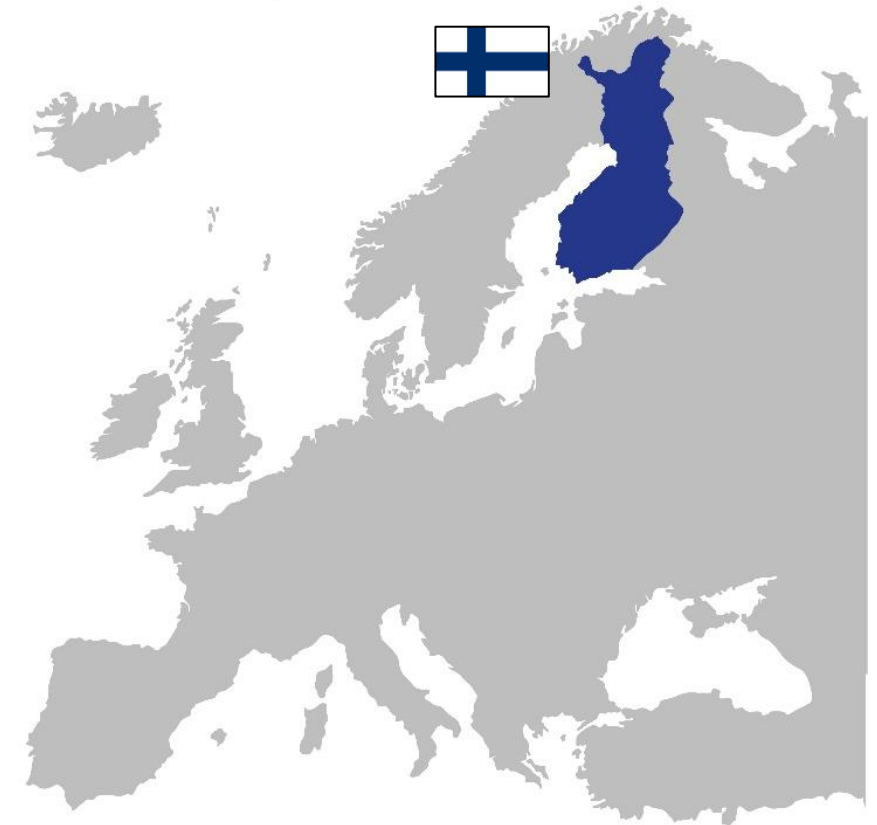


Act on Support for Informal Care of Finland

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finland.fi/toolbox

Long-term care in Finland

- Municipalities (n=309) responsible for arranging health and social services including long-term care and support for informal care -> from year 2023 responsibility to 21 wellbeing services counties
 - goal is to improve equality, access to services, control the increasing costs
- Social services are granted on the basis of an individual needs' assessment
- There is a wide range of options for long-term care such as home care, sheltered homes, more intense institutional care.
- The trend has been that institutional care has been decreasing and home care increasing despite increasing numbers of older adults (Finland is one of the fastest aging countries)
- Increase from 0.6 to 0.7 nurses per patient in long-term care of older adults in 2023 to improve the quality of care -> likely to be postponed due to the lack of nurses

History of the Act on Support for Informal Care

- Since 1970's there has not been obligation to take care for spouse or parents according to law
- From 1984 support for care at home
- In 1993 decree on caregiver support (allowance and supporting services) in Social Welfare Act
- In 1998 caregiver leave became statutory meaning 1 day per month off from caregiving, later 2 days
- Act on Support for Informal Care came into effect in 2006

