



Workbook on commuting safety



Finnish Road Safety Council
LIKENNETURVA



LOCALTAPIOLA

Workbook on commuting safety

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For the user of this workbook

Welcome on the journey towards safer commuting

This workbook will help you guide your workplace towards **zero commuting accidents**.

Choose the models and tips from the workbook that suit your workplace best. Every workplace is different, with its own challenges and needs. You may use the ideas, adapt and apply them, and develop them further. The most important step is to start the journey towards improved commuting safety.

If commuting safety has not been a focus previously, do not worry. The first step is often the hardest, but remember: this is a long-term process, not a sprint. Prioritise, take one step at a time and celebrate each achievement along the way. The key is that the entire workplace is involved in the journey towards safer commuting – together you will achieve it.

How to use this workbook

Save the workbook and remember to record your progress along the way. Read, browse, and complete the workbook in any order you prefer, returning to sections and editing your responses as needed.

Some sections will require more work and will be completed as you progress. The goal is not to complete as many large tasks as possible in a short time but to gradually embed commuting safety into workplace practices and risk management processes.

1. What is work-related travel?

Commuting and work-related travel often represent the most dangerous parts of the working day.

Each year, employees experience around 20,000 commuting accidents in Finland, meaning accidents that occur between home and the workplace. The majority of these are slips and falls, which are particularly common on weekdays during poor weather conditions. Additionally, as commuting usually occurs on familiar routes, attention may not be fully on the traffic environment. Whether travelling by car, on foot, or by bicycle, commuting is often the most hazardous part of the working day across all sectors.

Work-related travel accidents tend to result in more severe consequences than accidents occurring within the workplace and generate significant costs for employers.

By improving the safety of commuting and work-related travel, work attendance increases, and the costs associated with commuting accidents decrease. Employees remain healthy and capable of working.

Work-related travel – basic concepts

Work-related travel refers to movement related to work, such as travelling by motor vehicle, on foot, by bicycle or using public transport.

Commute

- Travel between home and the workplace.
- There is no commute in remote work.

Work-related travel

- Travel during working hours related to work, such as customer visits, meetings, or moving between work sites.
- Work-related travel undertaken during free time: travel paid for by the employer but carried out during the employee's free time.
- Accidents occurring during work-related travel are recorded as workplace accidents.

Accidents occurring during commuting or work-related travel are primarily covered by the employer's mandatory occupational accident insurance.

1.1 The benefits of a safe commute



Increased days at work and reduced absences.



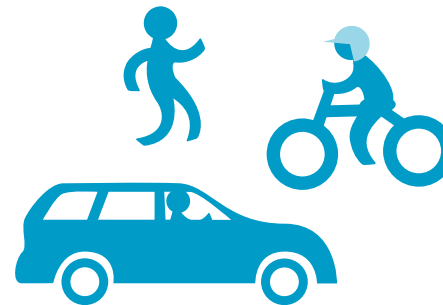
A positive corporate image.



Reduced costs associated with commuting accidents.



A healthy and capable workforce is a key asset for the workplace.



A safe working day begins and ends with the commute.

1.2. Basics of commuting safety

Every commuting accident is unnecessary

The “zero accidents” mindset is part of a responsible workplace culture. It signifies a long-term commitment and a comprehensive, positive approach to continuously developing commuting safety. Promoting the safety of work-related travel is not solely the responsibility of the occupational safety organisation but concerns the entire staff.

A responsible employer ensures that occupational health and safety are prioritised in all activities. The employer must ensure that every employee can travel to and from work safely and in good health – every working day. Commuting safety should be incorporated into workplace practices and occupational safety activities. Measures and best practices used to prevent workplace accidents can often be applied to the prevention of commuting accidents.

Achieving zero commuting accidents is possible when the entire staff is aware of the goals and committed to the agreed rules. The progress of commuting safety should be regularly monitored and communicated.

Key building blocks for commuting safety

Leadership and commitment, ensuring necessary resources, adequate communication, employee participation, risk management, setting goals and continuous evaluation and monitoring. Building a safe commuting culture requires attention to all these areas.



