

A photograph of a street scene in Finland. In the foreground, a person in a blue shirt and cap is walking away from the camera. To their right, a silver car with license plate CHJ-860 is parked. Further back, a red car is visible. The street is lined with green trees and has several traffic signs, including pedestrian crossings and a parking sign. A large, light-colored concrete planter with red flowers is in the foreground on the right.

Nordic Traffic Safety Forum 2022

Traffic safety coordinators in Finland

**Expert support and resources
for traffic safety work for
municipalities and cities**

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The Big picture: Coordination of traffic safety work at the national, regional and local level

EU-strategies

National traffic safety strategy (2022)

- Follow-up group meetings 2-3 times/year
- Subgroup meetings (e.g. micromobility)
- Traffic safety forum (yearly)

Regional traffic safety plans/strategies

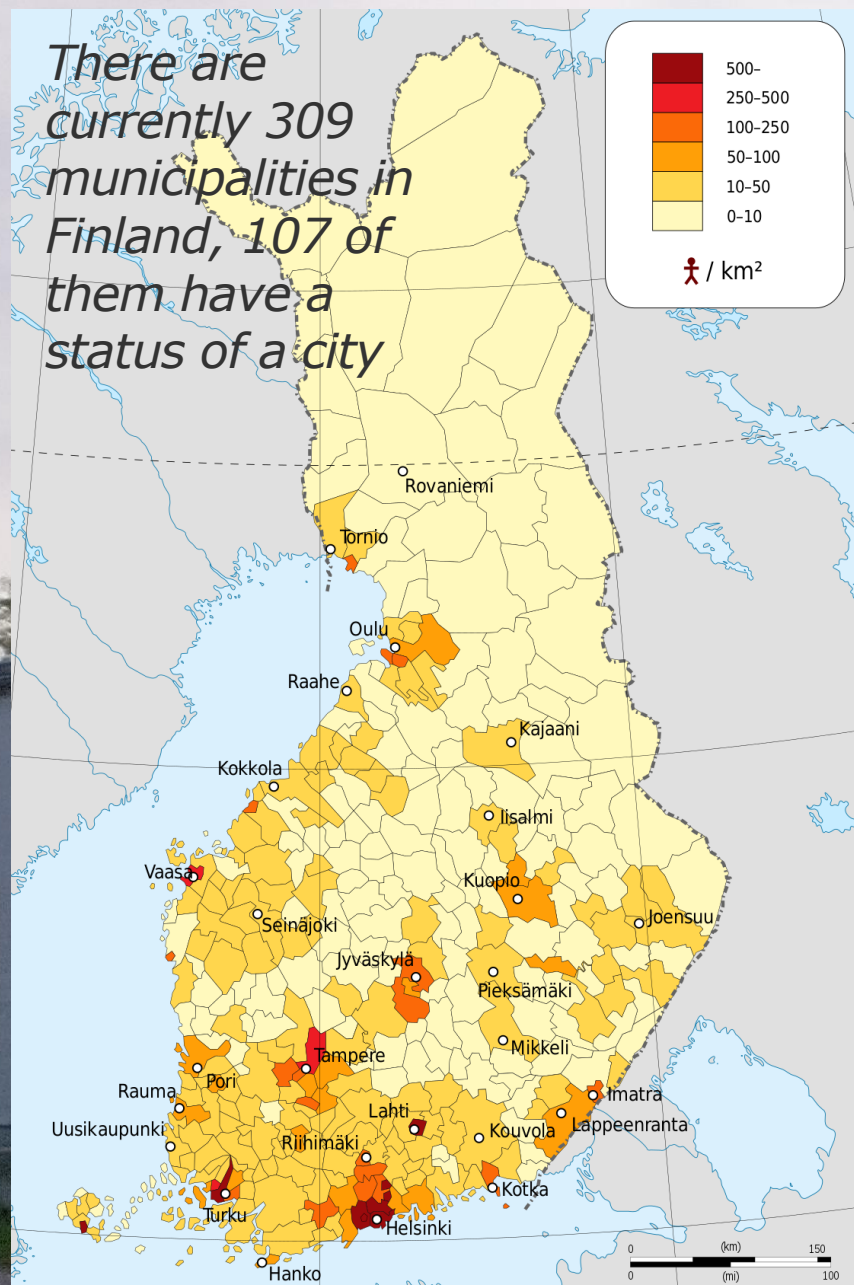
- Traffic safety group meetings 2-4 times/year
- Traffic safety forums (yearly)

