

Existing policies and strategies and their effectiveness for improving health literacy at national, regional and organizational levels in the WHO European Region

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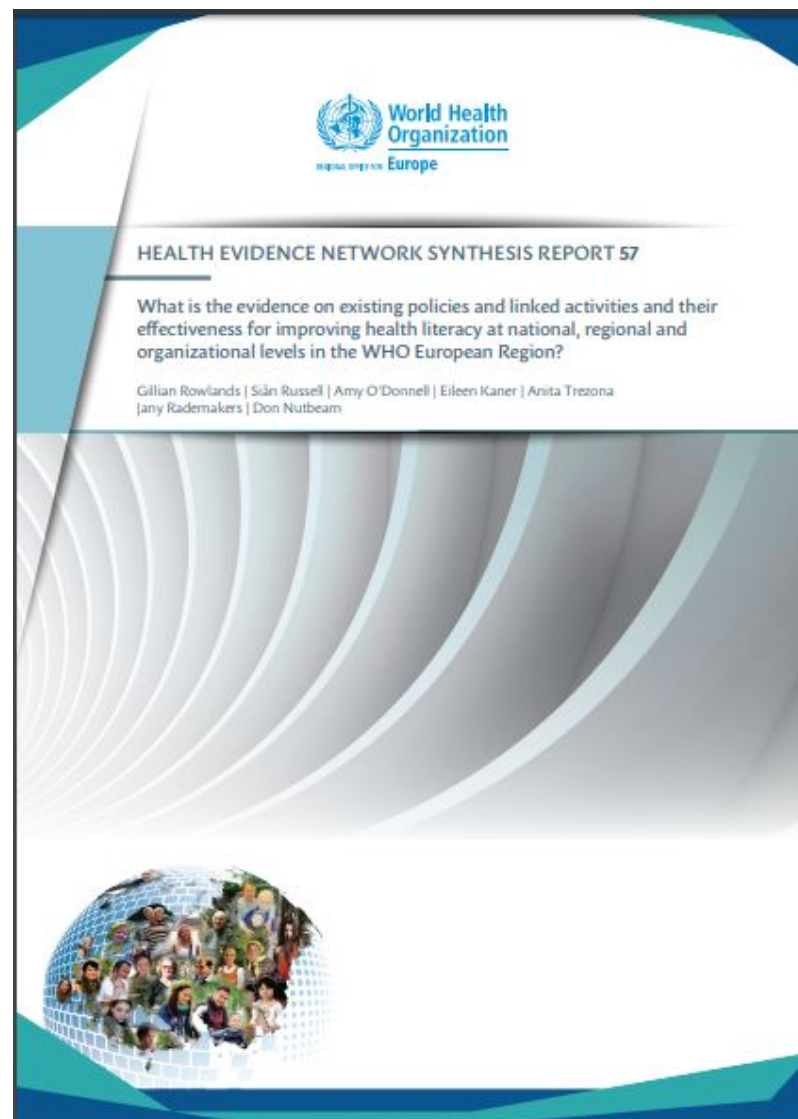
Commissioned by: The Health Evidence network (WHO Europe)



Publication:

What is the evidence on existing policies and linked activities and their effectiveness for improving health literacy at national, regional and organizational levels in the WHO European Region?

Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2018 (Health Evidence Network (HEN) synthesis report 57).



URL: <http://www.euro.who.int/en/data-and-evidence/evidence-informed-policy-making/publications/2018/what-is-the-evidence-on-existing-policies-and-linked-activities-and-their-effectiveness-for-improving-health-literacy-at-national,-regional-and-organizational-levels-in-the-who-european-region-2018>

The Health Evidence Network

- Summarizes the **best available evidence** for decision-making;
- Peer-reviewed, professionally written responses that are **relevant, ready-to-use and evidence-informed**;
- An official WHO source for evidence – **now listed in PubMed**;
- **74 reports published to date**
- Received '*highly commended*' in **BMA Book Awards 2017**.