**What about your workplace?
What practical measures ensure
that employees have the conditions
to commute safely?**

2. Current situation, goals and measurement

One of the first steps is to examine the current state of commuting safety at your workplace: what are employees' commuting journeys like, how do they travel, how many commuting accidents occur, and what are the key risks associated with commuting?

You can also use safety observations, near-miss reports, insurance company claims statistics, employee surveys, and workplace risk assessments that include commuting. At the same time, review commuting-related practices and guidelines, employee orientation and training, as well as internal communication.

Assessing the current situation helps in identifying and evaluating the risks of commuting, setting goals, and planning appropriate actions to achieve these goals.

Basic information

Company / workplace / site:

Description of the work environment:

location of sites and typical modes of commuting.

Our occupational safety manager:

Person responsible for commuting safety (if different from the occupational safety manager):

How many commuting accidents occur annually?

How many absences result from these accidents?

Estimated costs caused by days of absence

(e.g., substitute salaries, overtime, disruptions to operations).

Commuting safety vision and goals:

management commitment, responsibilities and obligations, resources.

Key guidelines and documentation on commuting safety:

guidelines, rules, risk management, occupational safety action plan, induction materials.

2.1 Self-assessment of commuting safety

Self-assessment

The self-assessment is designed to help workplaces evaluate the current state of commuting safety and support continuous improvement. This tool is especially aimed at management, the occupational safety organisation, and those responsible for commuting safety. It can be used at the very beginning to help clarify what commuting safety encompasses.

The self-assessment covers four areas of commuting safety:

- 1) Leadership and employee participation
- 2) Planning and action
- 3) Collaboration
- 4) Continuous improvement

The tool helps identify both the well-functioning areas and those requiring further attention. The assessment also provides insights for planning the next year's action plan. It is advisable to repeat the self-assessment periodically to track progress.



Tools available:

[Työliikenteen turvallisuuden itsearviointi \(FI\)](#)

[Self-assessment matrix \(ENG\)](#)

[Självvärderingsmatris \(SV\)](#)



Record your self-assessment score and the areas identified for improvement.

Score and date of assessment:

Which areas of commuting safety have you performed best in, based on the assessment?

(e.g., 1–3 well-functioning areas)

Which areas or individual items need the most improvement, and where will you focus your attention in the future?

How will these actions be incorporated into the next operational plan? When will the assessment be repeated?

2.2 Workplace goals

Clear and measurable goals

The workplace should have clear, management-defined goals for improving commuting safety, communicated to the entire staff. The goals should be measurable and/or assessable, taking into account the work environment, the results of risk assessments, and employee experiences.

Examples of goals and indicators:

- A 30 % reduction in commuting accidents within two years.
- A 40 % reduction in sick leave due to commuting accidents within two years.
- A 20 % increase in the use of safety equipment (e.g., helmets, seat belts) within two years.
- Commuting guidelines established at the workplace.
- Regular and comprehensive communication (at least 4 communication activities/year).
- Employees have sufficient knowledge and skills to identify and manage commuting risks (quantitative and qualitative evaluation).

Once the goals are set, actions to achieve them are selected. Some actions may focus on fulfilling the employer's responsibilities, while others may aim to influence employee behaviour and practices.

Goals and actions can be documented in an action plan, handbook, or other written document. Effective action requires that the entire staff is aware of the goals and committed to following the agreed practices.

What are your goals for commuting safety for the next 1–5 years?

What actions are required to achieve these goals? Will training, induction, or new practices be needed? What will change in daily work?

What resources are needed?

2.3 Measurement, monitoring and evaluation

Measurement

Appropriate and effective processes for monitoring, measuring, analysing and evaluating commuting safety should be established at the workplace. This ensures that the chosen actions align with the set goals.

For employers, monitoring, measuring and evaluation are management tools that clarify the importance of the work: are the actions sufficient to reduce indirect and direct costs, absences, and to promote employee wellbeing in the long term?

It is useful to evaluate both individual actions (what was successful, what can be improved) and their impacts (are there changes in employees' attitudes and behaviour in the desired direction). Evaluation does not need to be tedious or time-consuming.



Leading indicators:

e.g., number of communication activities, number of training activities and participants, safety observations, completed risk assessments.

