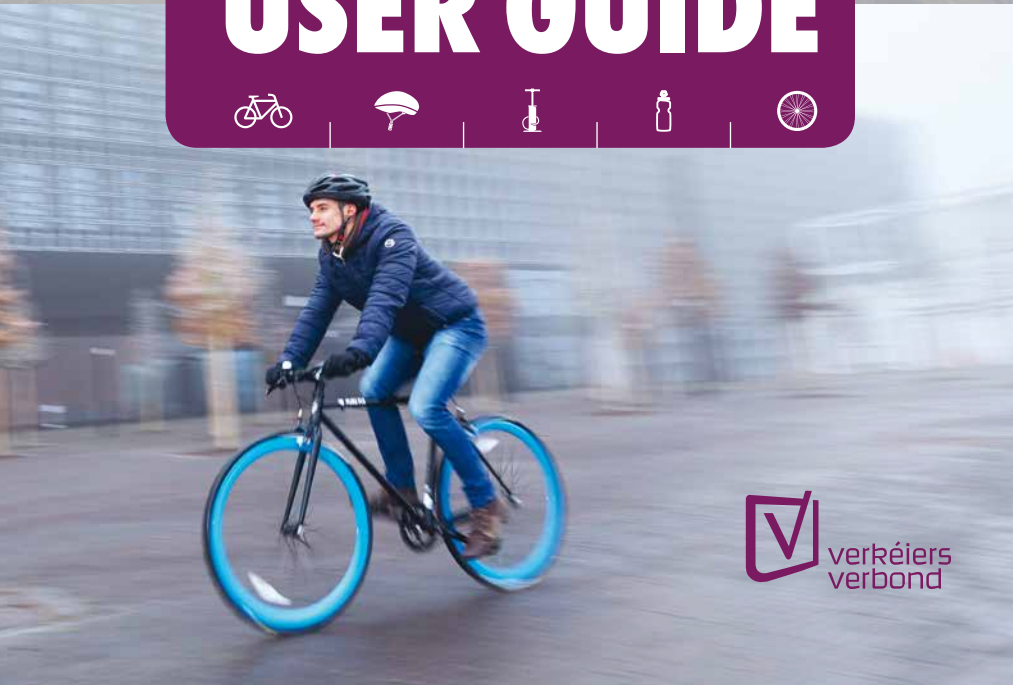
EN

MAM VËLO OP D'SCHAFF ODER AN D'SCHOUL

USER GUIDE



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BUTCHERS & BICYCLES

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INTERVIEW > GILLES DOSTERT, VERKÉIERSVERBOND DIRECTOR GENERAL

What is the *Verkéiersverbond*?

The *Verkéiersverbond* (National Public Transport Community) is a public agency which comes under the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Infrastructure. Our task is to change travel behaviour so that people use more sustainable means of transport.

And how does the *Verkéiersverbond* make this happen?

Our policy of making information widely available about all the different ways of travelling plays a big role. The *Mobilitéitszentral* is one of our most important services. This customer centre deals directly with public transport customers and anyone interested in using alternative forms of transport. In addition to this service, we also provide our helpline, on 2465 2465, our travel app and our website. We also run other programmes such as "Mam Vëlo op d'Schaff" and develop joint projects with our partners which we then implement.

For you, how much of a priority is cycling?

Cycling is a very important part of the transport equation. We are very clear that traffic jams and wasting time trying to find a parking space pose real problems for our economy. Dealing with traffic noise and exhaust fumes from internal combustion engines are challenges for the future. Bikes, pedelecs and cargo bikes too offer great, clean solutions for all these problems. Each of us needs to rediscover that automatic reflex of "taking the bike". This multi-lingual brochure should help us engage with this idea again.

INTRODUCTION

> MAM VËLO OP D'SCHAFF: IT'S ALL ABOUT YOUR MINDSET

Why not forget your car from time to time and use your bike instead? Although it sounds as if cycle commuting is a simple choice to make, in fact it's not for everyone. Surprised? This is because it's not actually about the bike, the gear, the route or even the weather. It's not even about cycling abilities or being in good physical shape either, rather it's about the cyclist – you. Whether cycling to work will be right for you will depend on your attitude, your expectations and your personality.

It's one of those things that can either be very simple or extremely complex, whatever you choose to make it. You can commute on any bike, cycle down any street, wear whatever you like and carry your things however you want. And it's not just about getting you from A to B, but about you doing this comfortably, safely and it being fun and healthy at the same time, anytime!

Bike culture in the Grand Duchy is flourishing, which is reflected among other things in the growing *Mam Vëlo op d'Schaff* community. Drivers are getting used to sharing the roads with an ever-increasing cycling community and Luxembourg is working hard to improve its cycling infrastructure: many main roads now have red cycle lanes, at certain times cyclists can use one-way lanes against the traffic flow, cycle stands and secure mBox cycle storage facilities are being installed. Larger cities are offering bike sharing schemes, such as vel'oh! and Vël'OK – ideal for "multimobile" commuters (www.yeaah.lu).

With this handy user guide, packed with useful tips and informative interviews, we hope to release your positive mindset and give you that extra push to get on your saddle and ride to work, whether you're just getting started or whether you're already a regular cyclist.

You don't need anything special to take the "Vëlo op d'Schaff", just the right mindset!

DO YOU WANT TO JOIN THE #MVOS COMMUNITY?

> FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE STEPS

1. Create an MVOS team of 2 to 4 people.
2. Choose a captain.
3. Register online at mvos.lu from 1st April.
   It's free and a welcome present awaits you!
4. Between 15 May and 31 July, bike to work or school at least 15 times.

Qualify for the big raffle and you can win some amazing prizes, or help your company or school to be the one to win the Golden Gear Award while reducing CO_2 emissions and improving your fitness at the same time!

> GOOD TO KNOW

> You don't have to ride the whole way – be multimobile (www.yeaah.lu).
> For team members: your place of work or school, and your commute do not need to be the same.
> To enter the big prize draw, each team member has to qualify individually.
> Join in anytime but no later than 15 July.