Local traffic safety plans/strategies

- Traffic safety working groups, 2-6 meetings/year

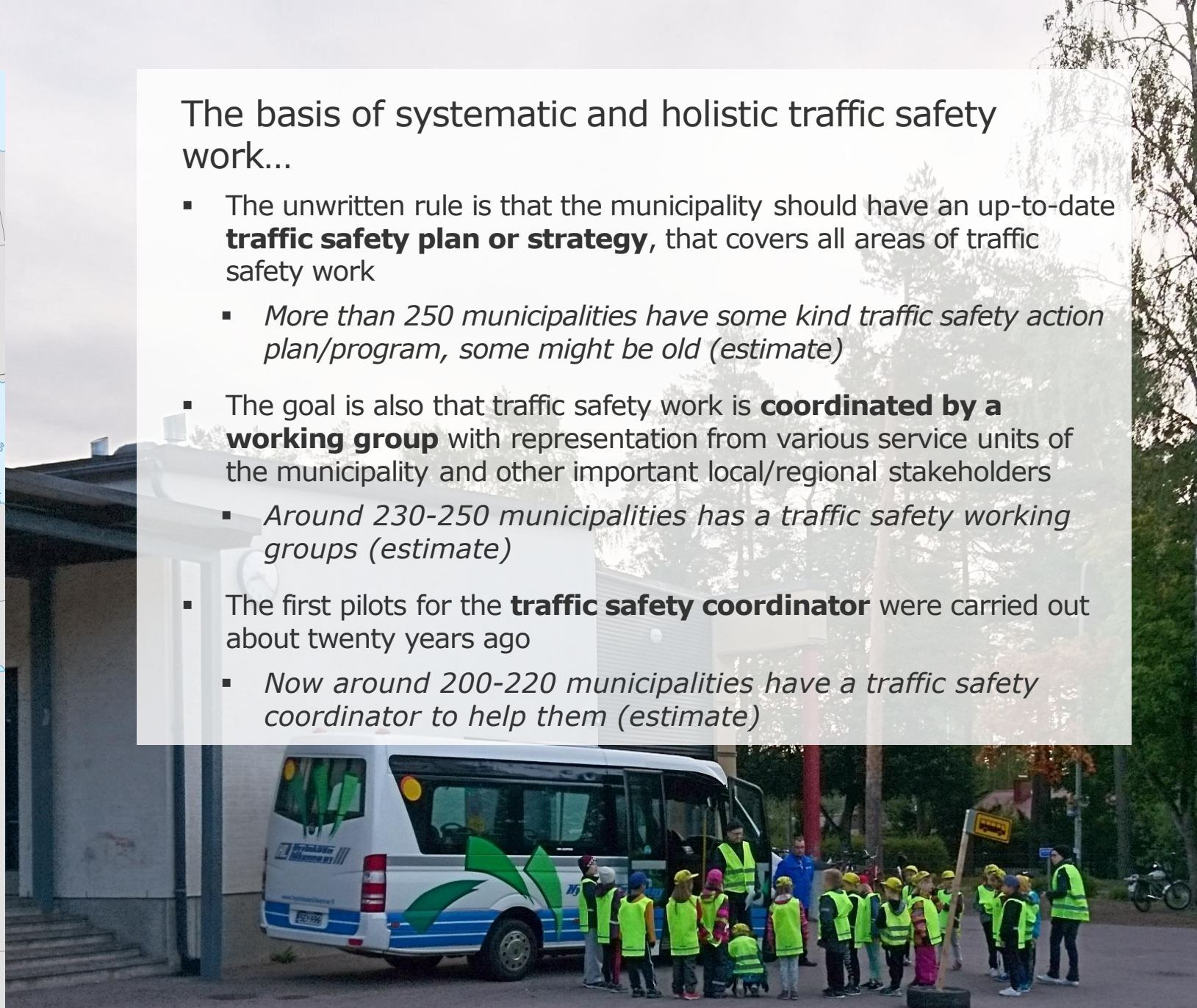
Promotion of well-being, health and safety

Development of a sustainable transport system



The basis of systematic and holistic traffic safety work...