How will monitoring and measurement be carried out?

Who will do it?

Lagging indicators:

e.g., number of commuting accidents and resulting sick leave days, costs.

How will the results be communicated?

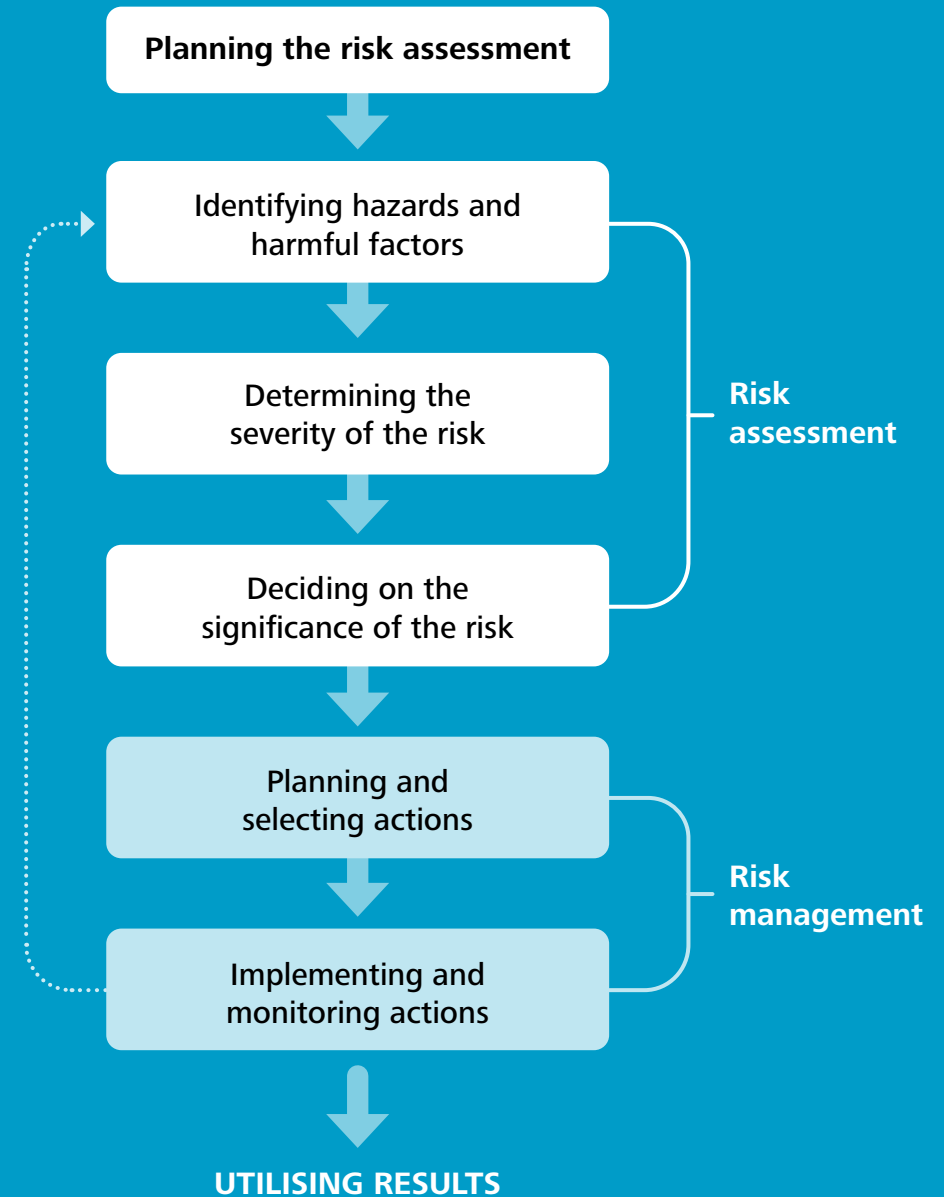
3. Identifying and managing commuting risks

The general workplace risk assessment process can also be applied to commuting risks.

Identifying and assessing hazards and harmful factors provides an accurate overview of the company's commuting safety and its development needs. The aim of risk management actions is to ensure safe and smooth commuting.