MAM VËLO OP D'SCHAFF ODER AN D'SCHOUL

15.05 - 31.07
#MVOS365

REGISTER ONLINE 1ST APRIL MVOS.LU

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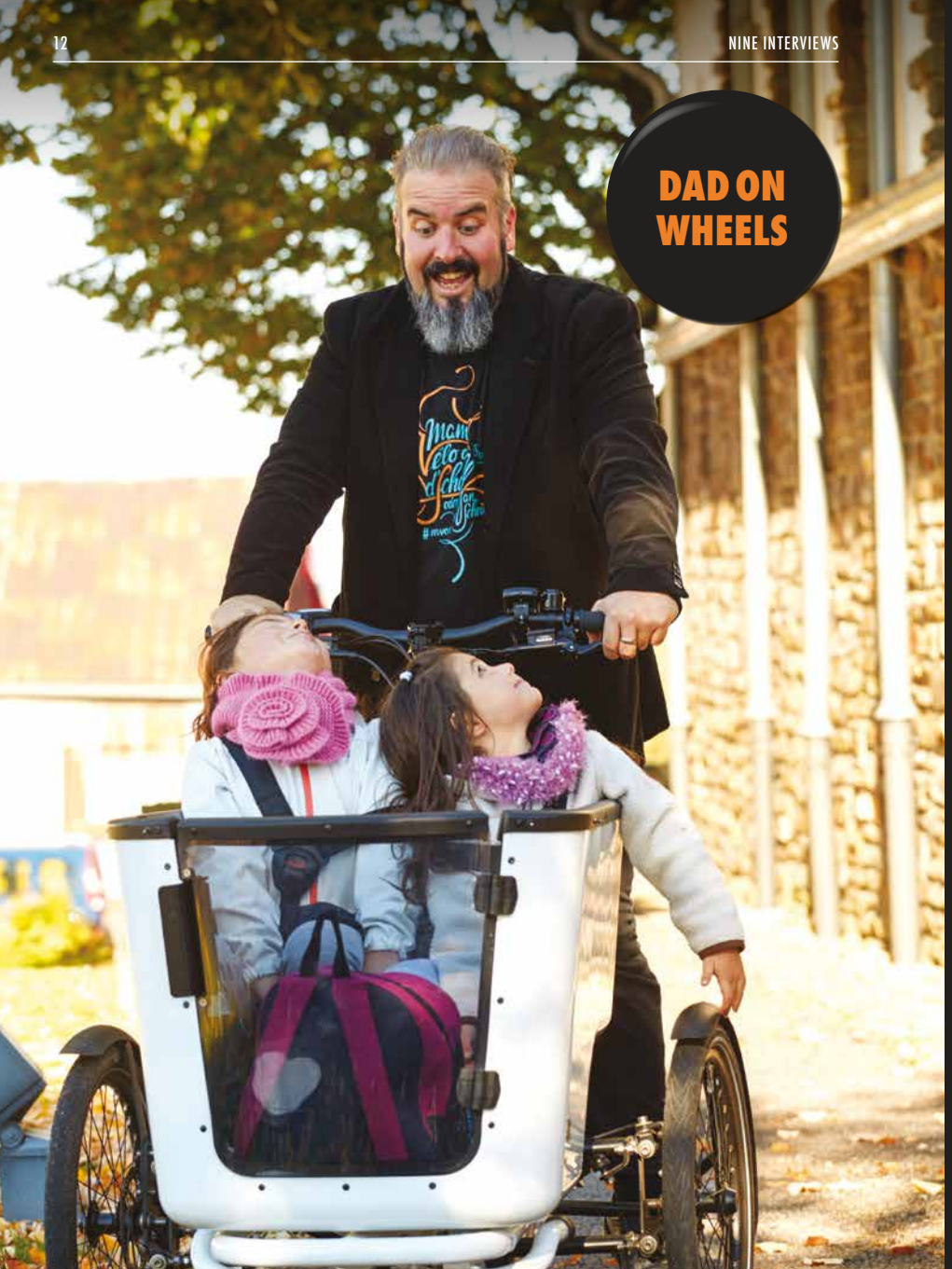
DAD ON WHEELS

DAVID EVERARD, ELISA & EVELYN

COMMUNICATION & MARKETING MANAGER, 41
PARC HOSINGEN

1.



DAD ON WHEELS

What are the advantages of using a bike for the school run?

In our local area, children normally take the bus to get to a school in the centre. This is practical of course, but if children can get some fresh air in the morning, say hi to the sheep and cats, and have a chat with one another while they're eating their sandwich then their day gets off to quite a different start. What's more, we get to school before the bus because we don't need to make any stops en route.

Why did you decide to buy a cargo bike?

I really enjoy cycling myself so the first time I was on paternity leave I started taking my eldest daughter to school by attaching her bike to mine with a special tow bar. With my second daughter, I wanted to take them both to school so then the logical conclusion was to use a cargo bike.

Children, what do you think of the bike?

Elisa: It's like a roller coaster. It's so much fun!

Evelyn: I think it's great when we're going downhill and round corners. The other children also think it's great and they want one too. But I haven't seen any other bikes like it.

ELECTRIC BIKER

RUBEN BRITO

ACCOUNTANT, 38
LIPPERSCHEID

2.

ELECTRIC BIKER

Why did you decide to cycle part of the way to work?

My son goes to a nursery in Erpeldange and I take the train in Ettelbruck. So I just put my bike in the back of the car, I drop my son off at his nursery and leave the car there. It doesn't take me long to cycle to the railway station and I don't have to waste time looking for somewhere to park.

You have an electrically-assisted bike, don't you?

Yes, the electric assistance does some of the work for me. I do enough sport already so getting to work doesn't have to be exhausting as well (he laughs). For me it's more about not wasting time and getting some fresh air.

In the morning do you see other people cycling to work like you?

Yes, you do see the odd person getting onto the train with a bike. However, I still find it surprising how few people use a bike even just to get to the station from the villages around Ettelbruck and in Ettelbruck itself. Of course the infrastructure isn't absolutely ideal, but it certainly isn't bad or dangerous as people say. I think people have simply forgotten just how wonderful it is to be on a bike.

VEL'OH! CREW

TOM WEBER
GEOGRAPHER, 32
BELVAUX

DAVID VIAGGI
COMPUTER SCIENTIST, 33
BISSEN

ANDY SCHMIT
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, 39
BASCHARAGE

3.

VEL'OH! CREW

Why did you decide to use vel'oh?

Andy: Our offices moved and the new location isn't quite so central. So cycling was then a good way of getting into the city centre quickly, but without too much effort.

Tom: On Wednesdays there's a market at "Knuedler" – and if you use vel'oh you can nip over there quickly to pick up a few things for the office fridge or buy some vegetables to take home. You can fit a lot in the basket.