The problem

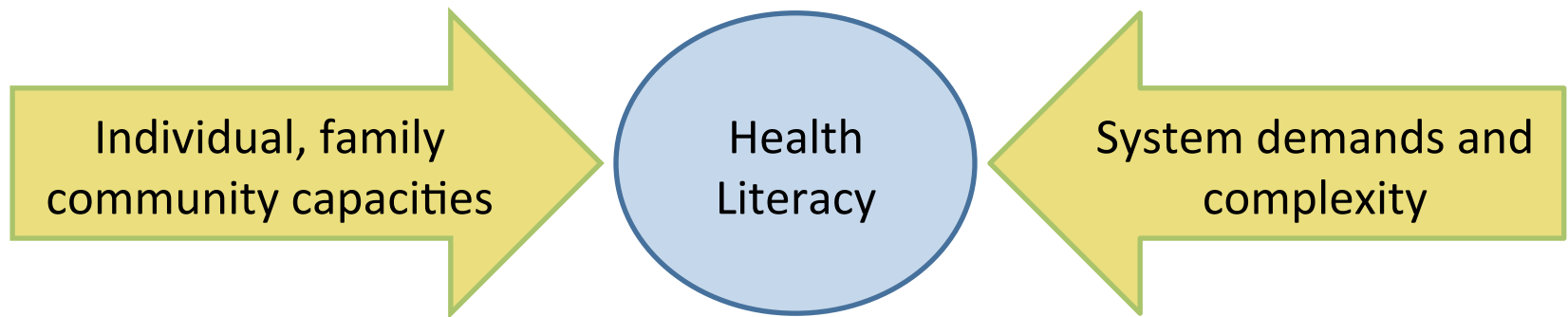
- Based on the European Health Literacy Survey (HLS-EU, 2011) in eight EU countries:
 - 47% of adults have sub-optimal health literacy, with 12% of people at the lowest skills level
 - A wide variation in health literacy between the countries surveyed¹
 - Low health literacy is associated with lower health and more illness¹
 - Low health literacy has a social gradient; poses particular issues for socio-economically disadvantaged and marginalized groups
- Health literacy identified as being critical to delivery of the Health 2020 targets²

The approach

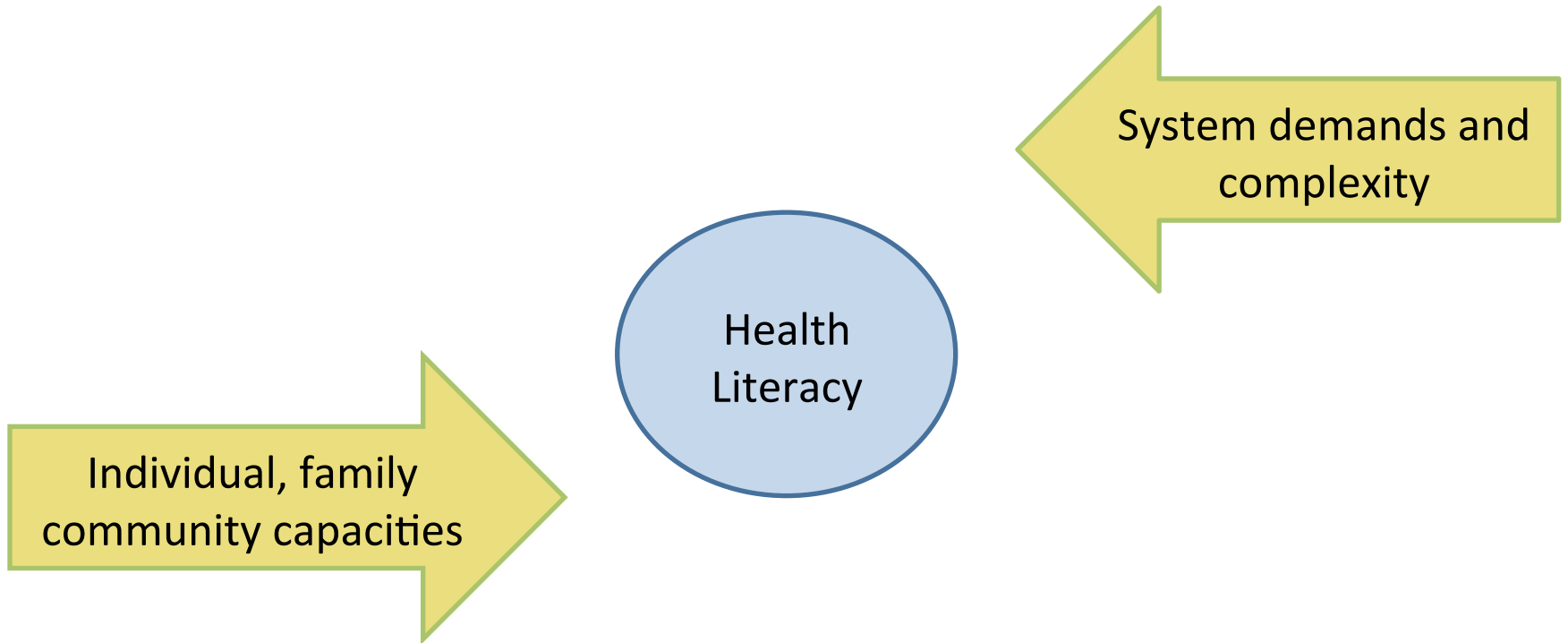
- The evidence synthesis used clear definitions of policy and health literacy, and clear inclusion and exclusion criteria.
- Policies were identified through
 - A rigorous search of peer-reviewed literature using a pre-defined search strategy
 - An internet search and secondary reference searching for ‘grey’ literature and
 - A web-based internet enquiry involving health literacy experts.