Risk assessment process:

- **Identify** commuting-related issues that cause or may cause harm to employee safety or health.
- **Prioritise** identified risks to target the correct actions.
- **Implement** corrective actions to ensure safe commuting for all.



3.1 What can you learn from accidents and near-miss incidents?

Learning from commuting accidents and near-misses

Investigation of workplace accidents is common practice at many workplaces. Lessons and improvement proposals from these investigations have effectively reduced workplace accidents. Commuting accidents should also be investigated to gain a deeper understanding of the risks associated with employees' commuting. While not all risks can be eliminated, various improvements can be made to reduce them.

It is important to communicate investigation results to employees and encourage them to report safety deviations and observations to enable learning.

Near-miss incidents should also be reported and handled in addition to actual accidents. It is beneficial to have an easily accessible, low-threshold reporting channel, regularly reminded to employees.

What about your workplace? Where and to whom are near-miss or commuting accident reports made?

1

OBSERVATION

Identification and immediate action

2

REPORTING

Why, where, who, how, and when?

3

INVESTIGATION

Identify root causes and successes

4

ACTIONS

Prioritisation and decisions

5

LEARNING

Sharing and applying knowledge in practice

Case example: slipping on the way to work

Over 1,000 commuting accidents on a single icy day!

On a February day, over 1,000 commuting accidents occurred due to extremely icy conditions. As it was during the winter holiday week in Southern Finland, fewer people were commuting, meaning **the number could have been even higher if it had occurred at a different time.**

What happened?

- A 45-year-old sales representative slipped on the street on the way to work, resulting in an injured ankle.
- At the emergency department, a fractured fibula was diagnosed, requiring surgery. The job involved heavy travel and physical work, and the employer could not offer lighter duties, affecting the return-to-work timeline.
- Recovery was prolonged, requiring a second surgery, extending the recovery by 5 months. The employee returned to same role after rehabilitation.
- The maintenance of the accident area was deemed sufficient, so no compensation was recovered from the responsible maintenance party.

Consequences:

- Total absence lasted approximately 12 months.
- The insurance company paid around €70,000 in total compensation.
- Treatment costs, including surgery, amounted to around €18,000.
- Disability allowance for one year totalled around €50,000.
- Costs related to hiring a substitute and salary payments during sick leave cost the employer around €40,000.
- The personnel change caused delays in the employer's order book.
- Compensation claims increased future insurance premiums.



4. Practical measures in the workplace

Embedding safety

It is important to consider how road safety can be embedded into the structures and practices of the workplace. Employees must be able to identify travel-related risks and have the motivation to act safely. This way, safe travel practices become part of the workplace safety culture and social norms: this is how we operate here. Actions should be chosen according to set goals and available resources.

Responsibilities and participation

Employer responsibilities and obligations must be in order, and employees should also be involved. Commuting safety then becomes a shared concern within the work community. People do not change their attitudes overnight; they need reminders and encouragement to act safely. This work, therefore, requires a long-term and systematic approach.

Communication, events and campaigns

Communication through various workplace channels is a cost-effective method of action. Events, training, and different campaigns engage and activate staff. Timeliness is important. For example, autumn can focus on visibility, tyre safety around the time of seasonal changes, and safe cycling at the start of spring cycling season. Some safety themes are relevant throughout the

year, such as using seatbelts when driving or avoiding mobile phone use in traffic.

Collaboration and ready-made materials

It is advisable to involve partners in promoting commuting safety, such as occupational health services, your insurance company, the Finnish Road Safety Council (Liikenneturva), local car dealerships and rental services, or cobblers. Throughout the year, many theme days and weeks take place, such as Reflector Day, Car-Free Day, European Mobility Week, Stay on Your Feet, and Accident Day. These all offer ready-made materials that can also be used in workplaces.