David: There's a vel'oh station just 100 metres from the office. And if you borrow a bike you can be anywhere in the town within five to ten minutes. This means you have more options about who to meet and where to go at lunchtime.

Do you also use a bike at other times?

David: I've got a pedelec, which I use for that famous "last mile" from my car to my workplace. Since I hold a political office, I want to have more flexibility on the days when I have commitments and know that my car is nearby. On other days I'm not reliant on it. If you work normal office hours, using a combination of all types of transport – P+R, train and bus or bike – is definitely the best alternative.

Tom: I also use the shared bike system on a daily basis to cycle to work from the railway station or from Bouillon P+R and then to cycle back there. For me it's very practical not having to worry about maintaining or servicing a bike or working out where I can leave it securely locked, etc.

Andy: The *Verkéiersverbond* is installing more and more mBoxes across the whole country. So things are bound to change. Lots of people will use the mBoxes to park their bikes, so they can enjoy the last few kilometres and travel quickly.

BIKE 4 WORK

JOSIANE MAILLIET

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, 48
MERSCH

4.

BIKE 4 WORK

Why did you decide to use a bike?

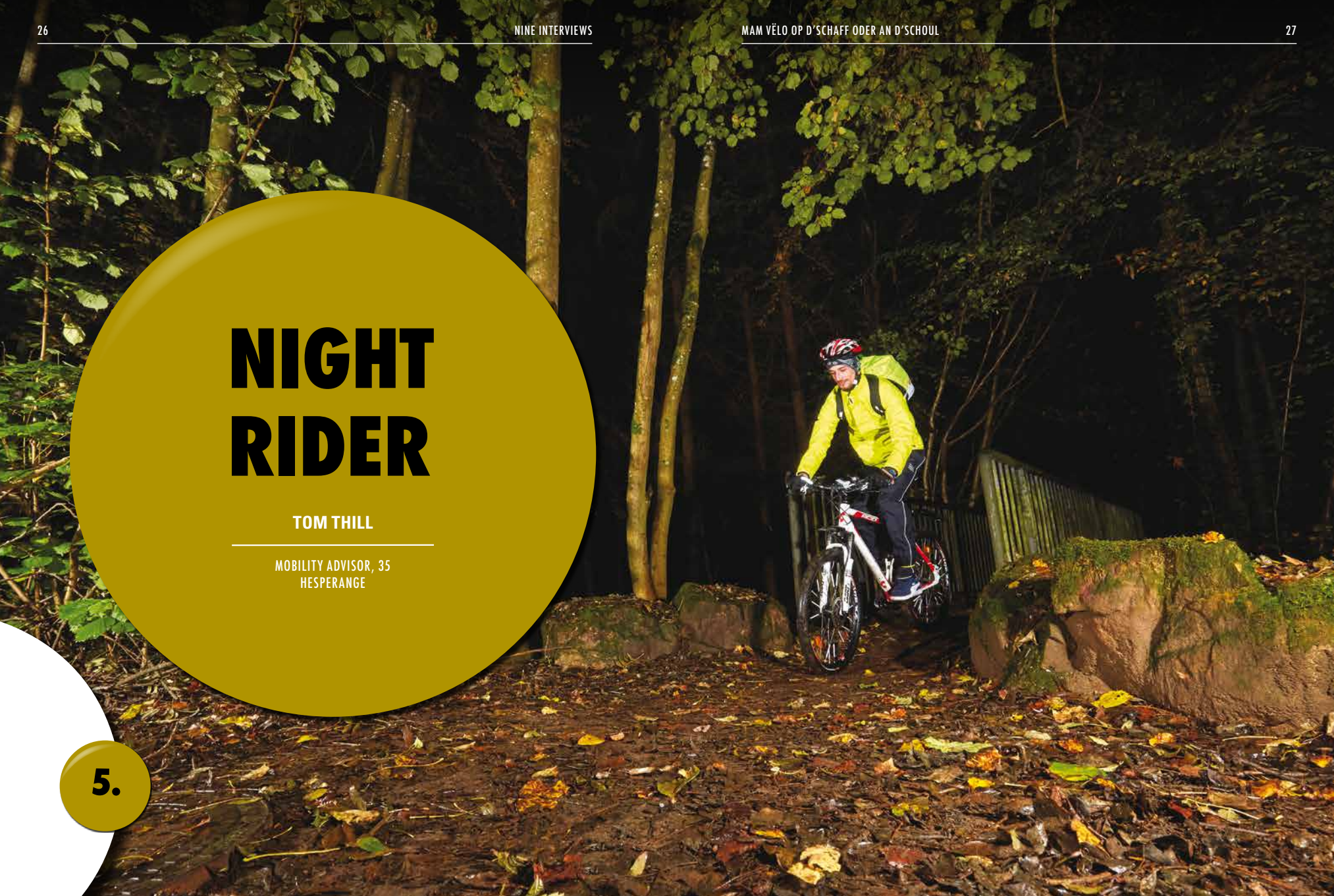
I've always enjoyed cycling and since our offices are not in the city centre, we have two office bikes. Almost every day I have a meeting somewhere else and there simply isn't a quicker or more direct way of getting there than using a bike.

Do you use a bike in all weathers?

When it's dry I use a bike. I still have to work once I've got to where I'm going and I really don't fancy getting togged up in waterproof clothing from head to foot. But I don't mind if it's cold. It's nice to breathe in a little fresh air for a few minutes in the day, when otherwise you're sat at a desk all day long.

Do think that office bikes are something other companies should also think about having?

Definitely! We have two in the garage and the pedelec is particularly popular. Using a bike just makes life easier for our staff and they know exactly how long it will take them to get to the next meeting. You'll never arrive late when you use a bike.



NIGHT RIDER

TOM THILL

MOBILITY ADVISOR, 35
HESPERANGE

5.

NIGHT RIDER

What made you decide to cycle to work?

I'm really into exercise. We decided to have a family and as the children took up some of our time, I started looking for ways of integrating exercise into my daily routine. It then seemed obvious that I might as well cycle to work as it's a journey I have to do anyway every day.

Do you also cycle in the dark?

I do shift work which means I set off very early in the morning. If the weather isn't too bad, I'll use my mountain bike and take a shortcut through the woods. I've also got myself a fixie bike now which I use for cycling on roads. What I particularly like about this bike is the challenge of going the whole way without changing gear. There's something very "authentic" about it, you really feel a connection with the bike.

You always wear a helmet and high-vis cycling jacket, don't you?

