



Reducing Emissions from Commuting

GHG emissions category

Scope 3, Category 7: Employee commuting

Introduction

This guide explains how to lower greenhouse gas emissions from commuting—the transportation of employees between their homes and workplaces

Emissions from commuting vary in significance for different organisations, depending on location and transport options. Key actions to reduce these emissions include promoting sustainable transport, introducing flexible working, motivating employees to choose sustainable transport, and engaging with employees commuting. During the COVID pandemic, commuting emissions dropped by 40%, showing that substantial reductions are possible.

Measure and Understand

To tackle commuting emissions, you first need to understand current commuting habits and patterns among your staff. Conduct a survey that also includes questions about employees' feelings toward their commute. Use the results from this survey to figure out the most effective actions to address your commuting emissions.

Resources

- [*How to calculate commuting emissions.*](#)
- [*Survey template*](#)
- [*Emissions factors for travel*](#)

Key Actions

Financially Support Employees Switching to Lower Emission Forms of Commuting

Encourage the use of bikes, public transport, electric cars, and shared vehicles to reduce emissions.

- Offer company loans or leases for bikes and e-bikes to encourage cycling as a commuting option. This can also benefit employee health.
- Encourage the use of public transport or carpooling over car commuting with financial incentives.

Company Investments

- Implement a policy requiring all company-owned and leased cars to be electric.
- Install charging stations for electric bikes and cars on site.

Introduce Flexible Working

Allow employees to work from home or satellite offices part-time. Allowing employees to spend two

days per week working from home can reduce commuting emissions by up to 40%. It is important to remember that telecommuting also leads to emissions that should be accounted for.

- Set policy enabling flexible working-from-home (see example on [policy](#)).
- Allow employees to work from a satellite office closer to their homes, e.g. through co-working spaces.

Motivate Employees to Choose Low Emission Commuting

- Include commuting terms in employee contracts.
- Use communication campaigns, user groups and internal challenges to promote sustainable commuting.
- Create a task force or group of champions from different parts of the organisation to develop an analysis and action plan.
- Encourage and promote carpooling and car-sharing services among employees.

Engage with Your Employees

Employee engagement is crucial for reducing commuting emissions. Even with new transportation options, emissions won't fall unless employee behaviour changes. Begin by informing employees that you'll measure commuting emissions and ask for suggestions on how to reduce them.

Cost Implications

Resources will be required for the initial data collection and analysis (up-front cost) and for following-up on progress. External resources may be required. Investments will probably be required, in incentives for low-carbon commuting. There may also be savings in disincentivizing high-carbon options (e.g. savings from offering fewer car-parking spaces).
