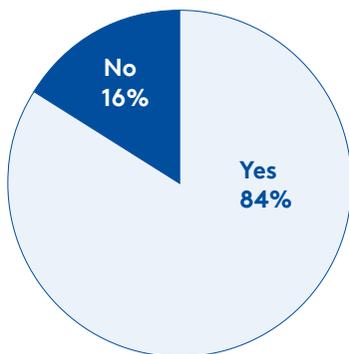


Free-of-charge leisure activity groups prevent segregation among children and young people and provide experiences of group membership

The Finnish model for leisure activities aims to provide every primary and lower secondary school student with an extracurricular activity they enjoy free of charge as part of the school day. The Ministry of Education and Culture awards around EUR 14 million annually to municipalities for organising

16% would not have the opportunity to have a hobby without an extracurricular activity group as part of the school day.



If your child did not take part in an extracurricular activity as part of the school day, would they be able to have a hobby in some other group?

At the national level, this would mean these groups based on the Finnish model for leisure activities being attended by around **22,800 students** who would otherwise not be able to take part in organised activities.

511,000 primary and lower secondary students in municipalities that have been awarded government grants

22,800 students who have not taken part in organised activities during the past six months

13,200 of them were vulnerable, that is, their family background included one or more socio-economic risk factors

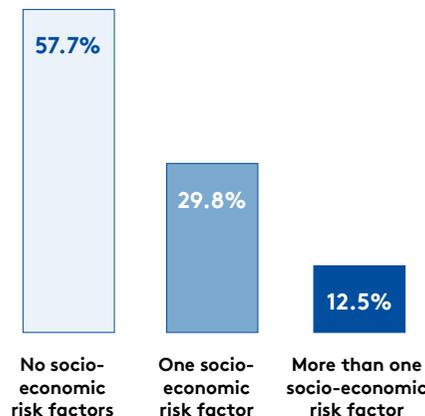
143,000 students participating in free-of-charge extra-curricular activity

* The estimate is based on data on government grant applications submitted by municipalities for the 2024/2025 school year and on the results of a We Foundation survey carried out during the 2024/2025 school year.

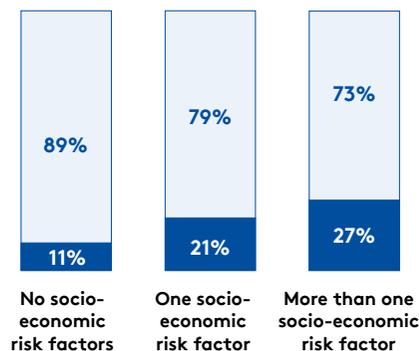
extracurricular provision. The first government grants for this purpose were awarded in 2021. Groups receiving grants have been attended by 143,000 students – almost a quarter of the around 560,000 primary and lower secondary school students in Finland.

During the 2024/2025 school year, We Foundation is assessing the impact of the Finnish model for leisure activities together with the Ministry of Education and Culture, the model's Contact Point (Finnish National Agency for Education), the Regional State Administrative Agency and 20 municipalities. Data is collected directly from the parents and guardians of the students taking part in the activities.

12.5% of the participants are students whose families have accumulated disadvantage. This is higher than at the population level in the pilot municipalities (5–8%).



Students belonging to vulnerable groups also have fewer opportunities to participate in other hobbies.



○ Yes ● No

The data collected so far shows clearly that the activity groups reach children and young people coming from a wide variety of backgrounds, including vulnerable groups. The fact that activities are free of charge is an important criterion for low-income groups in particular, but other important aspects also include being able to try out new hobbies and to join in as part of the school day.

For many, the leisure activity groups are also spaces that are free of bullying, discrimination and racism. The groups have a positive impact on the wellbeing of many participants, but even further efforts will be required to ensure the wellbeing of children belonging to vulnerable groups in particular.

