. In 2025, the Physical Activity Awards were presented for the first time at the Estonian Olympic Committee's Sports Stars of the Year Gala on 28 December at the Alexela Concert Hall, combining the recognition of those who promote physical activity with the biggest celebration of the sporting year.

Nominations could be submitted until 17 November in three categories: Getting Children Active, Friend of Physical Activity and Physical Activity Initiative. They were evaluated by a jury comprising representatives of the Estonian Olympic Committee, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Research, the University of Tartu Move Lab, the National Institute for Health Development, the Estonian Employers' Confederation, the Association of Estonian Cities and Municipalities and the Competence Centre for Physical Activity. A total of 115 nominations were submitted, exceeding expectations and confirming strong interest in this type of initiative. Municipalities were particularly active in their participation.





The Getting Children Active 2025 award was presented to the physical activity monitoring application FitSphere, whose team has organised a nationwide step challenge for educational institutions for six consecutive years. A total of 208 educational institutions participated in the 2025 step challenge and more than 1.1 billion steps were recorded. The Friend of Physical Activity 2025 title was awarded to AS Mainor for its consistent work in promoting physical activity among the 18,000 people of Ülemiste City through physical activity challenges, sports infrastructure and community events. The Physical Activity Initiative 2025 award was won by the organisers of the community initiative Kopli Sörk – what began as an idea between two neighbours developed in less than a year into a nationwide jogging movement that now brings together more than 40 communities from Tallinn to Kuressaare and from Tartu to Jõhvi.

The (social) media campaign for the Physical Activity Awards was supported by active communication activities from October to December. The campaign kicked off at a major event in October – the Kääriku physical activity conference – and was followed

by public communication regarding the nomination of candidates until the announcement of the winners. In co-operation with the advertising agency Vatson, videos were produced and used in both organic and paid social media posts on Facebook and Instagram. The social media campaign, carried out in November, reached 74,000 people on a budget of 500 euros and generated 145,000 views. The campaign was supported by press releases, which helped keep it in the public eye throughout its duration and increased the credibility and visibility of the initiative. A total of 115 candidates were nominated for the Physical Activity Awards, exceeding expectations and confirming strong interest in the new initiative. The candidates represented a wide range of fields and regions, highlighting the diversity of physical activity in Estonia.

Communication channels of the Competence Centre for Physical Activity

The Competence Centre for Physical Activity actively uses four main communication channels.

As of December, the [Facebook](#)¹¹ page Liigume had 21,800 followers and accumulated more than 3 million views over the year. Video content grew significantly: there were 397,444 (+236%) 3-second views and 29,448 (+326%) 1-minute views. This shows that the content not only reaches people as they scroll, but also manages to keep them engaged. Notably, 62% of views came from non-followers, confirming the channel's role in capturing the attention of new people. Reels emerged as the most popular content type (39.7% of views), followed by link posts (26.5%) and photos (15.4%). As of the end of December, the [Liigume Instagram](#)¹² channel had 2,348 followers and recorded 358,100 views and 130,100 unique users over the year. Reels also dominated there (71.4% of views), engagement increased by 100% and link clicks reached 1,300 (+319%). In 2025,

the [website liigume.ee](https://liigume.ee)¹³ was visited by a total of 73,645 people, of whom 71,191 (6,100 per month) were new visitors. The average visit duration was 1 minute and 8 seconds, and the largest source of traffic was organic search.

The [monthly partner newsletter of CCPA](#)¹⁴ reaches approximately 255 experts in the physical activity field, including representatives of county sports unions, members of the physical activity action plan network, the Estonian Olympic Committee and its network. In 2025, 12 newsletters were sent, achieving an average open rate of 62% and a click-through rate of 25%. Both indicators significantly exceed the sector average.

Alongside its own channels, the Competence Centre actively uses the channels of

partners in the physical activity action plan network to amplify campaigns and content, including the social media and communication channels of ministries, county sports unions and other partners (such as municipalities). As a result, messages reach an even wider audience.



OTHER PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

Updating of the professional standards for physical activity coaches and implementation of the curriculum

The Competence Centre for Physical Activity, together with Tallinn University and the University of Tartu, updated the curricula for physical activity coaches to systematically support the growth of physical activity among the population. While the curriculum for the Physical Activity Assistant Coach qualification (EQF Level 3) was updated in 2024, the curriculum for the Physical Activity Junior Coach qualification (EQF Level 4) was updated in 2025.

The curricula are based on the concept of physical literacy, which views movement as a skill that can be learned and supports the development of positive and lasting physical activity habits throughout the life course. The updated curricula focus on developing practical skills and on the coach's role in supporting individuals' physical, psychological and social capabilities.

In 2025, two EQF Level 3 training courses and one EQF Level 4 training course were carried out. The EQF Level 4 course comprised 50 academic hours and included both theoretical and practical forms of learning, with a focus on coaching different target groups, including older people and people with disabilities.

As of 31 March 2026, there were 78 physical activity coaches in Estonia, including 55 at EQF Level 3 and 23 at EQF Level 4. Interest in the physical activity coaching qualification is growing. This reflects the need to support an increasing number of people on their fitness journeys with the help of qualified instructors.

The training courses are open to fitness enthu-

siasts, fitness instructors, physical education teachers and coaches in different sports who wish to contribute to improving people's health and increasing physical activity. This approach strengthens the culture of physical activity in the community and supports the goal that every person should find a suitable and enjoyable way to be physically active.

More information about the physical activity coach qualification is available at: <https://liigume.ee/liikumisharrastuse-treenerikutse/>¹⁵

Co-operation project between the municipalities of Viimsi and Keila to increase physical activity among older people

In 2025, the Competence Centre for Physical Activity carried out a practical co-operation project with the municipalities of Keila and Viimsi to test locally applicable models for supporting physical activity among the older people. The project was based on the principle that physical activity should be accessible, guided and socially inclusive – especially for people who do not have established habits of regular physical activity or whose health conditions require an adapted approach.