Action plan

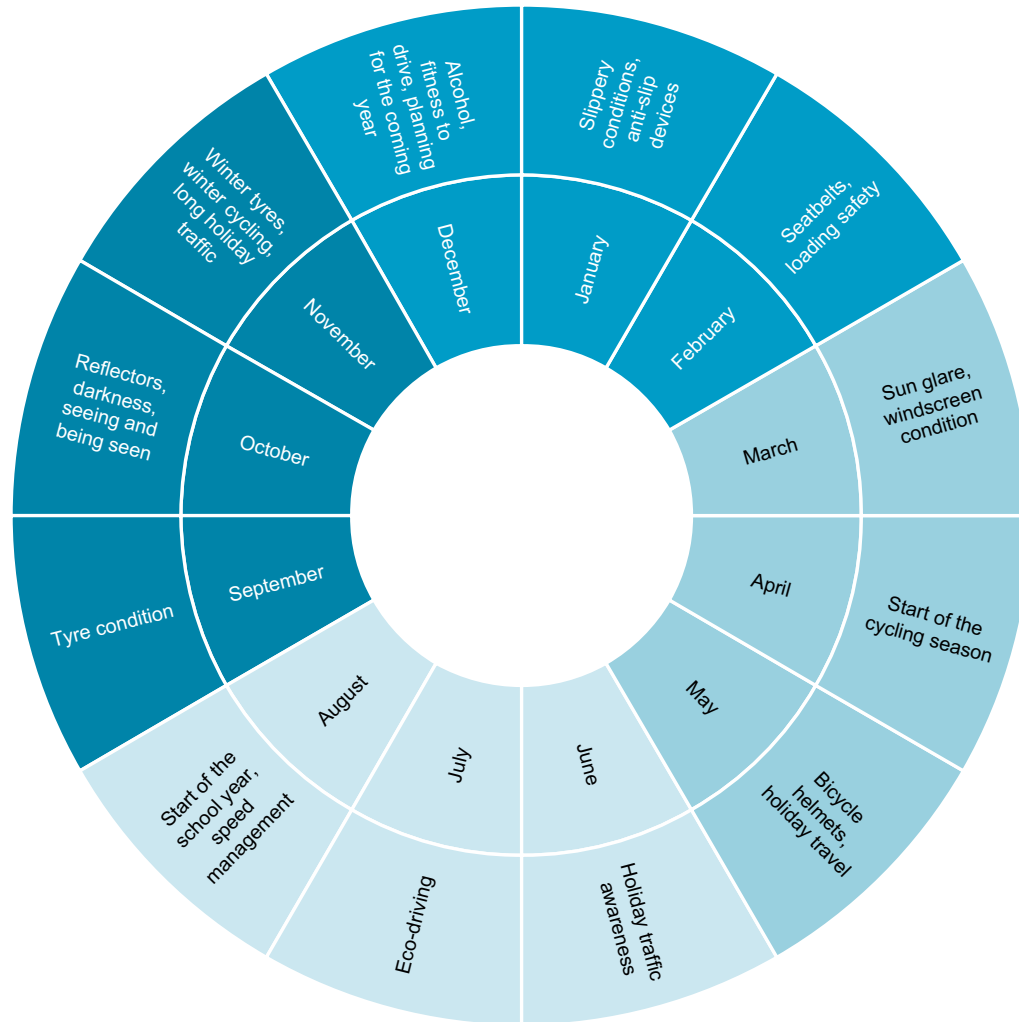
Compiling actions into an action plan makes the work easier and ensures that all planned activities are completed. You do not need to do everything in one year; even a few actions, such as a communication theme or an event, are sufficient.



Employers can also support employees' commuting safety through purchases as resources allow. Reflectors, bicycle helmets, anti-slip devices, or even sandbags provided by the employer encourage their use.

4.1 Examples of actions and topics

Annual calendar of commuting themes



Additional measures:

- Employee induction, including supervisors (e.g., Safety Moments).
- Defensive driving courses (EAK) for car and bicycle users.
- Various events and campaigns.
- Themed lectures and information sessions.
- Staff training.
- Activities during safety days.
- Communication via workplace channels.
- Weather warnings via text message subscription.
- Workplace-specific campaigns.
- Select actions to support set goals. 4–6 actions per year are sufficient; there is no need to do everything at once.

4.2 Action plan template

When?	What?	Why?	Where?	Who?	How will it be evaluated?

5. Rules for commuting safety

Workplace culture is built step by step.