In Finland as a whole,

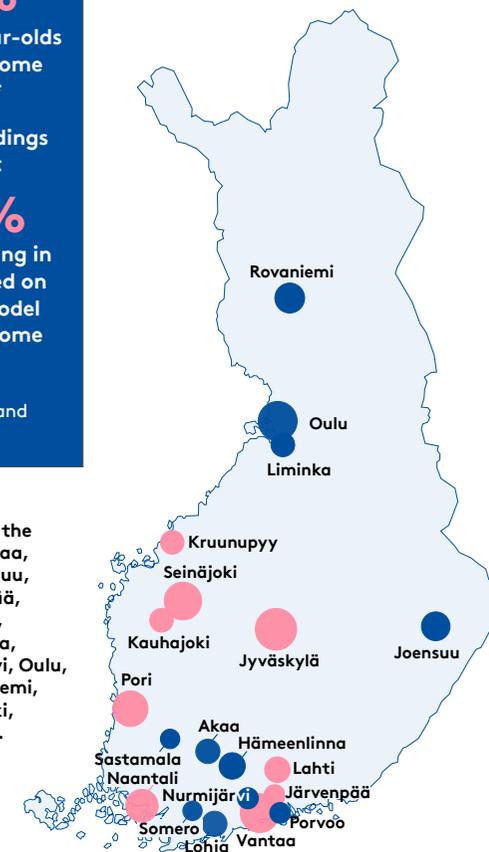
11.7% of under-18-year-olds live in low-income families. *

The survey findings show that

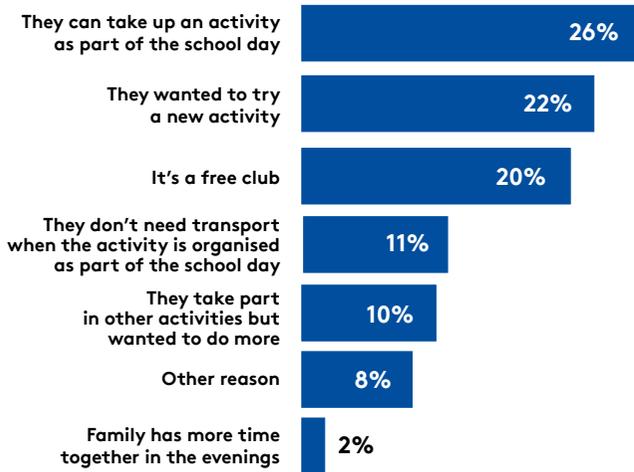
35.0% of those enrolling in activities based on the Finnish model live in low-income families.

*Statistics Finland

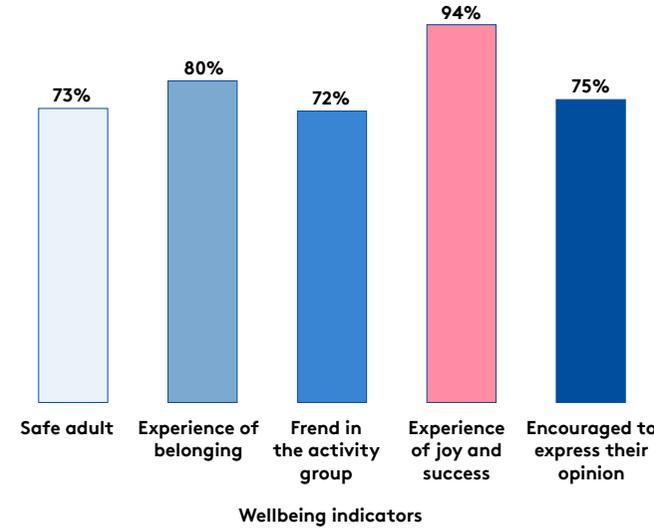
The survey included the municipalities of Akaa, Hämeenlinna, Joensuu, Jyväskylä, Järvenpää, Kauhajoki, Kronoby, Lahti, Liminka, Lohja, Naantali, Nurmijärvi, Oulu, Pori, Porvoo, Rovaniemi, Sastamala, Seinäjoki, Somero and Vantaa.