Health literacy is a balance between the skills of the individual / family / community and the environment in which they live

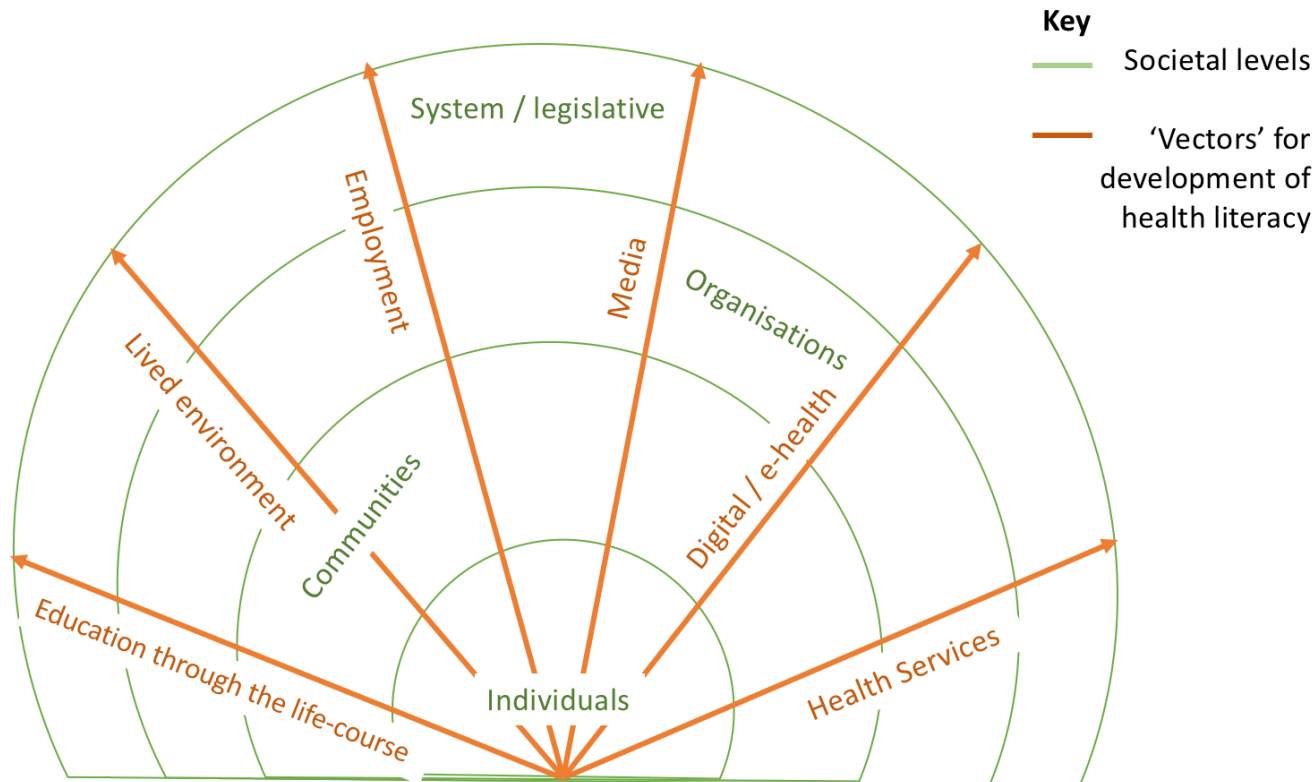


Parker R. 2009.