Yes, but it's up to the individual what they wear when they are on the road. I myself try to be as visible as possible. Better to be too conspicuous than not be conspicuous enough. And I don't cycle to look cool – I cycle to get from A to B, and preferably to arrive happy and healthy. However, for you to be seen, other people also have to be looking where they're going. Unfortunately too many people still text while driving and they're dangerous for pedestrians, other drivers and of course for cyclists too.

TEAM FIXIE

YVES DAX
GEOMATICIAN, 27
ETTELBRUCK

JOÉ SCHMIT
GEOGRAPHER, 29
WARKEN

SAM JACOBY
URBAN PLANNER, 29
ETTELBRUCK

6.

TEAM FIXIE

What made you decide to cycle to work?

Joé: I use a bike mostly for those last few kilometres to get to work. When I arrive at the station, I take my bike from the mBox and then cycle the short distance to my workplace. When you look at average speed, you can't beat a bike in urban areas.

Sam: It's the same for me. Cycling has turned out to be a really practical way of getting around because I also work in the city. You can get everywhere really quickly.

Yves: We work in the same department and when we were thinking about cycling we went out and bought three fixie bikes from the same shop. These bikes look good, they're robust because there's hardly any mechanism to go wrong and riding them is great fun.

But you don't just use the bike to go to work – you also use it during the day, don't you?

Sam: Yes, we also use our bikes to go to meetings. It's much easier to arrive somewhere on time when you know exactly how long it will take you to get there. And of course, the best way of getting to a restaurant during your lunch break is also to cycle there.

Yves: You don't arrive all hot and sweaty either, unless it's up in the 30s. When you're cycling you have to dress according to the weather. It also does you good just to get a bit of exercise when otherwise you're spending the whole day in front of a computer.

Joé: Every time you set out on a journey you have to decide beforehand how best to travel given the weather and the time you have available. You might decide to take the bus or walk or just use your bike.

Might you consider using the bike for even more of your journey?

Joé: I've resolved to make cycling a greater part of my daily routine, however, more for short distances of less than five kilometres. I've already started to cycle from my flat to work once a week, which is thirty-seven kilometres. Then I cycle home again the next day.

Sam: I definitely want to try it out in the summer. But not using the fixie bike, I'd rather switch to a road bike. I can imagine that it's really good to let off a bit of steam on the bike mornings and evenings.

Yves: We've talked about it, but only wanted to start once the weather is better. However, it's definitely an alternative. Especially as our workplace has showers, so it's easy to get ready for the day ahead.

CYCLING AFICIONADO

GILLES DOSTERT

MANAGING DIRECTOR VERKÉIERSVERBOND, 40 HEFFINGEN

7.

7.

CYCLING AFICIONADO

Why did you decide to cycle to work?

For me, the bicycle is the most inspired invention of modern times. Everyone can afford one – it's easy to use, sustainable, safe and most importantly extremely practical. Just by using the power of your own muscles you can cover great distances, do something to keep yourself healthy, feel deeply connected with your surroundings, and enjoy a great sense of freedom. Cycling has always fascinated me since I was a young boy, which is why I cycle as a leisure activity. Given the enormous volume of traffic on our roads, it just takes too long to get to work – whether by car or public transport – and most of all you're dependent on so many external factors. You then reach a point when you've had enough. So as often as possible, I try to use my bike for my twenty-five-kilometre journey, which takes me an hour. And it's great once you're cycling home to leave the noise and fumes of the city behind you and to cruise through the Grünewald and absorb the beauty of nature. You can switch off, mull things over and enjoy the journey. Once I'm home, I can then devote myself to my family as I don't need to find any extra time for sport.

But you use your bike during the day too, and not just to get to and from work?

Whenever possible, I borrow a vel'oh to travel around in the city. I've also just converted an old racing bike into a single speed bike. I think it's great that a real bike culture is developing here in Luxembourg which isn't just focused on cycling as a sport.

As director general of the *Verkéiersverbond* you have created a company bike environment by taking a few specific decisions. What advice could you give to other organisations or companies?

When we were moving offices we looked for premises with showers. Employees have to be able to have a wash after cycling to work in the mornings. We also have bike parking spaces in the basement where staff can leave their bikes and know they are secure. And we've also bought two bikes for the company, a pump and a repair kit, as well as a waterproof rucksack for taking documents to meetings.

My advice is to provide the right infrastructure as it will definitely get used. If your staff are happier and healthier in the workplace, then that's an added bonus.

CYCLE TO WORK

FÉLICIE WEYCKER

CHAIR OF THE VERKÉIERSVERBOND EXECUTIVE BOARD, 44 STRASSEN

8.

CYCLE TO WORK

8.

What made you decide to cycle part of the way to work?

A specific example: my minister cycles in almost every day and he doesn't live much further away from our office than I do. When I tried it out for myself, I found that it was actually quicker to come by bike. What's more, you get more exercise day in day out and so automatically you're taking care of your health.

Doesn't your bike have an electric motor?

A friend was selling his pedelec, which is quicker and more practical especially as I have to cope with a couple of hills on my route and it means I can get to the office feeling fresh, but not exhausted.

Do you see other people in the morning on their bikes like you?

Yes, you see more and more people cycling to work, so I hope that the infrastructure will continue to improve, and most importantly that it will be safer.

BIKE BUS TRAIN

LIONEL MALANÉ

CHIEF ASSISTANT, 38
LUXEMBOURG

9.

What made you decide to cycle to work?

I don't really live that far from where I work. As I try to keep myself fit, it occurred to me that as I have to travel to work every day I might as well do it on my bike. This worked brilliantly so I then just made cycling part of my daily routine. On days when I had meetings away from the office, I took the bus so that I didn't turn up all sweaty. But then I started missing my bike, so...

...you bought yourself a folding bike.

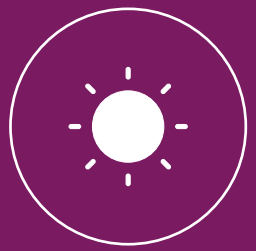
Correct, and it was the right decision. It means I can cycle part of the way to catch the bus or train and then I can travel the rest of the way easily and quickly. Also during the day I can take the bus to a certain stop, get off there with my folding bike which I take with me on the bus or train and then I continue on my bike. It's really so handy!

What advice would you give to anyone reading this, wondering whether a folding bike might be the right thing for them?

Just give it a go! You have a feeling of complete freedom when all you have to think about is the time it will take you as a cyclist to get from A to B. Why not try borrowing a folding bike from a friend or a shop and plan all the legs of your journey so that you make it work. After a week, you'll know whether this is the best way of getting around for you or not.