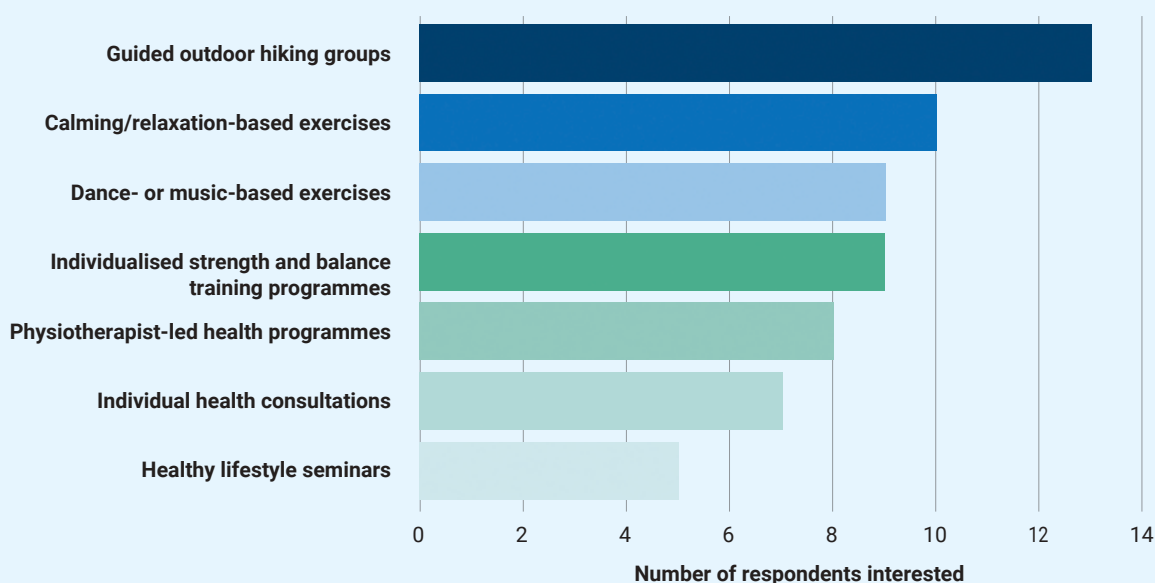
'Healthy Keila on the Move'

In spring 2025, the 'Healthy Keila on the Move' exercise programme was implemented in the city of Keila and was aimed at all residents of Keila aged 50 and over. The programme ran from 7 April to 20 June 2025 and included four weekly exercise sessions in different formats and locations: Shindo stretching sessions at Keila Health Centre, Asahi exercise sessions in Keila Central Park, strength training at Keila School Stadium, and Nordic walking at the same stadium on Saturdays. All sessions were free of charge for participants.

At the end of the programme, a satisfaction survey was conducted and completed by 17 participants: 14 women and 3 men. The age profile of participants was broad: 8 participants were aged 65–68, 2 were aged 70–74, 6 were aged 75–79, and 1 participant was aged 80–84. The main reasons for participating were maintaining and improving health, spending free time actively, and the social and community aspect.

The survey results showed that the exercise programme for older people in Keila was

Desired services in the future



highly valued by participants. Its strengths included high-quality instruction, effective organisation and a positive exercise experience, all of which supported not only physical activity but also social and emotional well-being. At the same time, the survey revealed that participation was not balanced by gender, and engaging more men will require targeted outreach and more attractive formats. It also became apparent that participants' training experience varied, which is why it is recommended to create level-based programmes for beginners and advanced participants in the future.

In the survey on future needs, participants expressed the strongest interest in guided outdoor hiking groups, calming and relaxation-based exercises, dance- or music-based exercises, and individualised strength and balance training sessions. Based on the experience in Keila, clear directions emerged for future development: expanding the programme with nature-based and restorative activities, offering more personalised solutions (physiotherapy, strength and balance programmes), and developing digital and community-based outreach to attract new participants.

The most important outcome of the pilot project was that participants expressed a willingness to pay for physical activity instructor services themselves in the future. This is a significant signal – once people have developed a physical activity habit and experienced its positive effects, regular guided exercise becomes something they value and are willing to pay for. The experience in Keila confirms that a municipality does not have to be a permanent source of funding. It is enough to provide the initial push and ensure a safe environment for the habit to take root. The most important contribution a municipality can make is to help launch projects. A low-threshold, free pilot programme helps overcome the barrier of taking the first step and demonstrates that physical activity is both possible and

enjoyable even in older age.

Viimsi's physical activity project 'More Stamina, More Friends'"

In 2025, Viimsi Rural Municipality launched the physical activity project 'More Stamina, More Friends', aimed at people aged 55 and over. The objective of the project was to increase physical activity and promote a healthy and socially active lifestyle. It focused on outdoor physical activity and offered free guided exercise sessions on the Karulaugu, Rohuneeme and Tädu health trails.

From April to October, 26 exercise sessions were organised, offering a variety of physical activities: sport for all, Nordic walking, gymnastics, outdoor gym exercises, physiotherapist-led sessions and nature hikes. Participation averaged 8–12 people per session, aged between 49 and 82, the majority of whom were women. Most participants already had established physical activity habits and were motivated by the opportunity to spend time with others in a healthy way.

Based on the feedback, the programme was highly rated. Participants highlighted the high quality of instruction, effective organisation and positive effects on both physical and mental well-being. Similar to the experience in Keila, the project revealed a need to place greater emphasis on engaging men and to develop level-based exercise sessions for participants with different levels of experience.

The project was implemented together with the Viimsi Pensioners' Association and supported by specialists from different fields. The experience in Viimsi confirms that guided and community-based physical activity helps establish more lasting physical activity habits and supports healthy ageing.