Act on Support for informal care – current status

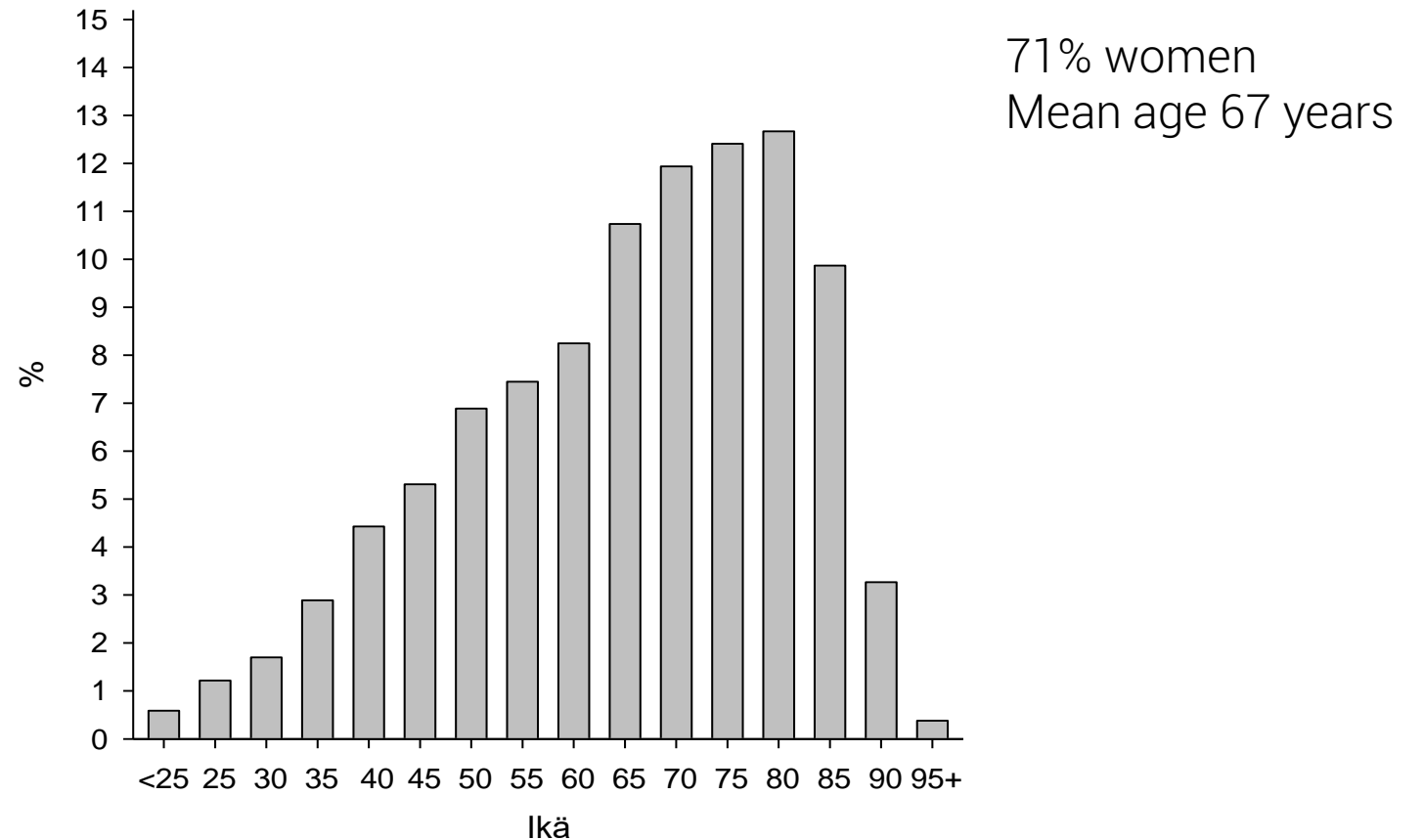
- Support for informal care consists of
 - Carer allowance (minimum 423,61 e/month, 847,22 e/month in very high-intensity care situation temporarily)
 - Leaves 2-3 days per month (municipality responsible for arranging care for the care recipient)
 - Support services to the carer and the care recipient
- Process: Needs assessment of the care recipient -> Care/service plan and contract on informal care are made
- The municipalities define the criteria who is eligible for support for informal care and the number and level of allowance categories
 - currently tens of different variations
- Recent developments:
 - 2016: Services supporting caregiving including training and education, wellbeing and health checks, health and social services supporting carer's wellbeing and caregiving
 - 2016 wider options for care arrangements during carer's leave

Population of
Finland 5.5 million

Carers in Finland

- About 47 500 people receive support for informal care ($\approx 1\%$ of the adult population). The number has been increasing every year.
- 60 000 carers in binding and demanding situations (=would be eligible for support for informal care)
- 350 000 so-called primary caregivers

Age of the carers receiving support for informal care in 2012





Survey to municipalities about support for informal care in 2012

- The most common reasons for informal care:
 - weakening of physical functional capacity
 - memory diseases and other memory problems
 - long term physical diseases or disabilities connected to old age
 - intellectual disability
- approximately 26 to 46 % of the persons receiving informal care would have been in institutional care
- half of the informal caregivers did not take their statutory holidays

Survey informal carers receiving support for informal care in 2012

- If there was no possibility for informal care 67% of the care recipients would need institutional care
- Care need of the care recipient:
 - 13–24 hours per day 69 %
 - 7–12 hours 16 %
 - <7 hours 15 %
- Over 90% lived with their care recipient
- → the vast majority are (very) high-intensity caregivers



Other acts related to informal care in Finland

- Work time Act 2001:
 - **Reduced working time:** When an **employee, for social or health reasons wishes to work fewer hours** than the regular working time, **the employer shall strive to organise** the work so that the employee can work part time. When refusing to organise the part-time work the employer must give its reasons for the refusal. **No remuneration** by the employer or government
- Employment Contracts Act:
 - **2011 Absence for taking care of a family member or someone close to the employee:** If it is necessary for an employee to be absent in order to provide special care for a family member or someone else close to him or her, the employer must try to arrange the work so that the employee may be absent from work for a fixed period. The employer is not required to pay remuneration
 - **2022 Carers' leave:** Employees will have the right to take carers' leave for up to five days per year. Care recipient: carer's child, parent, or spouse or a person living with the carer. No remuneration by the employer or government