CYCLING TO WORK: EIGHT TIPS TO GET STARTED

TIPS & TRICKS



1

START CYCLING WHILE THE WEATHER IS GOOD.

2

TRY OUT YOUR ROUTE IN THE EVENING OR AT A WEEK-END.

3

ONLY CYCLE FOR PART OF YOUR JOURNEY.

4

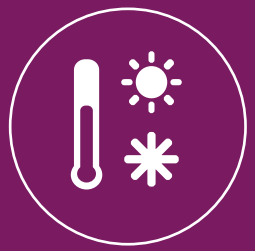
GET OFF YOUR BIKE WHEN YOUR ROUTE GOES UPHILL.

5

ASK FOR ADVICE FROM PEOPLE YOU KNOW WHO USE A BIKE.

6

TAKE SOME SPARE SOCKS WITH YOU.



7

BE PREPARED FOR WHEN THE WEATHER IS EITHER VERY HOT OR VERY COLD.

8

BUY OR BORROW SOME BASIC CYCLING EQUIPMENT.

6 GOOD REASONS

1 GET THERE FASTER

For short to medium distances (up to five kilometres) cycling is usually quicker than using a car. It also avoids the hassle of being caught up in traffic jams and looking for a parking space.

Winter plus: you'll be warmer riding your bike than standing at a bus stop or waiting for your car to heat up.

2 REDUCE POLLUTION

Whether in summer or winter, the only energy you'll need to ride your bike is your own. No fossil fuels are used, nor are any greenhouse gasses emitted such as CO_2 – apart from your own breathing.

3 SAVE MONEY

The cost of buying and maintaining a bike is considerably lower than for a car. You won't have to pay for insurance, taxes, fuel, parking fees or parking tickets. And, you'll save on gym membership too!

Winter plus: you'll make even greater savings if you cycle in all seasons.

2nd photo © MarcBruxelle / iStock / Thinkstock

> THERE ARE MANY ARGUMENTS WHY YOU SHOULD SWITCH TO CYCLING, EVEN IN WINTER! WE HAVE PICKED SIX FOR YOU.

4 BE STRESS-FREE

Riding your bike reduces stress and you can have some fun at the same time. It lets you wind down and forget your everyday troubles, which relieves tension and reduces depression.

Winter plus: by battling against headwinds and blizzards, you'll get the same endorphin rush as winter skiers.

5 BE HAPPIER

According to recent studies, cyclists are twice as happy as other commuters because of the combination of mental health benefits, being able to save money, having greater control over their commuting journey and a sense of fun.

Winter plus: when the days are getting shorter, being active outdoors will improve your mood considerably and boost your Vitamin D production.

6 LIVE LONGER

Cycling is excellent for your cardiovascular system. Studies have shown that, on average, half an hour of cycling per day will increase your life expectancy by about two and a half years. And contrary to popular opinion, cyclists breathe in fewer harmful emissions than car drivers.

Winter plus: when it's cold outside, your body burns more calories.

HOW TO CHOOSE THE BEST BIKE FOR YOU

The right choice of bike generally depends on what type of cyclist you are, and whether you're someone who is going to ride a bike on a daily basis or just occasionally. Before you buy a new bike, think about what you need it for: your daily commute, weekend excursions, to buy groceries, to work out, to transport your children, etc.

A quick overview

Road bikes, also known as racing bikes, are designed for performance on (mostly) well-paved roads. They can be used for fitness riding, commuting, long-distance rides, touring and racing. Your back muscles must be well-trained because of the forward-leaning position. Road bikes are not usually designed to carry heavy loads.

Touring bikes are made for long excursions. However, just as with cars, there are many subcategories which are all specialised for slightly different purposes (which actually holds true for most bike categories).

Cyclocross or **gravel bikes** are designed for use both on and off road. They are best used with light loads.

Trekking bikes are suitable both for light everyday fitness and leisure. Even with a heavy load, they are flexible enough to cope with all the corners in urban traffic, as well as being able to run straight and steadily on longer journeys.

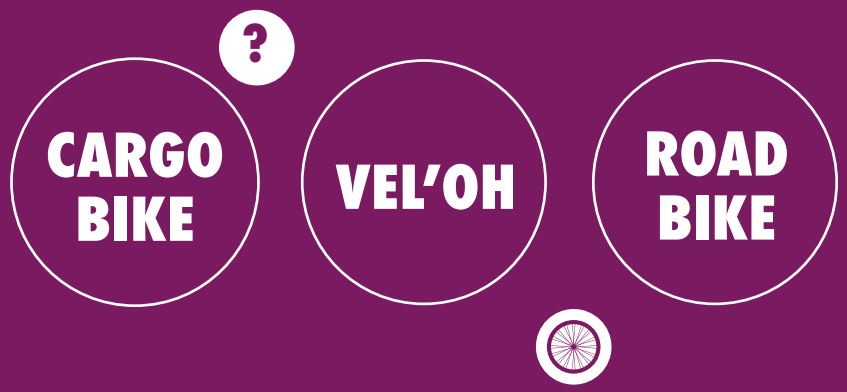
Mountain bikes are designed for riding on rough off-road tracks. They have flat or upright handlebars, and a very low gear range for pedalling up

steep paths. They can be outfitted for use as touring or commuting bikes, although they would not be as light or as efficient.

City bikes or **roadsters** offer a characteristic upright seating position, comfortable riding and a good overview in traffic. They are designed for frequent short and moderately paced rides through relatively flat urban areas, and are low-maintenance and easy to use.

Genuine **Dutch bikes** are all about comfort, ergonomics, reliability and style. Just as on a city bike, you sit upright which is the best posture for your back and body. They are perfect for your daily commute, especially on shorter distances and when the terrain is flatter – and you won't have to worry about what to wear.

Folding bikes are ideal for commuters who need to take their bike on a bus or train for part of their commute, and who have limited storage space at home or in the office. They can also be used for getting to appointments in the city. Lightweight and strong, they can be easily folded up, however, they are a slightly less efficient and a bit trickier to handle than a standard bike.



Pedelecs (pedal electrical cycle) are fun to ride and have become more popular of late across all age groups. They have a battery and an electric motor which offer support when pedalling, while the amount of assistance can be controlled. Pedelecs can be used on roads and cycle lanes and are particularly convenient for anyone who has to cope with steep climbs or longer distances and does not wish to break out into a sweat. Pedelecs are often also referred to as **e-bikes**, however, these actually fall into the "motorized bicycle" category. They cannot be used on cycle lanes and require a driving licence, helmet and rear-view mirror.