Follow-up activities under the Welfare Technology Innovation Programme targeting older people

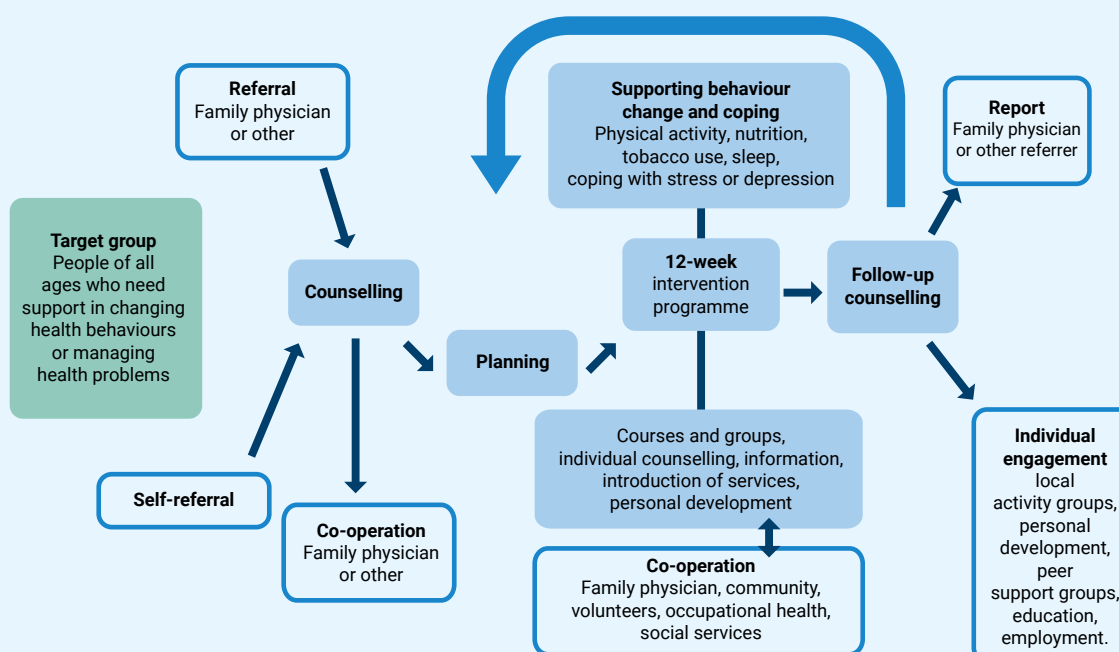
The practical experience and data gathered during the pilot projects in Keila and Viimsi to support physical activity among older people laid the groundwork for a new leap forward. The projects showed that local physical activity programmes are effective and that people are ready for change, but achieving systemic impact requires evidence-based, scalable solutions that integrate digital technologies.

To address this need, the Competence Centre for Physical Activity, together with its partners, began developing the welfare technology solutions programme '*Life-style Counselling Intervention Programme for Older People at Risk of Falls to Effectively Support Physical Activity and Mental Health*'.¹⁶ Support is provided under Regulation No 74 of the Minister of Social Affairs of 18 December 2025 'Support for the Uptake of Welfare Technologies in the Health Care and Social Welfare Sector' and applications for the measure will open in 2026.

The aim of the project is to develop and pilot the digital welfare platform Tervisetugi, designed to support physical activity and mental health among people aged 65 and over who are at risk of falls. As an interface to the welfare platform, the impact of (a) support from loved ones, (b) a social counsellor or health care advisor, and (c) a community counsellor on the physical and mental health indicators of older adults will be tested. The project combines the Norwegian Healthy Life Centre model and evidence-based counselling methodology with the Finnish UKK Institute's ExSed solution for the objective measurement of physical activity into a comprehensive whole.

The project objectives are aligned across three levels to create the innovative welfare platform Tervisetugi:

- 1) short-term pilot programme (Phase 1): testing the technical solution across different target groups; assessing cost-effectiveness on a smaller scale and evaluating user experience;
- 2) a broader nationwide intervention programme (Phase 2): the service model is validated through research. To this end,



a reference group analysis involving a statistically reliable number of users is used. At the national system level, social welfare and health care platforms are integrated;

- 3) long-term (after Phase 2): a scalable and cost-effective welfare platform Tervisetugi: both for the specific target group of older people at risk of falls and within other social welfare and health care systems. The Tervisetugi (health support) concept will be expanded, following the Norwegian model, into 12-week behaviour change programmes structured around five habit modules:

- developing healthy physical activity habits;
- developing healthy eating habits;
- quitting substances and smoking;
- reducing alcohol consumption;
- overcoming sleep disorders.

The project involves a broad consortium of partners: digital platform developer Heia-Heia Oy (Finland), research partners TalTech Centre for Digital Health, Metrosert AS and the National Institute for Health Development, the Estonian Coalition for Mental Health and Well-being VATEK, the target group engagement partner MTÜ Kuldne Liiga, pilot municipalities and, as strategic partners, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs.

The project outputs include an evidence-based impact assessment report, guidance materials for counsellors and policy recommendations. These will provide input for scaling up Phase II across Estonia, with the aim of reaching at least ten counties. Each fall-related hospital admission prevented saves an average of more than 3,000 euros, underscoring the project's social and economic impact.

Support measures for county sports unions

The Competence Centre for Physical Activity supports county sports unions through dedicated support measures aimed at introducing different opportunities for physical activity across each county, increasing people's everyday physical activity, and fostering lasting physical activity habits among different age groups. A key focus is on inclusive and health-promoting physical activity, where the emphasis is not on competition but on the joy of movement, accessibility and creating positive first experiences.

All activities were co-ordinated by county sports unions and implemented in close co-operation with local partners and sports clubs. This made it possible to take into account the unique characteristics of each county and offer physical activity opportunities that respond to local needs.

In 2025, three support measures were implemented. Through the Heart Month and Outdoor Month measures and the Sports Week measure (up to 1,000 euros per county), support was directed primarily towards community-based physical activity initiatives across all stages of life, such as open training sessions, fitness days and joint outdoor activities that help integrate movement into people's daily lives. Through the support measure for kindergartens (up to 2,500 euros per county), the focus was on establishing physical activity habits from an early age by supporting outdoor activity, increasing awareness among teachers and parents, and developing practical skills to make movement a natural part of children's everyday lives. Kindergartens worked closely with health promotion specialists from the county's educational institutions, helping to better integrate these activities into the everyday learning and educational environment. All measures were guided by the principle that physical activity should be accessible, diverse and motivating for everyone, helping to create a healthier and more active living environment across Estonia.

