Achieving Vision Zero

Case study: Road safety in Helsinki

Vision Zero in Helsinki: casualty data
In 2019, no one was killed while walking or cycling in Helsinki, a city of 650,000 people.

At least 20 people were seriously injured in Helsinki, which is the equivalent of 3.1 people killed or seriously injured per 100,000. In 2023, 95 people were killed and 3,615 seriously injured in London, the equivalent of 4.1 people being killed or seriously injured per 100,000.

From July 2024 to July 2025, Helsinki reported zero road fatalities, achieving their Vision Zero target again.

0
people killed walking and cycling in 2019

31%
reduction in people injured on inner-city streets

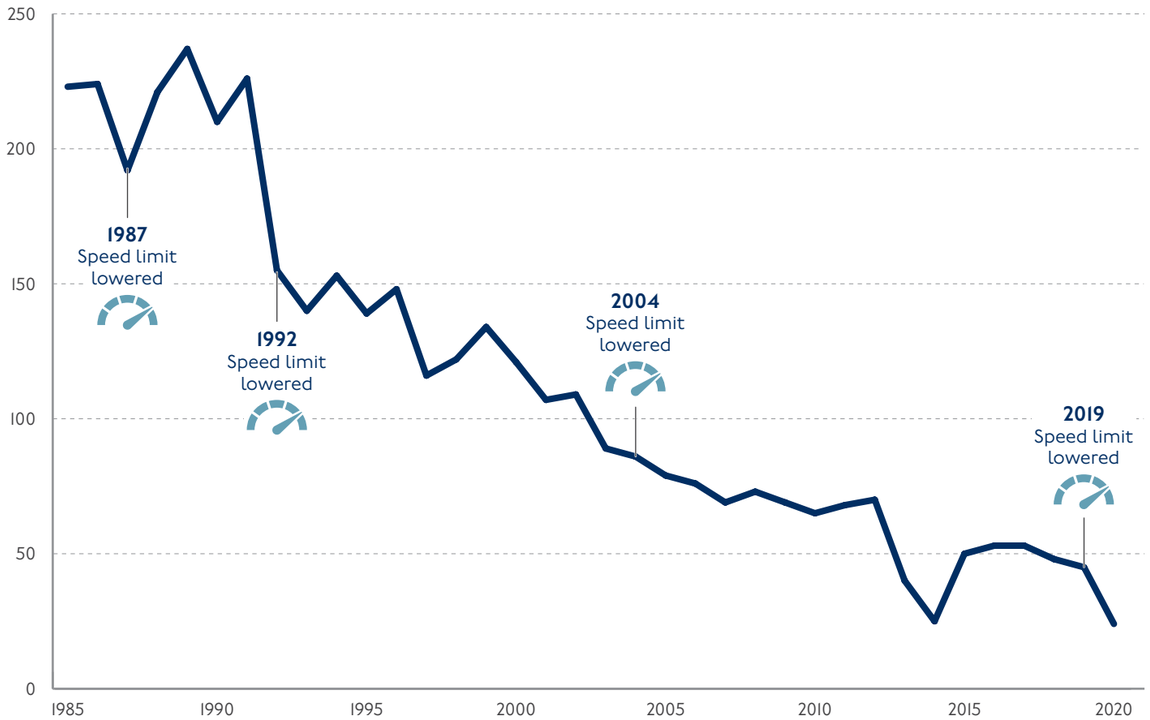
‘The decision to reduce the general speed limit to 30km per hour (19mph) in 2019 was not an easy one to make. The City Board voted on it. But I can say that afterwards no one has regretted it.’

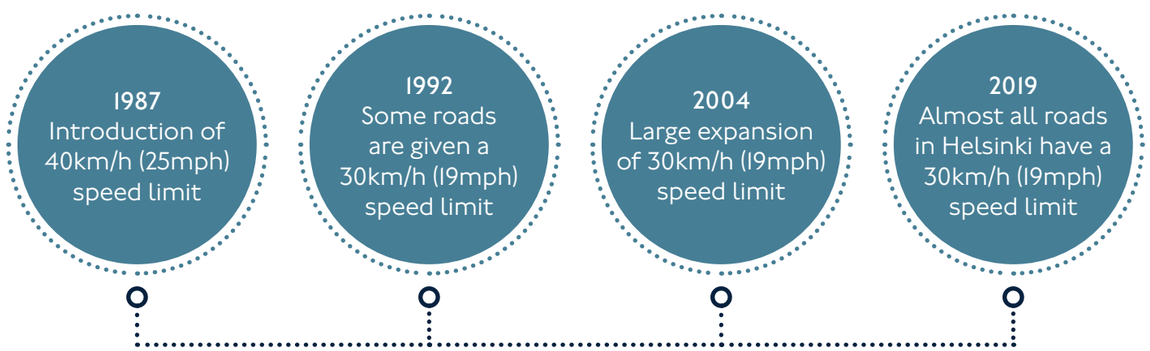
Anni Sinnemäki
Deputy Mayor of the City of Helsinki
Urban Environment Division

MAYOR OF LONDON

TRANSPORT FOR LONDON
EVERY JOURNEY MATTERS

Number of pedestrians killed or seriously injured in the inner city of Helsinki*





* City of Helsinki Urban Environment Division (2024)

Vision Zero approach in Helsinki: Reducing speed limits

The city of Helsinki has reduced the speed limits on the street network several times in the past few decades to improve traffic safety.

The number of road traffic collisions resulting in personal injury decreased after the changes in speed limits. After the change to the speed limit in 2004, the number of collisions resulting in personal injuries decreased by nine per cent on the streets with lower speed limits, compared to streets where limits were not decreased between the periods 1998-2003 and 2005-09. The number of personal injuries of pedestrians decreased by 19 per cent and of motor vehicle occupants by 34 per cent on the streets where speed limit was reduced from 40km/h to 30km/h (25mph to 19mph). On the streets of the inner city, where the limit was reduced to 30km/h (19mph), the number of pedestrian injured in road traffic collisions decreased by 31 per cent.

The number of people injured by road traffic collisions also decreased after speed limit changes in 2019. Between 2015-18 and 2020-23, the number of collisions resulting in personal injury on all streets in Helsinki decreased by 29 per cent. However, the results are not only because of the speed limits changes, the coronavirus pandemic and changes in the way the statistics are gathered are likely to have had an impact on the number of people injured after 2019.

Enforcement is key

Speed enforcement is another important measure to address actual driving speeds. The police are responsible for speed enforcement in Finland. The city of Helsinki, together with the police built 60 fixed control points of automatic speed enforcement on its street network and another 10 points will be built in the following years. The police also have vehicles for mobile control points. The fixed control points are placed in a street with a speed limit of 40km/h (25mph) or more. Physical traffic calming measures are applied on streets with a speed limit of 30km/h (19mph) or less.

Although measures to improve traffic safety other than lowering the speed limits and actual driving speed are also needed, lowering speed limits is one of the most important measures to improve traffic safety in urban areas.

All content for this case study was provided by the Transport Authority of Helsinki