

# Summary & main points

IAKS Nordic webinar on covid-19 and sports in the Nordic countries – 3.12.20

**SPEAKER 1 – JAKOB RATHLEV**, *Managing director, PhD, The Danish Institute for Sports Studies*

**Sports and exercise participation in Denmark during the corona pandemic: Insights from a cohort study and perspectives on the future.**

Link to report:

<https://idan.dk/idan-undersoeger/coronakrisens-effekt-paa-danskernes-motions-og-sportsvaner/>



## Learning point #1

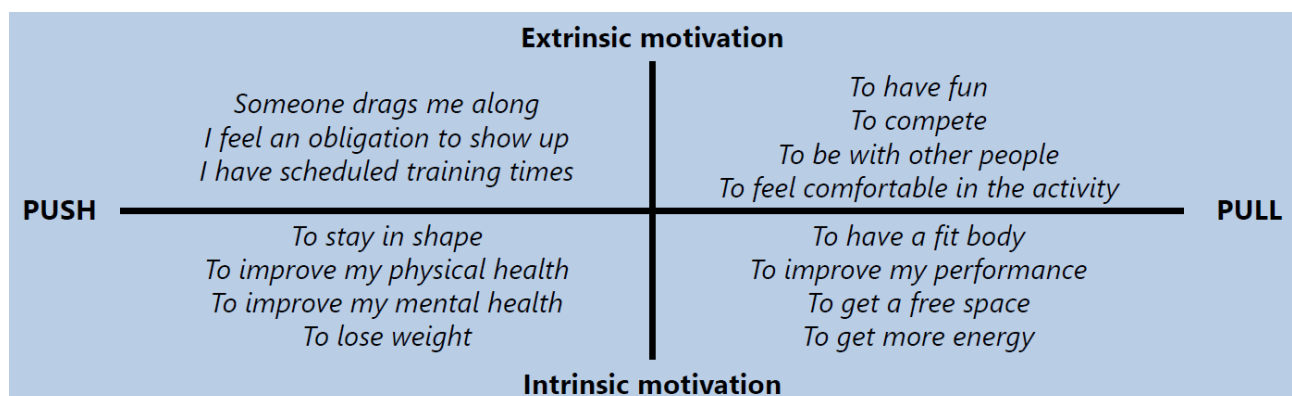
- **Those who remained active** when their sports club/fitness center closed, were the ones who were able to substitute for self-organized activities such as home workouts.
- **Those who stopped** when their sports club/fitness center closed, were the ones who were not able/willing to substitute their activities.
- → *The **organized activities are crucial to a some people** because without them they give up physical activity*

## Learning point #2

- The lockdown suddenly introduced a **better work life balance** for many people, who got **more leisure time** with less commuting to work.
- → ***Time and flexibility are critical barriers** for another group of people who became active once the barriers were reduced.*
- We were **able to genuinely test the effect of barriers** such as time and flexibility. This indicates that a flexible work-life has the **potential to be a healthy work-life**

## Learning point #3

- **Those who dropped out** of physical activity are different from **those who started**
- → *It is basically about **difference in motivation**. Some have a strong **intrinsic** motivation, while others depend on **extrinsic** motivation (see example in figure)*



#### Learning point #4

- The panel data reveals that people's participation in physical activity varies over time **25 % of those who were inactive before the lockdown** are active now, but an additional 6 % were momentarily active during the summer
- **80 % of those who were active before the lockdown** are active now, but an additional 10 % were momentarily active during the summer
- → *When we look at the **aggregated level of participation** at a specific point in time, we cannot see the ongoing **movements in and out** of physical activity*
- Are sports and exercise **habits more fluid** than we think...? Or is it **just the crisis**? The **new cohort study** will provide us with answers.

#### PERSPECTIVES ON THE FUTURE:

**Getting the drop-outs back** will be a major task

→ Many will **lack energy** after a long time of inactivity

→ Some will have **higher demands for hygiene** due to **fear of infection**

→ Likely that many **dropouts were already at the edge** of inactivity before lockdown

**The new active will not necessarily stay active** if their days return to normal:

→ Will the trend of self-organizing and home workouts continue?

→ Will working from home be more acceptable in the future?

NB: Sports clubs shouldn't regard this trend as lost terrain but **try to embrace it**.

NB: It is most likely the extrinsic motivation we need to focus on.

#### Similar analysis in Sweden:

There is an ongoing research project at Malmö University. Head of the Project is prof. Susanna Hedenborg.