Municipalities in motion

Municipalities in Motion (Liikuma Kutsuv Omaavalitsus) is a [toolkit provided by the Competence Centre for Physical Activity](#)¹⁷ to municipalities to promote physical activity. In 2025, the toolkit was expanded with new materials.

International co-operation

The national strategy document '[Fundamentals of Estonian Sports Policy until 2030](#)¹⁸' sets out a vision that by 2030, the mental and physical balance and well-being of Estonians will be on par with that of the Nordic countries. To support this goal, the Competence Centre for Physical Activity organises annual study visits to the Nordic countries to learn about best practices and service models. In 2024, the delegation visited organisations leading physical activity and sport development in Finland. In late May 2025, a study visit to Norway was organised to explore innovative solutions in the fields of physical activity and health promotion. The Estonian delegation included Taire Ojala from Pärnumaa Sports Union, Lily Allas from Jõulumäe Recreational Sports Centre, Janne Tomberg from Harku Rural Municipality, Evelin Kruusalu from the Health Insur-

ance Fund, and Henek Tomson, Maiu Merihein, Kertu Tort and Kaili Uusmaa from the Competence Centre for Physical Activity.

The delegation visited several institutions in Trondheim and Oslo, including a Healthy Life Centre (Frisklivssentral) – a municipal service centre that provides support for changing health behaviours. They also visited the elite sports centre Olympiatoppen, where a research-based approach supports elite sport, and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), whose research provides evidence-based insights on how physical activity affects quality of life and ageing, and helps reduce health risks.

'As a health promotion specialist, I was impressed by the way the Frisklivssentral or Healthy Life Centre concept has been implemented in municipalities. The focus is on prevention and lifestyle counselling based on motivational interviewing techniques. Support is provided in developing practical skills and building habits,' said Janne Tomberg from Harku Rural Municipality. She added that she has already shared this experience within the Harju County network of health promotion specialists.

NTNU researchers Ulrik Wisløff and Dorthe Stensvold presented research-based findings indicating that a healthy lifestyle can add up to 24 years to a person's lifespan, 14 of which are directly linked to physical activity. 'For example, just 30 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity per week is enough to reduce mortality from cardiovascular disease by up to 50%. Physical activity also helps prevent dementia, as a strong heart also means better brain function,' said Taire Ojala from Pärnumaa Sports Union, summarising the latest findings presented by the leading researchers.

The researchers also highlighted the long-running Norwegian health study HUNT, whose data have helped shape national



health policy and supported a number of international research projects. More than 250,000 people have participated in the study since 1984.

An increase in life expectancy places a greater burden on the health care system. At present, 97% of health care expenditure in Norway is spent on treatment and only 3% on prevention. In Estonia, the Health Insurance Fund allocated 1.4% of its 2024 budget to disease prevention and health promotion. Experts are calling for a shift in focus – greater investment should be made in prevention and shaping health behaviours.

The delegation also visited the Åsvang School where outdoor learning and play-based approaches are central to education and student well-being is consciously prioritised. 'At the school, students with special educational needs are integrated into mainstream classes and school buildings ensure smooth accessibility for them. Teaching also seeks to integrate different subjects. For example, geography and natural science were taught in conjunction with physical education. It was especially nice to see that learning outdoors was considered normal even in the rain,' said Henek Tomson, organiser of the Norway study visit and Research Manager at the Competence Centre for Physical Activity.

Lily Allas from Jõulumäe Recreational Sports Centre also found the Norwegian school's approach an interesting experience, particularly the way subjects are seamlessly integrated into different activities while placing importance on the child's perspective. 'When designing the curriculum and learning activities, the opinions of those for whom the activities are intended are also taken into account,' she said. Overall, the findings from both the research and the study visits made one thing clear – physical activity and a healthy lifestyle are not only for sporty people, but for anyone who wants to live a longer and higher-quality life.

The study visit also led to several follow-up activities in the Estonian context. Anders Berg Ildstad, mobility planner for the City of Trondheim, was invited to speak at the annual physical activity seminar 'Kääriku Kärjad', where he presented best practices in creating active public spaces, using Trondheim as an example. The Norway visit also led to the development of the Frisklivssentral or Healthy Life Centre concept for the Estonian context within the welfare technology innovation programme. The connection established with the Norwegian University of Science and Technology led to Anders Revdal being invited to the research institutions collaboration day 'Movement Brings Well-being' held on 2 December 2025. There, he presented Mia Health, an evidence-based exercise app based on cutting-edge research from NTNU, and outlined plans for its localisation into Estonian in 2026.

ERASMUS+ PROJECTS – active projects in 2025, results and partners

In 2025, funding was sought from the European Union's Erasmus+ Sport programme for several international co-operation projects to develop the field of physical activity. The programme supports the promotion of sport and physical activity across Europe by strengthening co-operation between countries. To this end, best practices are shared and innovative solutions are developed to help people be more active and live healthier lives. International co-operation projects bring together sports federations, research institutions, health promotion organisations and public sector bodies from different countries with a common goal – to create evidence-based, practical and transferable solutions that can be implemented both at international and local level. The projects were selected in highly competitive conditions. In the Erasmus+ Sport 2025 call for proposals, a total of 1,039 applications were submitted, of which 124 projects were selected.



ROUTES – European Framework for Nature Trails (2026–2028)

The Competence Centre for Physical Activity participates in the international co-operation project ROUTES (Responsible Overall Use of Trails through a Framework for a European Standard) funded under the Erasmus+ Sport programme for the years 2026–2028. The project was selected in the Erasmus+ Sport 2025 call for proposals, with a budget of €400,000.

The aim of the project is to promote the safe, sustainable and multimodal use of nature trails across Europe. Outdoor physical activity is gaining popularity throughout Europe. The quality, clarity and safety of trails directly influence people's experience, access and environmental impact. A well-described and well-designed trail supports health, reduces risks and helps protect the natural environment. ROUTES provides an opportunity to combine physical activity promotion, environmental protection and digital development into a single integrated approach. Clear and reliable trail information helps people get out and about more and stay safer, which is important from both a public health and environmental perspective. ROUTES focuses on more consistent and understandable

trail information (including difficulty levels), sustainable trail management and responsible use, improved accessibility and inclusion, and the interoperability of digital solutions (map platforms, data standards).