Through workplace culture, social norms for safe travel are created. Workplaces can agree on how employees will commute and promote safe travel together.

Guidelines or rules on commuting within the work community can cover topics such as scheduling, modes of transport, safety equipment, and traffic behaviour. When developing rules, it is important to determine their level of obligation: are they recommendations, instructions, orders, or mutual agreements? Work-related travel during working hours can be guided more strictly.

A good example is the use of mobile phones while driving. A workplace may agree that employees should not participate in meetings while driving. Additionally, it should be clearly stated that messaging or holding a phone while driving is not allowed.

Induction for new employees becomes easier when commuting rules are documented and can be followed consistently.

When practices are agreed upon together and there is commitment to follow them, it is easier for colleagues to remind each other if someone acts against them, for example by attending a Teams meeting while driving.

At the same time, it is useful to review other documents related to travel, such as travel guidelines, ensuring that commuting safety rules align with them.

The implementation of rules should also be monitored by including questions on commuting in annual wellbeing surveys, for example: *"Have you driven for work while feeling too tired?"*

5.1 Example: Finnish Road Safety Council's rules

When employees of the Finnish Road Safety Council travel, safety, environmental and health considerations are prioritised. Efforts are made to favour safe and sustainable modes of travel, such as train and bus travel, walking, cycling, and remote working. Human-powered travel reduces environmental emissions and promotes employee physical activity and wellbeing.

Staff follow traffic laws and rules, drive proactively, and respect other road users.

- Travel safety is more important than travel efficiency.
- We avoid phone calls while driving. If a call is necessary, we use hands-free and keep calls short. For longer calls, we stop the vehicle.
- We do not write messages or use the internet while driving, not even at traffic lights, and we do not attend remote meetings while driving or cycling.
- We use seatbelts, reflectors, anti-slip devices, bicycle helmets, and other safety equipment.
- We reduce haste through planning and anticipation, and adjust our speed to the conditions.
- We avoid driving when tired or unwell.
- If alcohol is consumed at representation events, we use taxis or public transport.



5.2 Rules for your workplace

Planning work-related travel:

recommended modes, combining multiple meetings, breaks, procedures if the workday extends unexpectedly.

Time pressure:

balancing safety with efficiency, procedures if an unexpected external factor changes the schedule.

Weather and other conditions:

speed adjustment, time planning, decisions on travel during very poor weather, or using remote work instead.

Vehicle condition:

appropriate tyres, vehicle inspections, loading, induction when using rental cars.

Focus on traffic:

avoid phone calls, messaging, and remote meetings while driving; use hands-free if necessary, set navigation before departure.

Public transport:

use seatbelts on coaches.

Walking:

anti-slip devices or shoes with good grip, reflectors in the dark.

Reporting accidents and near-misses:

low-threshold reporting channel, regular reminders, investigation of incidents.

Cycling:

helmet, front and rear lights, reflectors, bell, studded tyres, fitness to cycle.

Use of safety equipment:

seatbelts, helmets, use of safety gear provided by the employer during commuting and work-related travel.

Fitness to drive:

zero tolerance for alcohol and drugs, no driving when tired, unwell, or emotionally distressed, do not ride with a driver under the influence, check the impact of medication on driving.

Other:

6. Useful links

-  **Finnish Road Safety Council's commuting safety**
Models and tips
-  **Finnish Road Safety Council news**
Updates to support internal communication (in Finnish)
-  **Finnish Road Safety Council commuting safety newsletter**
Free of charge, published four times a year in Finnish, Swedish, and English
-  **Finnish Road Safety Council Flickr image bank**
Infographics, illustrations for internal communication (non-commercial use)
-  **How Liikenneturva staff travel**
The Finnish Road Safety Council's rules for work-related travel (in Finnish)
-  **LähiTapiolan RiskiHelppi** (in Finnish)
-  **TVK Pakki statistics application**
Commuting accident statistics by the Finnish Workers' Compensation Center (in Finnish)
-  **TTK Safe work-related travel**
A guide by the Centre for Occupational Safety and the Finnish Road Safety Council (in Finnish)
-  **Occupational Safety and Health Act** (in Finnish)