Article: <https://idrottsforum.org/unga-vittnar-om-mer-stillasittande-liv-under-corona-ny-forskning-fran-malmo-universitet/>

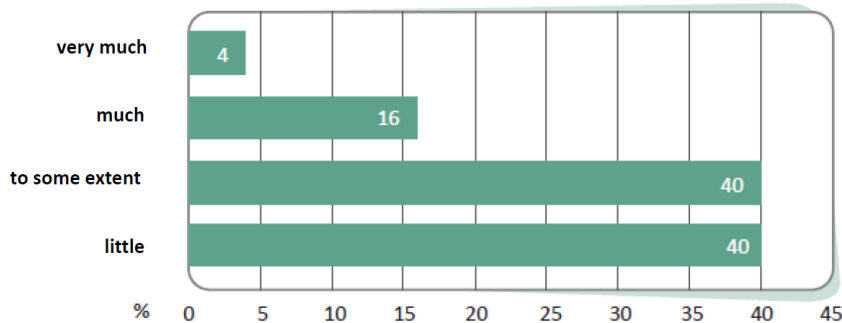
**SPEAKER 2 – MINTTU KORSBERG**, *General Secretary of the National Sports Council in Finland*

**Closing down the organized sports sector in Finland. How have we coped with the situation?**



**Effect on sports clubs**

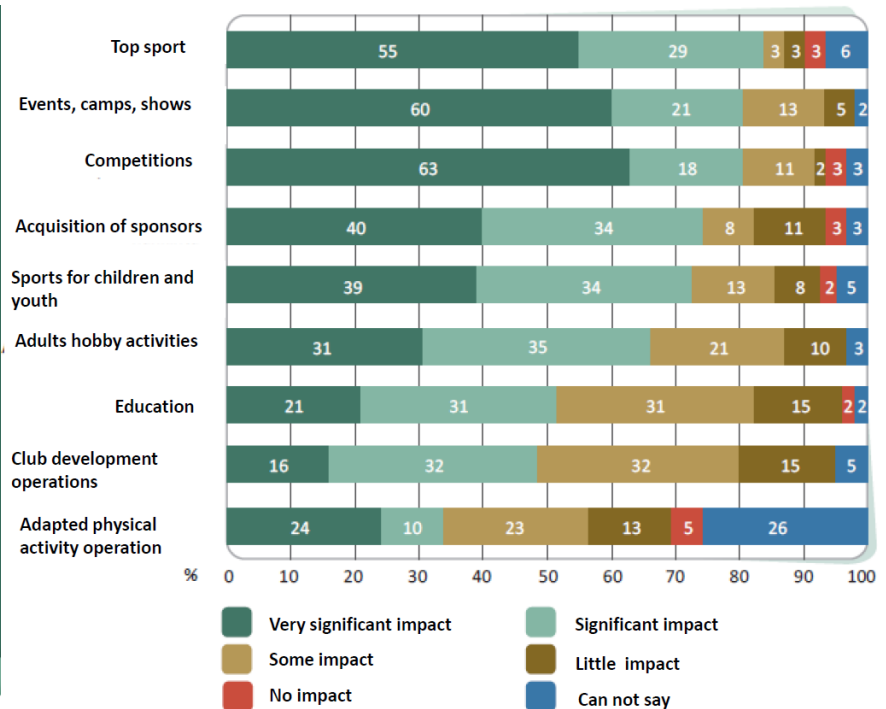
- How much trouble arose after lockdown, spring 2020?




**VLN**  
VALTION LIIKUNTANEUVOSTO  
Suomen Liikuntaliitto

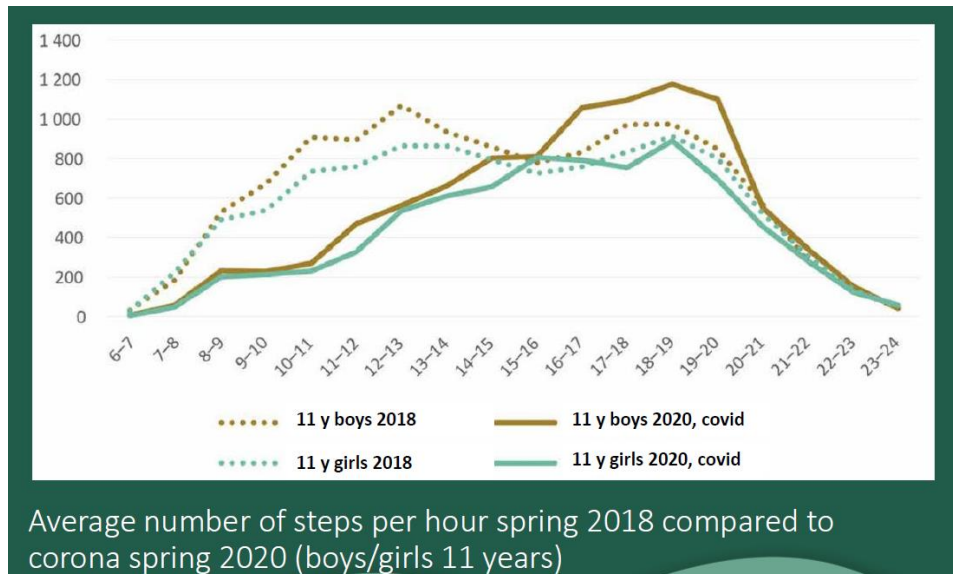
# sports federations

*The effects of the corona pandemic on various activity*



## Developments in activity

- **Children:** Less active during first half of the day. Boys more in the afternoon.