The Competence Centre for Physical Activity participates in the project as a research and development support partner. The conditions of bog trails are also being piloted in Estonia in co-operation with managers of natural recreation areas (in other countries, mountain, forest, coastal and urban trails are being tested).

Wise Move – gamified promotion of physical activity (2026–2027)

The Wise Move pilot project aims to increase physical activity, particularly among groups whose opportunities for being active have previously been more limited. The project encourages both adults and children to take steps in their everyday lives towards healthier movement habits. Through a gamified approach, physical activity is made more enjoyable and engaging for participants. The aim of the pilot is to involve at least 30,000 participants from three countries, reduce physical inactivity among participants by 10%, and increase by 15% the number of participants who meet the WHO's physical



activity guidelines. The project brings gamified movement pathways into people's living environments. In the pilot areas, movement and health points are created in co-operation with municipalities and communities.

Participants can register individually or as teams and receive a smart card that they can use to collect points as they complete the trail. Based on the smart card data, the system constructs the movement journey, calculates distance and assigns game points that encourage participants to be more active. The Research Manager of the Competence Centre for Physical Activity Henek Tomson became familiar with the project's related 'Beat the Street' solution in Colchester, United Kingdom. There, the movement game has actively engaged schoolchildren, parents, older adults, and people with disabilities, reinforcing the belief that this is an effective community-based health innovation.

The project is co-ordinated by the Belgian sports agency Sport Vlaanderen. The project partners include the Belgian health promotion institute VIGeZ, the Dutch health research organisation ZorgOnderzoek Nederland Zon, the Dutch InnoSportLab Sport en Beweeg (Innobeweeglab), the French centre for sports expertise CREPS Rhône-Alpes, the Irish company Intellithrive Limited, and, from Estonia, the Competence Centre for Physical Activity. The project is funded by the European Union through the Erasmus+ Sport 2025 programme, with a total budget of €400,000 over two years.

The Competence Centre for Physical Activity participates in the project as a research and development partner, bringing an Estonian perspective to the international co-operation and ensuring that the project results also reach Estonia's residents and organisations promoting physical activity. In Estonia, the project technology is planned to be piloted in spring 2027.



International co-operation enables the Competence Centre to stay up to date with the latest European trends and research findings, test innovative approaches in Estonia and actively contribute to shaping developments and frameworks in the field.

Research institutions collaboration day 'Movement Brings Well-being'

On 2 December 2025, the Competence Centre for Physical Activity organised its second annual collaboration day for research and development partners, titled 'Movement Brings Well-being'. The event brought together approximately 50 participants from universities, ministries, research institutes, sports organisations, the health care sector, non-governmental organisations and the private sector. The aim of the event was to bring together the research, policy and practice communities to analyse the state of physical activity in Estonia and develop new solution ideas through a co-creation approach.

Presentations

Ott Velsberg discussed the role of data governance in promoting physical activity. The central message of his presentation was that without systematic data, it is not



OTT VELSBERG

Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs

**'Smart Data, Smart Decisions –
How to Build a More Effective Bridge
Between Different Institutions?'**

possible to assess which interventions truly work and where investments should be directed. Data makes it possible to create better urban environments, identify dangerous intersections, missing pavement sections and areas where people would prefer to move as pedestrians. Velsberg emphasised the importance of high-value data categories, including mobility data, and presented the government's investments to date in supporting data economy use cases. He concluded that the most important factor in advancing the data economy is co-operation and consideration for others – neither technology nor funding can replace trust between institutions.

Kerli Ilves presented an overview of the genetic and psychological foundations of physical activity behaviour. One key finding was that there is no single 'activity gene' – genetic factors manifest themselves through the central nervous system, the circulatory and immune systems, and metabolic processes. In addition, it was found that personality, particularly conscientiousness, influences levels of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA). Taking personality characteristics into account provides a more precise explanation of future behaviour than relying only on broad personality dimensions.

The Big Five personality trait model consists of five main personality dimensions:

- 1) **Neuroticism** – anxiety, emotional instability, vulnerability
- 1) **Extraversion** – sociability, energy, positive emotions
- 1) **Openness** – curiosity, creativity, intellectual openness
- 1) **Agreeableness** – trust, altruism and willingness to co-operate
- 1) **Conscientiousness** – self-discipline, organisation, sense of responsibility, achievement orientation

Each dimension also includes more specific subtraits. Ilves demonstrated how subtraits of conscientiousness (such as self-discipline and organisation) have differing effects on physical activity – effects that remain hidden when conscientiousness is treated as a single aggregate measure.

Ilves also presented findings from a systematic review of 95 physical activity interventions. Only 20 interventions achieved a positive effect that lasted longer than six months. It also became clear that a theory-based approach alone does not guarantee success – the determinants of behav-



KERLI ILVES

University of Tartu / National Institute for Health Development

'Genes Set the Stage, Will Takes the Lead – What Shapes Our Health Behaviour?'

joural change must be actively measured and influenced. The concluding message of the presentation was that willpower can be designed and supported, but this requires a well-thought-out and consistent approach.

Anders Revdal from the Cardiac Exercise Research Group (CERG) of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) presented cutting-edge research findings in the context of physical activity among the general population. The central argument of his presentation was that, according to current scientific knowledge, maximum oxygen uptake (VO₂max) is the strongest predictor of health and life expectancy – stronger than blood pressure, cholesterol or body mass index. The HUNT3 study conducted by NTNU (involving more than 55,000 Norwegians) showed that low VO₂max predicts premature mortality even after controlling for all other risk factors. The Generation 100 study demonstrated that high-intensity interval training (HIIT) is both safe and effective for older adults. Revdal also introduced the Mia Health app, which allows people to calculate their fitness level and receive personalised training recommendations. As an AI-driven solution, it brings cutting-edge science into everyday life. A



ANDERS REVDAL

Norwegian University of Science and Technology

'From Society to the Molecular Level... and Back: Health and Disease in Cutting-Edge Science'

recurring question throughout the presentation was how to translate evidence-based knowledge into something that encourages the population at large to be more physically active.