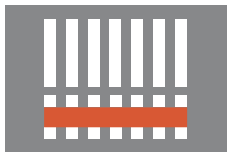
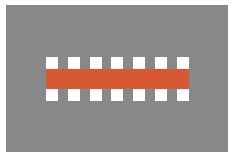
Cargo bikes are great for running errands and transporting kids because they have a sturdy frame design built for stowing gear and carrying lots of weight. While they tend to be heavier and slower, they are so useful that this makes them popular for urban cycling. Most cargo bikes are equipped with a battery and supporting motor.

BIKE SHARING

If you don't feel like buying your own bike, you could always try using the bike-sharing schemes – vel'oh! in the City of Luxembourg and Vël'OK in Esch-sur-Alzette, Bettembourg, Differdange, Dudelange, Kayl, Sanem, and Schifflange. Bike stations are spread across urban areas and the robust bicycles are particularly practical for occasional cyclists. They all have lights, three speed gears and a basket, which makes them ideally suited for all distances within the urban area. Bertrange, Diekirch, Ettelbruck and Mamer municipalities also provide similar schemes. All in all, across the Grand Duchy there are currently over 130 bike stations with more than 1,600 bikes available. In addition, various rent-a-bike offers are also available for occasional weekend cyclists.

SAFETY

> THREE SCENARIOS FOR CROSSING THE ROAD

type of crossing	pedestrian crossing	shared crossing for pedestrians and cyclists	cyclist crossing
marking			
traffic signal when approaching the crossing			
traffic signal at crossing			no traffic signal
priority rules	priority to pedestrians	priority to pedestrians and cyclists	no priority to cyclists

RIDING A BIKE ALSO MEANS RIDING SAFELY

To be safe it is essential that you stick to the Highway Code and obey all traffic signals.

Absolute priority is given to the "most vulnerable road users" such as pedestrians, for example. This principle applies particularly wherever there are pedestrian crossings or shared pathways, such as in municipal parks, and this is particularly important since children and the elderly often only hear or see cyclists coming towards them at speed once it is too late. As a general rule, you the cyclist should behave in such a way that you are aware of what is happening around you so you can take preventive action.

Wearing a safety helmet is particularly recommended for children. However, wearing a helmet is not compulsory and remains your personal decision (see page 62). If an accident occurs while you are travelling between your home and your workplace, as a cyclist you are insured by your employer. Any damage which you might cause is usually covered by your personal liability insurance.

> WHO HAS PRIORITY? – THE FOLLOWING RULES APPLY:

> At pedestrian crossings: pedestrians have priority and cyclists must get off their bikes and push them across the crossing.

> At crossings used by both pedestrians and cyclists: pedestrians and cyclists have priority over drivers. At these crossings, cyclists can cross the road using the cycle lane without having to get off their bike.

> When a cycle lane ends (not part of a pedestrian and cyclist crossing): cyclists do not have priority when crossing the road (neither do pedestrians when they are crossing).

> If there is no crossing, pedestrians and cyclists have to follow the general rules regarding priority.

> Bikes are allowed to use pedestrian areas after opening hours.

> Please see also p. 58

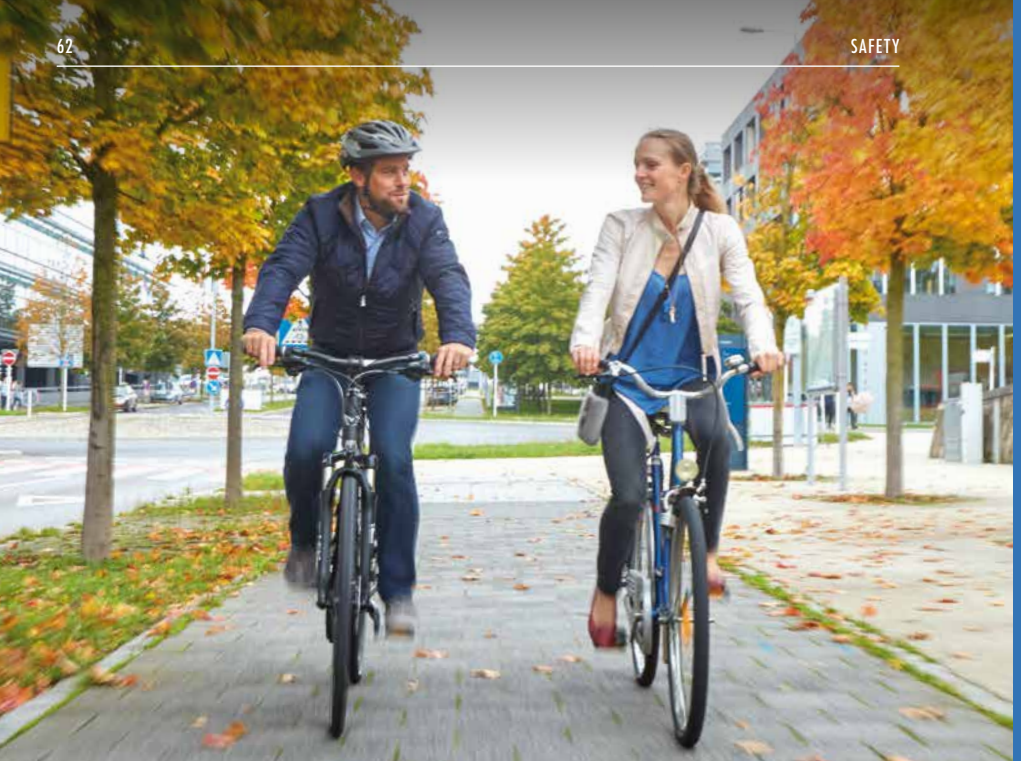
> HANDY RULES FOR CYCLING SAFELY:

> Don't let the traffic push you over towards the verge, you should always maintain your distance from vehicles parked along the roadside and watch out for any car doors opening out in front of you.

> Keep your distance from the vehicles in front of you too: because of their blind spot, cars and lorries which are turning off the road often fail to see cyclists coming up behind them and especially so when they are making a right turn.

> Whenever you want to change lane or direction, make sure you signal well in advance and check that the other people using the road have seen you.

> Ideally, you should test out what is your best route for getting to work every day. It may not necessarily be the quickest or shortest route; your best route could well be the one which has the least traffic lights, the least traffic or it might be a route which takes you through a park.