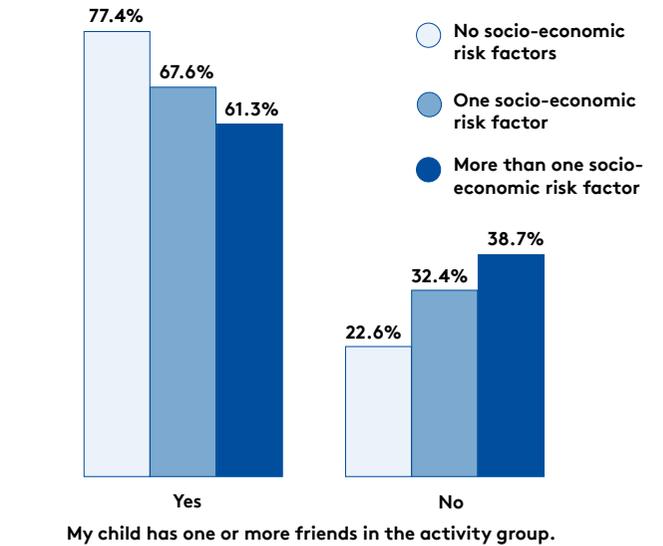
What was the most important reason for enrolling your child in an extra-curricular activity as part the school day?



Activity groups have positive impacts on the wellbeing of the majority of the participants.

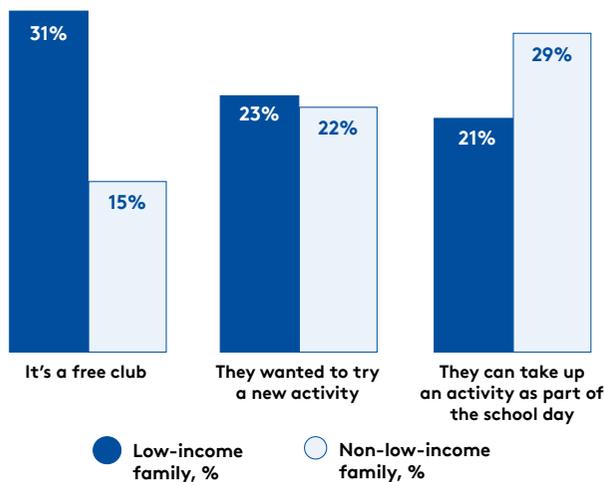


It is rarer for vulnerable children to have friends in the activity group.

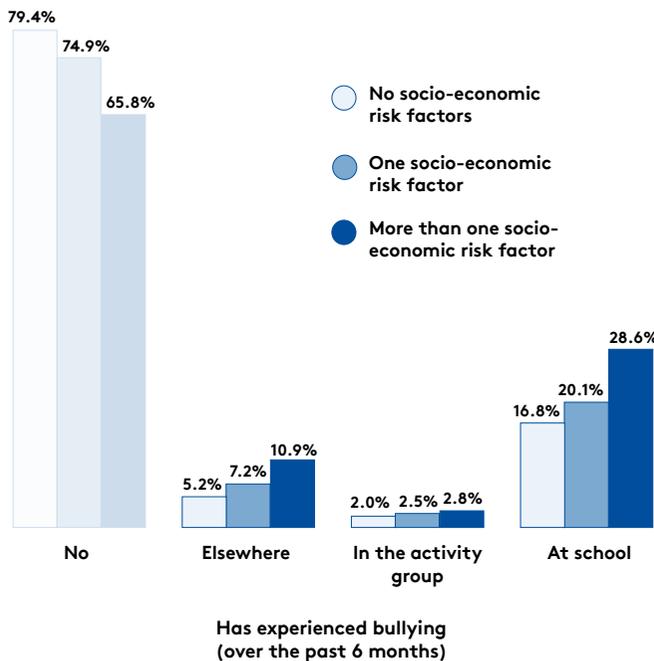


For children from low-income families, the fact that the activity was free of charge is the most important reason for participation.

What was the most important reason for enrolling your child in an extra-curricular activity as part the school day?



Activity groups are bullying-free spaces for many.



Very little discrimination or racism is experienced in activity groups.