Workshop 'A Solution Looking for a Problem'

The workshop was based on the results of the October 2025 physical activity survey, which were presented in the form of problem maps. The main findings of the survey were concerning. Interest in sport had declined from 67% (2016) to 47%, while 88% of people in Estonia consider physical activity important, only 60% engage in it every week, which falls short of WHO recommendations. Based on these findings, participants formed interdisciplinary teams and developed six solution prototypes in a co-creation sprint: 'Seniors Don't Fall' (preventing falls among older people), 'Children's Sports 2.0' (modernising children's participation in sports), 'Workplace Workouts' (integrating physical activity habits into the work environment), 'From Home Office to Outdoors' (encouraging remote workers to be active), 'Inactive to Active 20–26' (targeting young adults) and 'Movement Breaks' (promoting a culture of short movement breaks). In the vote, 'Children's Sports 2.0' was deemed the idea with the greatest impact (7 votes), 'Movement Breaks' was voted the most exciting idea (17 votes) and 'Workplace Workouts' was chosen as the idea that could be implemented most quickly (9 votes).

Participation

The collaboration day brought together a wide range of institutions: universities and research institutes; the ministries of Health, Education, Social Affairs, Culture, Defence, and Climate, as well as the Government Office; international and national umbrella organisations for sport; sports federations; local governments; kindergartens and schools;

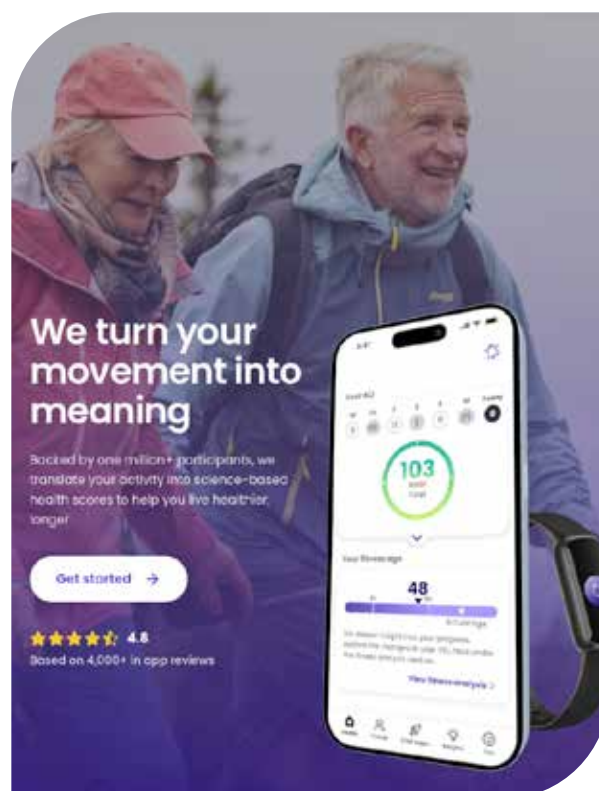
healthcare institutions; non-governmental organisations; and the private sector. The representation reflected the ambition of the collaboration day – to bring together different stakeholders in one space who influence the environment for physical activity in Estonia.

Follow-up activities from the perspective of the speakers at the collaboration day

The collaboration day provided impetus for several follow-up activities. The Competence Centre for Physical Activity, in co-operation with the National Institute for Health Development, initiated a study to map evidence-based behavioural physical activity interventions. The results of this study will be published in 2026.

In co-operation with the Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs, discussions were launched on two potential areas of collaboration. The first concerns the development of the 'Sport in School' programme into a data-driven pilot project, inspired by the Belgian Sports Compass model. Currently, under the programme, students' abilities are identified based on the coach's observations and subjective assessment, and this information is communicated to parents through unstructured feedback. The aim is to create a unified system where students' physical abilities are measured in a structured manner and combined with data on the student's own preferences, in order to provide personalised recommendations for suitable sports. Such a solution would also provide schools with an indicator to observe the links between health, physical education outcomes and participation in extracurricular activities.

The second opportunity for collaboration concerns improving the cross-use of Physical Activity Action Plan data. Currently, at least five ministries and several agencies are simultaneously planning initiatives to promote physical activity. As a result, data



on activities, target groups, and indicators is fragmented across institutions and mainly presented in static text form. The aim of this collaboration is to develop an interactive, data-driven action plan dashboard that consolidates data from different agencies onto a single platform. This would help identify gaps in coverage and duplication of efforts, and – supported by an AI-based query layer – enable decision-makers to access information using natural language.

Within the framework of co-operation with Norway, discussions have been initiated to localise the Mia Health application into Estonian in 2026. Mia Health is based on the research of the NTNU Cardiac Exercise Research Group (CERG) and allows users to assess their fitness level and receive personalised training recommendations. Currently, the application is only available in English.

Development and piloting of an exercise prescription intervention

On 21 July 2025, the Ministry of Culture announced a call for proposals to find a



partner to carry out the intervention study 'Development and piloting of an exercise prescription intervention'. The contractor of the intervention study will develop a research-based exercise prescription service model based on international best practices, pilot it and conduct a feasibility study. Based on the results of the project, it will be decided whether the service model can be scaled up, implemented and integrated into the Estonian health care system. Long-term health benefits, such as a reduction in chronic diseases, will not be assessed within the scope of the study, as its duration is limited.

The call and project are structured in three stages:

- Stage I – submission of concept proposals (pre-selection);
- Stage II – submission of full proposals by applicants who pass the pre-selection;
- Stage III – piloting and evaluation of the service model with the successful applicant.

The call was open to research and development institutions and interdisciplinary teams with experience in health research, exercise science and the application of digital technologies.

The deadline for Stage I submissions was 26 September 2025 and seven applications were received. In accordance with the terms of the competition, two applicants advanced to Stage II based on the highest scores awarded by the Evaluation Committee. These applicants were required to submit their final proposals by 13 March 2026 via the Estonian Research Information System (ETIS) at www.etis.ee.