SHOULD I WEAR A HELMET OR NOT?

In Luxembourg cyclists are not legally obliged to wear a helmet which means it's your personal decision whether you wear one or not. So it comes down to deciding how great you think the risk is of you having an accident when cycling.

GENERALLY, YOU'RE BETTER PROTECTED

Even if many people find them inconvenient, a cycle helmet offers you protection. People wearing a helmet who are involved in accidents sustain far fewer head injuries than those who ride without one. Head injuries might not count among the most common injuries sustained by cyclists, however, when it comes to life-threatening injuries the head is the part of the body which is injured most often.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN WEARING A HELMET

> The back of your head, your forehead and temples must be covered. Often the helmet gets pushed too far down onto the nape of the neck, so that if you were to have a crash the helmet might slip and injure your neck.

> Between your helmet and your eyebrows there should be enough space for about two fingers.

> It's important that you can adjust your helmet to fit your individual head shape.

> As the padding inside can easily become soaked with sweat, it should be removable and washable.

> If you have a crash you should stop using your helmet. Even if you don't have an accident, you ought to replace your helmet after five years or so because the material suffers wear and tear. The manufacturer will provide more detailed information.

BE PROPERLY EQUIPPED

Having good brakes and a proper set of lights is crucially important for your everyday cycling. According to the Luxembourg Highway Code, basic equipment for a road-worthy bike must include:

1

Two independent brakes.

2

A white or yellow front bike lamp and a red rear lamp, as well as a reflector.

3

At least two reflectors on the front and rear wheel.

4

Pedal reflectors.

5

A bell.

6

A yellow stripe on the rear mudguard.

* Apart from a front reflector, mountainbikes don't need specific lighting, as long as they are only used by daylight.

WATERPROOF: BE SAFE IN RAIN AND SNOW

There's one thing to bear in mind here: don't make a big deal out of special clothing and equipment – it's your attitude that's most important! However, wearing the right gear can make cycling much more enjoyable, especially in cold, wet weather.

NORMAL CLOTHES FOR NORMAL CYCLING

> If you cycle up to five kilometres, getting your recommended daily exercise by spending twenty to thirty minutes on your bike, then your normal work wear is often all you need.

> If you cycle for more than eight kilometres and you also cycle to work on a regular basis when the weather is bad, then you might want to think about buying yourself some special cycling gear.

CYCLING WEAR

CYCLING JACKETS AND TROUSERS

> **Rain:** Your basic cycling wear should include a proper, functional jacket with a hood, dropped back and non-slip elasticated cuffs. A breathable, all-purpose outdoor jacket with ample ventilation holes worn over your business clothes will also protect you from the rain. You might also consider keeping a waterproof jacket and rain overtrousers at home and at work. Overtrousers should fit over your shoes to stop you getting cold and wet from your feet upwards. To cope with worst case scenarios, you can also travel prepared with a rain poncho.

> **Winter:** When you're getting dressed to face the weather, remember to "layer up like an onion" – lots of thin layers do a better job of keeping you warm than a single thick layer. Start off with some breathable functional underwear that transports the sweat away from the body and wear a midlayer on top to keep you warm. Then as your top layer, you can wear a wind- and waterproof jacket (preferably breathable).

HAT AND GLOVES

> **Rain:** As well as windproof hats which you can also wear under your helmet, a multi-purpose snood gives you various options for covering your head: depending on how you wear it, a snood can either be a hat, headband, balaclava or bandana. You can also buy waterproof helmet covers. Thin, waterproof gloves are usually all you need.

> **Winter:** As soon as the temperature drops below freezing, you will need gloves with an extra layer of insulating lining. It's important that you can still move your hands freely so that you can brake and switch gears without any problem. As for your headwear, make sure that your ears are properly covered.

ACCESSORIES AND MAINTENANCE

SHOES

> **Rain:** Preferably your shoes should be light, waterproof and have a solid sole – a pair of sturdy general purpose shoes will be quite adequate.

> **Winter:** If your feet tend to get cold and numb easily, you'll need some insulating insoles. Your shoes shouldn't be too tight either, so that an insulating air cushion can form between the shoe and your foot. When it's cold and wet use cycling overshoes, as they will not only keep your feet dry but they'll also protect your shoes.

BEING VISIBLE IS (ALMOST) EVERYTHING

> A bright yellow or orange vest you can slip over your jacket and high-visibility arm and ankle bands are essential – particularly in adverse weather conditions or when it's dark or foggy. Reflectors or a rear light on your helmet will also make you more visible. You need to keep your reflectors clean too – otherwise they can no longer do their job. A hub dynamo will also give you light when it's wet and it operates reliably without battery. In wintertime it's particularly crucial that the lights on your bike also enable you to see properly and not just to be seen.

TYRES

> Tyres which are not kept properly pumped up tend to get damaged more quickly. However, if you are cycling over snow, lowering the tyre pressure slightly will help improve road contact. Should you need more grip in the snow, you can use spiked tyres. If you're not keen on changing your tyres then you can opt for all-season tyres. Puncture resistant tyres will give you added protection from punctures.

PREVENTING YOUR BIKE FROM BEING STOLEN

> Although no lock can offer you total security, the U-lock is the lock of choice. What's most important is that you leave your bike in a place where it is visible and where there are people or else put it in a secure mBox. If the temperature is very low, bike locks can freeze. To get the lock open you can use a de-icer for door locks and you can also use special oil to protect your lock in advance.

TRANSPORT

> Alongside standard bicycle baskets and rucksacks, there are several other ways of transporting your documents or shopping. Many manufacturers now offer various options such as saddle, bike or handlebar bags. If you prefer to carry your belongings on your person, a waterproof messenger bag is your best bet. If you shop in large quantities there are special trailers or you could opt for a cargo bike (please see pages 12 and 56).

KEEPING YOUR BIKE CLEAN

> It's especially important to keep your bike clean in winter because if it gets dirty this will attract the damp which will encourage corrosion. In particular you should clean your chain, wheel rims and brakes regularly to protect them from wear, gritting salt and the wet.

YOUR SADDLE

> So that you can get off your bike quickly when road conditions are slippery, you should lower your saddle a little. A saddle cover is the best way of coping with snow, ice and wet.

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CHANGING INTO WORKWEAR

TIPS FOR COMMUTERS

Taking a shower and getting changed

It's not absolutely necessary to be able to take a shower at your workplace. Most of the time freshening up a little at a sink, for example using wipes or a face cloth, will do the trick. Keep a towel and some deodorant at work too.