The approach

- A new health literacy policy framework was developed

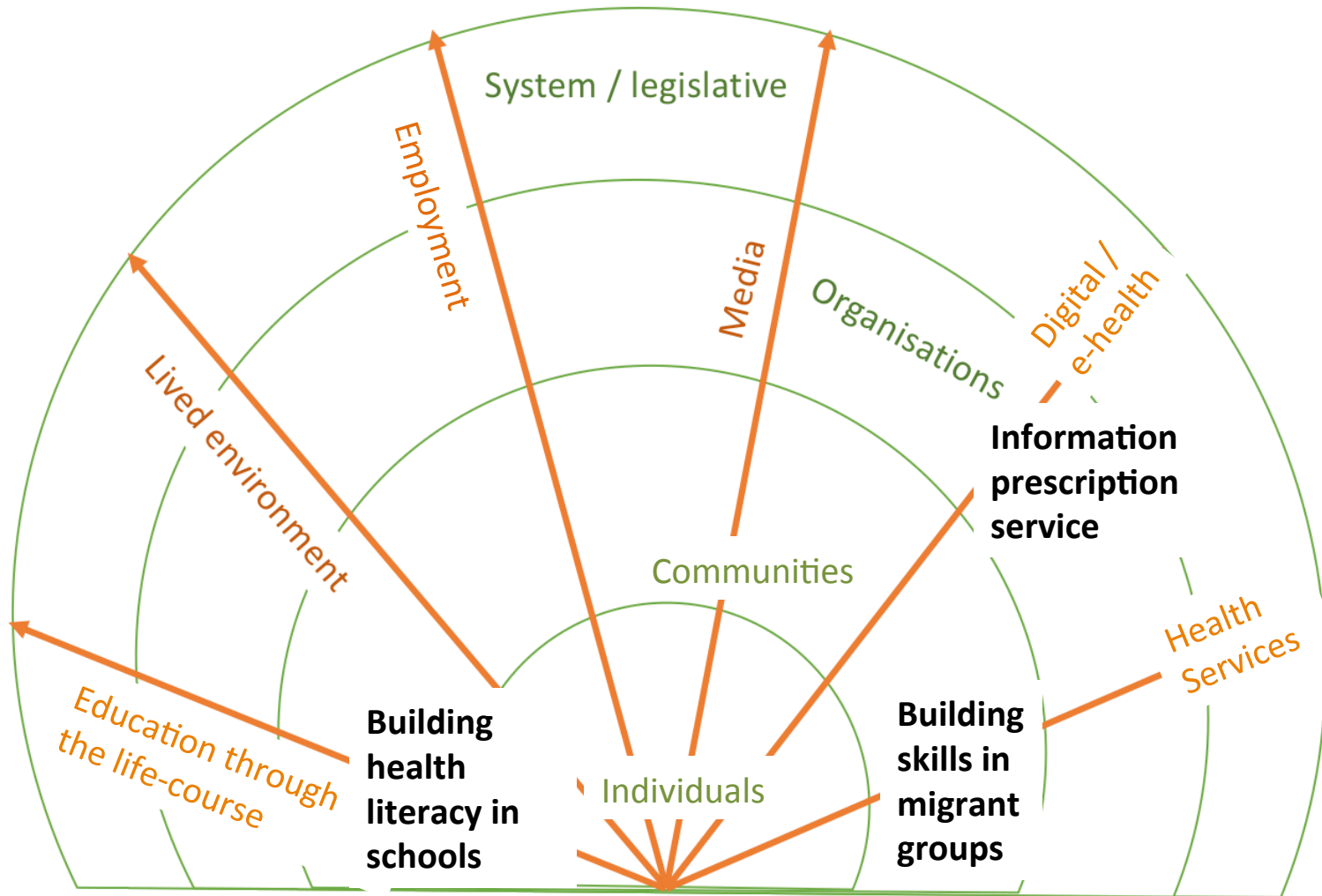


- Evidence of impact of the policies was identified

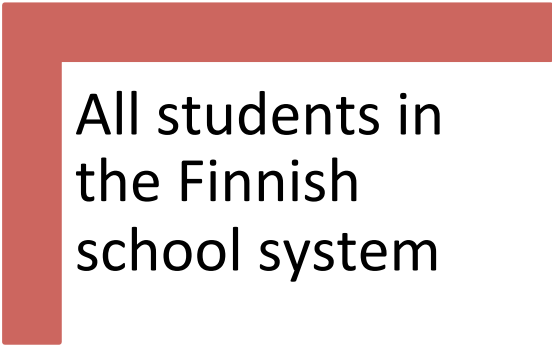
Member States in the WHO European Region with health literacy policies



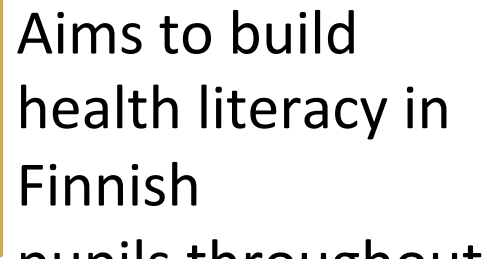