- **Adults (working age)**
  - Active **commuting decreased** during the pandemic.
  - Total amount of physical **activity did not decrease**, in some cases it even increased.
  - Some **substituted active commuting** with other forms of physical activity.
- The forms of physical activity changed: group exercise and gym training were replaced by walking and outdoor exercise.
- **Elderly**
  - Physical activity among older people **decreased less** than anticipated.
  - A large proportion **maintained their activity or even increased it**.
  - In particular, everyday physical activity, exercise at home and walking **increased or remained unchanged**.
  - Older people experienced a **shrinking of their life-space**, however, which may increase the risk of serious functional limitations.

## General perspectives & innovative solutions in consideration for the future:

- Increase in walking and outdoor/nature recreation
- Fast development of digital services (training, competitions, education)
- Yard exercise classes
- Balcony exercise (instructor in the court yard, participants exercise on their own balcony)
- Personal trainers for elderly via phone calls
- Instructed exercise in national television every morning (target group elderly)
- Indoor sports facilities closed and staff was transferred to the social sector and kindergartens, as well as to outdoor sports facilities to avoid layoffs

**SPEAKER 3 – BENTE LIER**, *General Secretary of The Norwegian Outdoor Council*

**What can we learn about the importance of outdoor arenas in our daily activities?**



### Main points

- When many activities close down, **nature is open 24/7**
- Nature is used as an **escape**, a place for disconnecting from worries
- A place where we can be together with **limited risks** for being infected
- In nature we say hello and smile, also to strangers – **a friendly smile is all we need** these days
- It is also a **great way for families** to be together
- With home office – **having lunch or dinner** outdoor or talking a family walk is popular.
- And with closed restaurants: Instead of cancelling, **it's a great solution** to move the dinner outdoors

### Survey

- 4 / 10 says **importance of nature has increased**
- 1 / 3 have **increased their outdoor activities**
- **150 million** visits to nature
- Average: **3 times a week** (35% daily!)
- In the top: women and 60+
- Sales of **outdoor equipment** went through the roof
- **Boom in new members** in many outdoor organizations
- Many **tried new activities**: 34% slept outdoors for the first time (50% of all young people)
  - 8% went on their first hike to the mountains
- Physical benefits are obvious, but the **mental effect is also important**
- In a survey **9 / 10** tell that they become **less stressed** when out in nature. **Research confirms** that being out in nature has a positive effect on our mental health. **Only 10 minutes**. No need to climb high, run fast
- **The conclusion is clear**: Nature is one of the most important arenas for physical exercise and mental recreation. For most of us – throughout our life
- Huge **global interest**, incl. Articles in BBC, National Geographic og The Guardian. This week Bulgaria, US, UK.
- **Is friluftsliv the answer to surviving a lockdown?**

### The outdoor organizations

- A lot of positive for outdoor activity organizations, but:
- More than **75% of activities cancelled**
- 65% established **new activities**
- 88% **adjusted their activities**
- All were **extremely creative** in adjusting to new circumstances
- Now we will hear from one of them: Ninni Jonsson from the orienteering federation.

**NINNI JONSSON**, *Specialist advisor, Norwegian Orienteering Federation*

### Effects of COVID-19

**Interest exploded, Best increase ever**, Enormous effort in the clubs, New participants, More offers available, **High rate of change**, Focus on making things easier, **Digital challenges, forced into a new way of thinking, Attention from media** an important part of the game, **High creativity among organizers**, Many new clubs entered the portal in 2020, **Marketing in different social channels**

- **Website ([www.turorientering.no](http://www.turorientering.no))** over **5 million page references** (2019: 2,4 mill)
- Highest increase ever: 350% in spring
- Number of downloaded maps: **100,000**
- New participants: **25 000**
- **New app** including QR code

*When corona hit - it was a hit:*

- ➔ **People had to exercise outdoor, be max 5 in a group and keep at least 1 m distance – perfect match!**

**What they did:**

- **Federation:** Reorganized internally, Relaunched app, Modernized the website, Changed simple support routines, Funds sought due to corona
- **Campaigns and media:** stimuli, get out, fresh air and physical activity
- **Organizers:** Eager to start the season earlier than planned; Accelerated start-up of the activities earlier; More free tours than normal became available; Learning way from manual to digital actions
- **Participants:** Many new non-traditional orienteering people; More time to each other; The community more important; Families with children searched for activities; Preferred outdoor activities