If you're able to hang one or more work outfits in a high locker that's really handy, but remember too that you'll need a bit more room in your locker during the cold season. No lockers available? Then take your work clothes with you in a waterproof pannier bag.

Any towels you use and any dirty cycling gear can be hung up and aired in places that don't get used at work such as storage rooms and stairwells.

Packing your work wear properly

Travel organiser bags are great for packing and transporting clothing (almost) crease-free: using the folding template, you fold your clothes into a rectangle and pack them like this into the bag with compresses them very heavily so that they keep their shape. Not only are there fewer creases, but your packed items take up less space. These bags are suitable for travelling on holiday as well as to work.

A handy tip: clothing with a high wool content does not crease so easily.

YOUNG RIDERS

CHILDREN LOVE CYCLING TOO

In general, children up to the age of ten are allowed to ride on the pavement. Strictly speaking, after the age of ten, they are then only allowed to ride on the road or on cycle paths. Once children reach the age of six, they can ride on the road if accompanied by someone who is at least fifteen years old.

Taking children with you

> Grown-ups (aged eighteen and above) are allowed to take a child of up to seven years of age (up to twenty-two kilos) in a child seat which has a safety belt and foot rests fitted. Adults can take up to two youngsters up to the age of eight with them in a bicycle trailer as long as it's equipped with safety belts and foot rests. Finally, in order to help children learn to cycle, you can opt for a special children's "unicycle" which can be attached to an adult bicycle.

Road safety education for kids

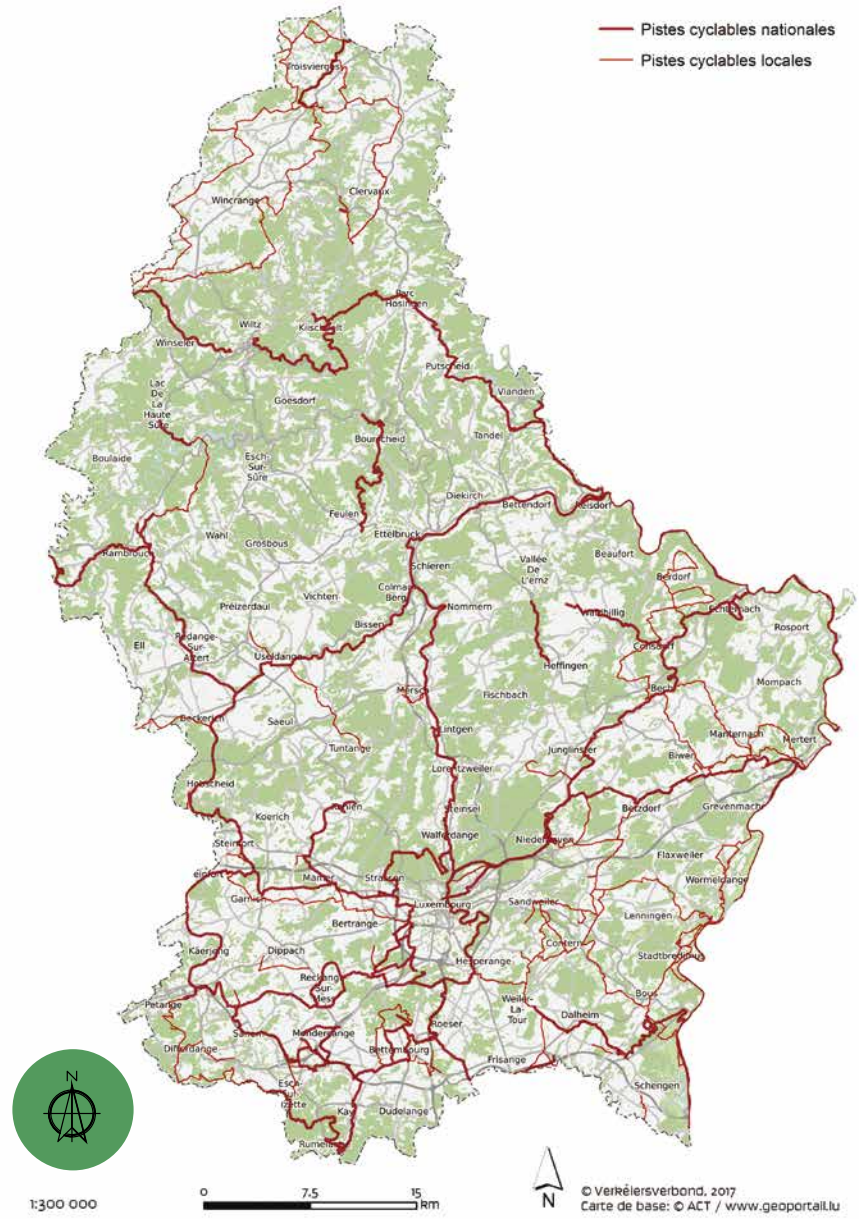
> It is best to introduce children to road safety issues as early as possible. The Luxembourg Ministry of Sport offers road safety education for communities, associations and other groups under the name "Sécher um Vëlo" ("Safe on your Bike"). It is available for children aged four to twelve. As part of the programme, former professional cyclist Kim Kirchen explains specific traffic situations to groups of up to fourteen children; the programme also provides information about bikes and the "Highway Code" as well as many useful tips on how to stay safe.

Sécher um Vëlo

Contact:
Ministry of Sport
66, rue de Trèves
L-2630 Luxembourg

NATIONAL CYCLE PATH NETWORK

FIND YOUR WAY!



USEFUL ADDRESSES

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6, rue Vauban
L-2663 Luxembourg
Tel.: 43 90 30 29
lvi@velo.lu
www.velo.lu

Mobilitéitszentral
11, Place de la Gare
L-1616 Luxembourg
Helpline: 24 65 24 65
service@verkeiersverbond.lu
www.mobiliteit.lu

Rent a Bike Ardennes
Contact: Syndicat d'Initiative et de Tourisme
35, rue du Château, L-9536 Wiltz
Tel.: 95 74 44
info@touristinfowiltz.lu
www.touristinfowiltz.lu

Rent a Bike Dikrich
CIGR Nordstad
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nordstad@cig.lu

Rent a Bike Mëllerdall
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www.rentabike-mellerdall.lu

Rent a Bike Miselerland
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www.velospisten.lu
www.visitluxembourg.lu

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