Some examples



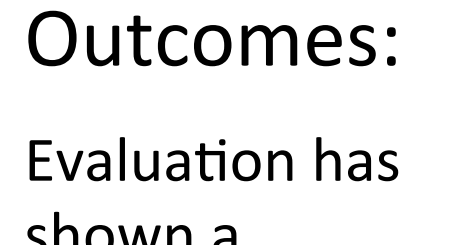
Building health literacy through the school curriculum: **Finland**



All students in
the Finnish
school system



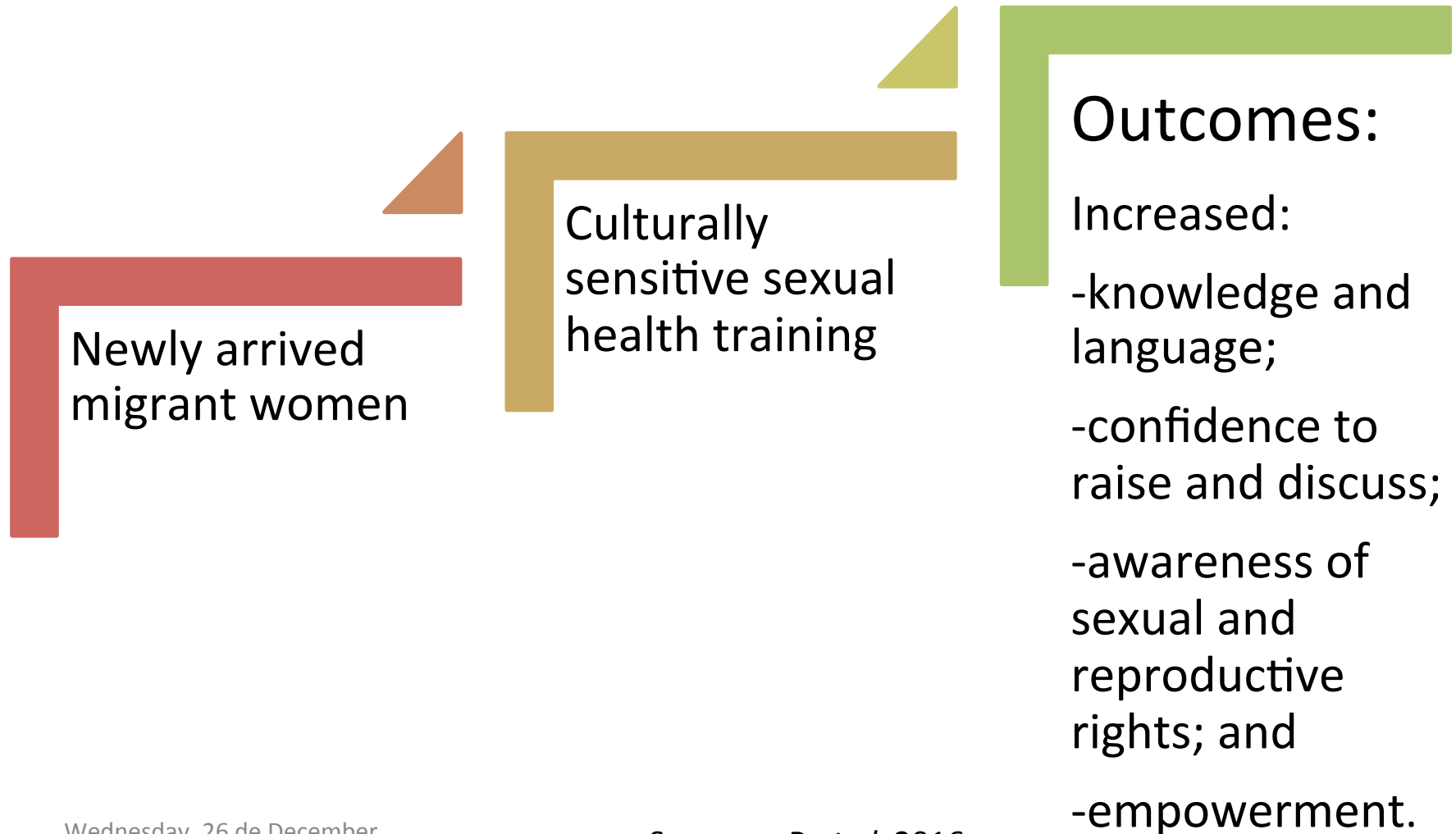
Aims to build
health literacy in
Finnish
pupils throughout
their school lives