The Ministry of Culture is expected to sign a contract with the successful applicant in May 2026. Following this, piloting and assessment of the service model will begin. The intervention study is expected to last up to 26 months, with a budget of up to 677,700 euros, plus 24% VAT. The activities are funded by the European Union Cohesion Fund 2021–2027.



4

LIST OF ACTIVITIES

The list of ongoing, planned and completed activities under the Physical Activity Action Plan provides an overview of all activities within the Physical Activity Action Plan. The symbol  indicates activities that were initiated for the first time in 2025. The history of the activities and related links can be found on the website of the [Competence Centre for Physical Activity](#).¹⁹

COMPLETED ACTIVITIES

NO	ACTIVITY	LEADER	STATUS
1	Amendment of the Early Childhood Education Act	Ministry of Education and Research	Completed
2	Survey on the mapping of sporting conditions in schools	Estonian Foundation of Sports Education and Information	Completed
3	Recognition of physical education teachers by the Minister of Defence	Defence Resources Agency	Completed
4	Conducting the school sports survey	Ministry of Culture	Completed
5	Implementation of the 'Be Active Year' and integration of best practices	Competence Centre for Physical Activity	Completed
6	Development of state-supported regional recreational sports centre services	Ministry of Culture	Completed
7	Increasing the flexibility of the support for labour costs of coaches to ensure multi-sport trainings are also encouraged	Ministry of Culture	Completed
8	Pilot study on sports and exercise opportunities for people with disabilities	Estonian Research Centre	Completed
9	Design of family-centred activities and services aimed at physically inactive people	Competence Centre for Physical Activity	Completed
10	Determining the cost of physical inactivity and excess weight in Estonia	National Institute for Health Development	Completed
11	Creation of the 'Physical activity in the workplace' webpage	Labour Inspectorate	Completed
12	Updating the legal framework so that learning and growing environments better promote balanced nutrition and physical activity	Ministry of Social Affairs	Completed
13	Training of municipality sports managers and community coaches	Competence Centre for Physical Activity	Completed
14	Promotion of outdoor and playground sports	Competence Centre for Physical Activity	Completed
15	Study on physical activity and nutrition interventions in schools and preschool child care institutions	Praxis	Completed
16	Supporting child care institution employees in promoting physical activity	Ministry of Social Affairs	Completed

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

NO	ACTIVITY	LEADER	STATUS
1	Creating a school environment that promotes physical activity	Ministry of Education and Research	In progress
2	Development and implementation of a system for monitoring the physical abilities of children and adolescents in schools	Ministry of Education and Research	In progress
3	Continued development and implementation of movement education	Ministry of Education and Research	In progress
4	Continued development of the Schools in Motion programme	UT Move Lab	In progress
5	Ensuring the sustainability of teaching basic swimming	Estonian Swimming Federation	In progress
6	Implementation of outdoor breaks and opening of physical activity facilities outside school hours	Ministry of Education and Research	In progress
7	Improvement of the conscription programme to enhance young people's physical fitness	Estonian Defence Forces	In progress
8	Preliminary assessment of youth in vocational and upper secondary education	Defence Resources Agency	In progress
9	Further development of national defence studies	Defence Resources Agency	In progress
10	Development of cyclist training for children and capacity building for teachers delivering preparatory training for cycling examination	Estonian Transport Administration	Not started
11	Updating the physical education curriculum	Ministry of Climate	Not started
12	Training of specialists supporting the physical activity of people with special needs, in co-operation with universities	Estonian Paralympic Committee	In progress
13	Analysis and development of proposals for municipal level sports funding systems	Competence Centre for Physical Activity	In progress
14	Providing access to previously closed physical activity facilities	Competence Centre for Physical Activity	In progress
15	Health-promoting programme for universities and vocational schools	Estonian Academic Sports Federation	In progress
16	Morning exercise sessions and activities for families with young children	Competence Centre for Physical Activity	In progress
17	Raising parents' awareness to increase children's physical activity levels	Competence Centre for Physical Activity	In progress

18	Consolidating information for parents on the <i>Tark Vanem</i> (Smart Parent) website	Estonian National Social Insurance Board	In progress
19	Development of networks of county public health specialists and health promoters of educational institutions (incl refresher training)	National Institute for Health Development	In progress
20	ToyBox-intervention	National Institute for Health Development	In progress
21	Further development of the SPIN programme	MTÜ SPIN	In progress

PEOPLE OF WORKING AGE AND THE ELDERLY

NO	ACTIVITY	LEADER	STATUS
1	Enhancement of driver training to include cycling education, development work and agreement-building	Ministry of Climate	Not started
2	Organising practical training for adults, including the elderly, to improve their cycling skills	Estonian Transport Administration	Not started
3	Consideration of compensation measures for cycling to work and for work-related cycling trips (including exemption from fringe benefits tax)	Ministry of Climate	Not started
4	Development of incentive programmes to promote cycling to and from home and work	Ministry of Climate	Not started
5	Analysis and proposals for state subsidies for sports equipment	Estonian Paralympic Committee	Not started
6	Systematic involvement of county-level physical activity coaches	Competence Centre for Physical Activity	In progress
7	Increasing the availability of sports aids in sports centres	Estonian Paralympic Committee	Not started
8	Promoting the benefits of healthy lifestyles in the workplace	Ministry of Culture	Not started
9	Promotion of activities that support physical activity among the elderly	Competence Centre for Physical Activity	In progress
10	Awarding the 'Health Promoting Workplace' label	Labour Inspectorate	In progress
11	Raising awareness among social workers about the importance of physical activity	Estonian National Social Insurance Board	Not started
12	Special Olympics 'Healthy Athlete' Programme	Special Olympics Estonia	In progress