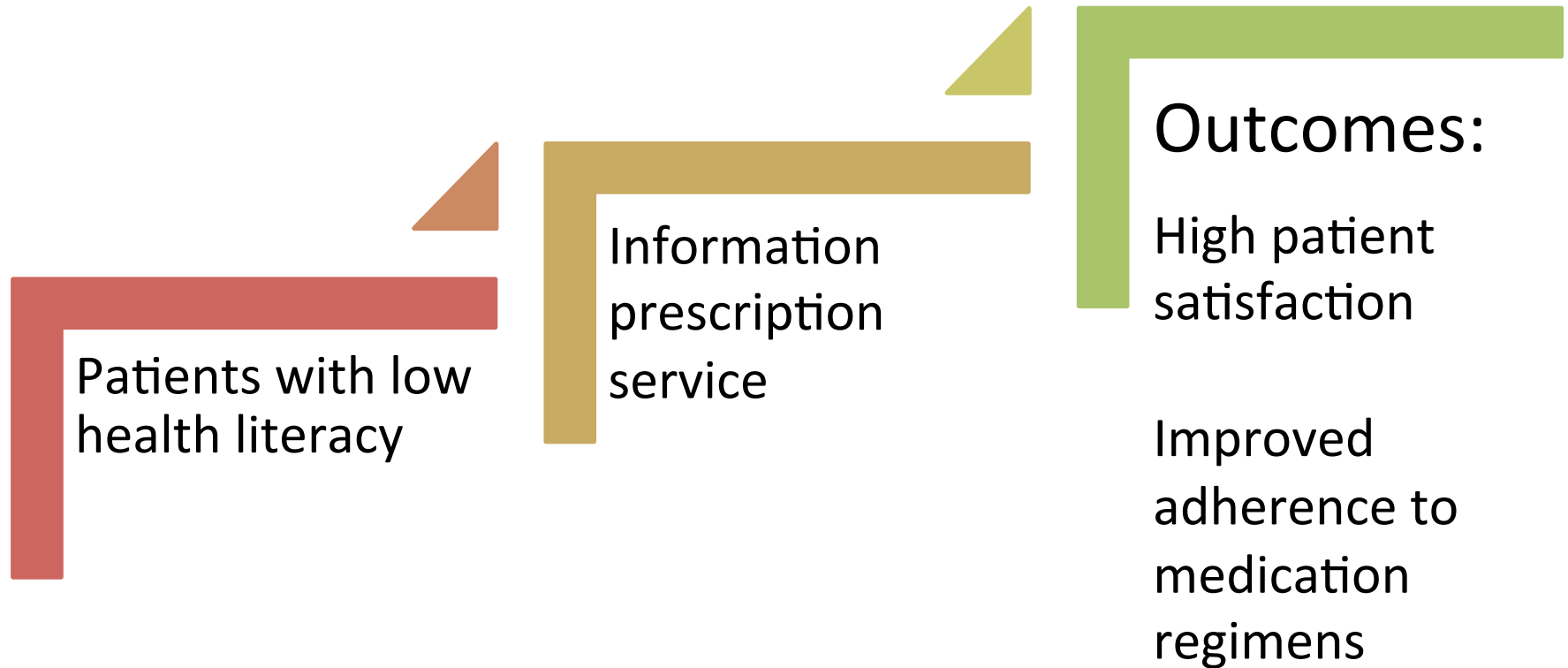
Outcomes:

Evaluation has
shown a
satisfactory level
of student
development of
health literacy

Building health literacy in migrant groups: **Sweden**

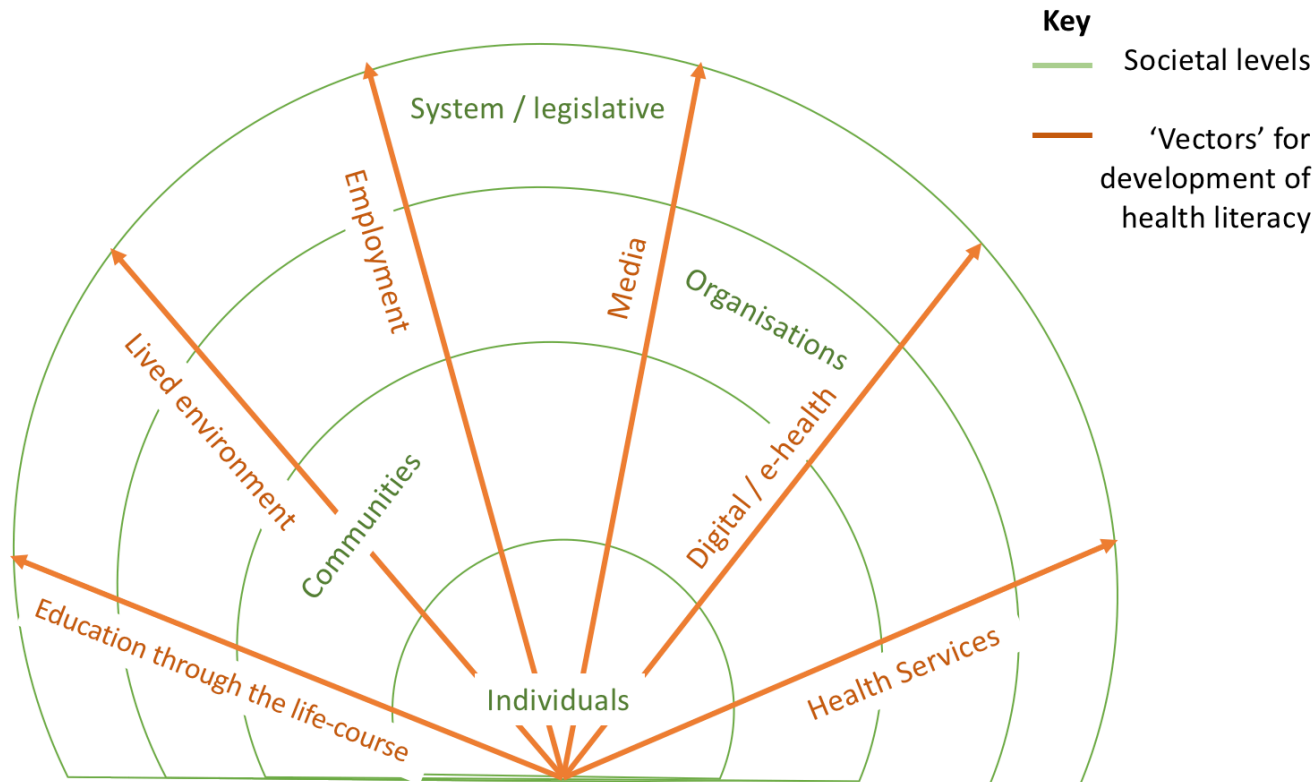


Information prescriptions: **Israel**



The approach

- A new health literacy policy framework was developed



- Evidence of impact of the policies was identified



Thank you!

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