ENVIRONMENT

NR	TEGEVUS	EESTVEDAJA	SEIS
1	Capacity building in the public sector on planning and decision-making that takes the needs of pedestrians and cyclists into account	Estonian Transport Administration	Not started
2	Updating Estonia's EuroVelo routes	Estonian Transport Administration	In progress
3	Mapping the winter condition levels of cycle tracks, lanes and footpaths on the national road condition map	Estonian Transport Administration	In progress
4	Standardisation, supplementation, updating and approval of cycling tourism route signage systems	Estonian Transport Administration	In progress
5	Updating the entire speed limit system in line with Vision Zero	Estonian Transport Administration	In progress
6	Including bicycles as a crisis-proof mode of transport in crisis response guidelines	Ministry of Climate	Not started
7	Traffic calming in residential areas and on secondary roads through traffic management and structural measures	Estonian Transport Administration	Not started
8	Connecting mobility hubs and key public transport stops with cycle tracks	Ministry of Climate	Not started
9	Development of mobility survey guidelines	Estonian Transport Administration	In progress
10	Expansion and improvement of the existing network of cycle tracks	Municipalities	In progress
11	Development and implementation of soft support measures for municipalities	Ministry of Climate	Pole alustatud
12	Identifying interested coordinators for regional and local action plans to promote bicycle use, development of plans	Estonian Transport Administration	In progress
13	Allowing bicycles on public transport and indicating bicycle carriage options in timetables	Ministry of Climate	In progress
14	Ensuring the circulation of bicycles and personal light electric vehicles	Ministry of Climate	Not started
15	Improving bicycle parking facilities at public institutions	Ministry of Climate	Not started
16	Establishing a bicycle user counting system on national roads	Estonian Transport Administration	In progress

17	Development of guidelines for the preparation of action plans to promote cycling	Estonian Transport Administration	In progress
18	Development and implementation of a concept for a network of bicycle expressways	Estonian Transport Administration	Not started
19	Standardisation of terminology related to bicycle infrastructure and bicycle traffic in sector-specific documents	Ministry of Climate	In progress
20	Updating and harmonisation of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure map data and related datasets	Estonian Transport Administration	In progress
21	Updating and implementing winter maintenance standards for cycle tracks	Estonian Transport Administration	Not started
22	Analysis of the need to clarify regulations governing the rights and obligations of cyclists and personal light electric vehicle users	Ministry of Climate	In progress
23	Updating cycling infrastructure requirements in road design standards and guidelines, integrating the guidelines of street space design into manuals and state roads passing through settlements	Estonian Transport Administration	In progress
24	Preparation of independent audits of road projects to minimise the number and severity of traffic accidents	Estonian Transport Administration	Not started
25	Continuation and increase of funding for the sustainable mobility (SÄLI) measure within the road maintenance programme	Ministry of Climate	In progress
26	Development and implementation of a small-scale infrastructure investment scheme for creating continuous travel routes	Ministry of Climate	Not started
27	Ensuring safe bicycle parking facilities at key public transport stops	Estonian Transport Administration	In progress
28	Consistent maintenance across continuous travel routes	Estonian Transport Administration	Not started
29	Making proposals regarding the National Spatial Plan 2050	Ministry of Climate	Not started
30	Implementation of the recommendations of the Accessibility Task Force in the field of sport	Ministry of Climate	In progress

COMMUNICATION

NO	ACTIVITY	LEADER	STATUS
1	Raising awareness of regular physical activity and healthy lifestyles	Competence Centre for Physical Activity	In progress

INNOVATION

NR	TEGEVUS	EESTVEDAJA	SEIS
1	Comprehensive health assessment of conscripts	Estonian Military Academy	In progress
2	Development of an intervention in the Estonian Defence Forces to strengthen physical activity, physical capacity and physical literacy related to conscripts' health	National Institute for Health Development	In progress
3	Development of the app <i>Sportdivägi</i>	Defence Resources Agency	In progress
4	Further development of a potential model for walking and cycling, and related training sessions	Estonian Transport Administration	Not started
5	Training and pilot implementation of best practices and technologies for winter maintenance of cycle tracks and footpaths	Estonian Transport Administration	Not started
6	Survey on the mapping of sporting conditions in kindergartens	Estonian Foundation of Sports Education and Information	In progress
7	Development and piloting of an exercise prescription intervention	Ministry of Culture	In progress
8	Mapping of best physical activity-promoting practices	Competence Centre for Physical Activity	In progress
9	Evidence-based intervention programme supporting physical activity and physical agency among students in the second stage of study	University of Tartu	In progress
10	Introducing training opportunities to young people	Competence Centre for Physical Activity	In progress
11	Management of the research work plan	Competence Centre for Physical Activity	In progress
12	Additional analysis for the study on the economic footprint of low physical activity and excess weight	To be determined	Not started
13	Behavioural and intervention study of inactive people: factors promoting and hindering everyday physical activity from a behavioural awareness perspective	To be determined	Not started
14	Conducting population-based health behaviour surveys	National Institute for Health Development	In progress

15	Development and updating of national physical activity guidelines	National Institute for Health Development	In progress
16	Management and development of the physical activity module of the research-based NutriData information system	National Institute for Health Development	In progress
17	Designing the health indicators in the Health Portal to be more human-centred	Ministry of Social Affairs	Not started

CROSS-CUTTING

NO	ACTIVITY	LEADER	STATUS
1	Expanding the network of partners promoting physical activity and raising awareness of the issue at the regional level	Competence Centre for Physical Activity	In progress
2	Advising organisations and assessing the effectiveness/efficiency of activities	Competence Centre for Physical Activity	In progress

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ABBREVIATIONS

ECS	Estonian Cycling Strategy 2040
MER	Ministry of Education and Research
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoCli	Ministry of Climate
KOV	Municipality
KRA	Defence Resources Agency
MoC	Ministry of Culture
CCPA	Competence Centre for Physical Activity
SiM	Schools in Motion
CSU	County sports union
RITA+	Research, development and innovation implementation programme of the Estonian Research Council
EFSEI	Estonian Foundation of Sports Education and Information
EASS	Estonian Academy of Security Sciences
MoSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
TAI	National Institute for Health Development
TKU	Health Behaviour Survey
TA	Estonian Transport Administration
UT	University of Tartu
WHO	World Health Organisation

Ministry of Culture
Competence Centre for Physical Activity

Tallinn 2026