- The unwritten rule is that the municipality should have an up-to-date **traffic safety plan or strategy**, that covers all areas of traffic safety work
 - *More than 250 municipalities have some kind traffic safety action plan/program, some might be old (estimate)*
- The goal is also that traffic safety work is **coordinated by a working group** with representation from various service units of the municipality and other important local/regional stakeholders
 - *Around 230-250 municipalities has a traffic safety working groups (estimate)*
- The first pilots for the **traffic safety coordinator** were carried out about twenty years ago
 - *Now around 200-220 municipalities have a traffic safety coordinator to help them (estimate)*



OBJECTIVES FOR THE LOCAL TRAFFIC SAFETY GROUP

Minimum requirements for the municipality's traffic safety work:

- Traffic safety plan (approved by decision-makers)
- Multidisciplinary traffic safety working group
- Comprehensive measure planning (Safe System)
- Taking care of the traffic safety skills of municipal employees
- Regular communication to municipal residents, municipal employees, decision-makers
- Taking care of the safety of transport procured by the municipality (e.g. school transport)
- Monitoring the traffic safety situation and measures
- Annual reporting
- Connecting traffic safety work to other strategies in the municipality (e.g. welfare strategies)

- ❑ **Monitoring the traffic safety situation** and issues affecting it (accidents, behaviour, perceived safety etc.)
- ❑ **Measure planning and coordinating** to the challenges of safe and sustainable mobility/transport (implementing the ts plan)
- ❑ **Promoting cooperation and exchange of experiences** within the municipality and between other local/regional authorities.
- ❑ **Ensuring the implementation of traffic safety work in different units of the municipality** → Ensuring professional competence in traffic safety in everyday work
- ❑ **Promoting the transparency of traffic safety** in the municipality's other strategies and plans (city strategy, welfare plans, land use plans, street/road plans, promoting plans for walking and cycling etc.)
- ❑ Promoting **safe and sustainable choices for municipal employees' working trips**

AN IDEAL COMPOSITION IN A LOCAL TRAFFIC SAFETY WORKING GROUP

Representation of the municipality

- Kindergartens/day care
- Primary school / education services
- Second degree education
- Services for young people
- Culture and leisure services
- Health care services (from baby to seniors)
- Substance abuse prevention
- Other social services (e.g. elderly, disabled persons)
- Technical services/traffic planning (safe environment)
- Occupational safety (municipality as employer)
- Communication services

Other relevant stakeholders

- Finnis Road Safety Council (Liikenneturva) (safe behaviour)
- Regional Road Authority (ELY-center) (safe environment)
- Police (traffic control, preventive work)
- Emergency services/Fire department (rescue work, preventive work)
- Local companies (e.g. transport companies, driving schools)
- Third sector operators (parents' associations, residents' associations, cycling associations)
- Traffic safety coordinator

The size of the municipality affects the organization, often the challenges increase with the size of the municipality

CHALLENGE – THE NEED FOR AN EXTERNAL HELP

Municipalities are key players in local holistic traffic safety work

- ❑ Municipalities and cities are responsible for lifelong traffic education, reaching all age groups through their services.
- ❑ Also the safe solution of an urban environment is in most cases the responsibility of municipalities and cities.
- ❑ The traffic safety work carried out in municipalities and cities will eventually reflect to the development of traffic safety nationally.

... But

- ❑ Taking over comprehensive traffic safety work is not a simple task if you are full of actual work of your own. Traffic safety is also often thought of as extra work.
- ❑ Municipalities' resources, expertise and knowledge about traffic safety issues are not always sufficient.



COORDINATOR IN SUPPORT OF MUNICIPALITIES

- ❑ The main task for the traffic safety coordinator is to maintain active and holistic traffic safety work in the municipality – **to encourage, motivate and provide expertise to challenges**
- ❑ Coordinator also **promotes cooperation and the exchange of experience and good practices** between local and regional actors
- ❑ **The focus is on collaboration, communication, life long traffic education and mobility management**, but municipalities also get assistance with the infrastructure traffic safety audits etc.
- ❑ In addition to traffic safety themes, work covers e.g. **promotion of walking and cycling** (sustainable transport)

"Coordinators work very closely with The Finnish Road Safety Council, which is the most important support for municipalities' traffic education work!"

COORDINATORS TASKS IN MORE DETAIL

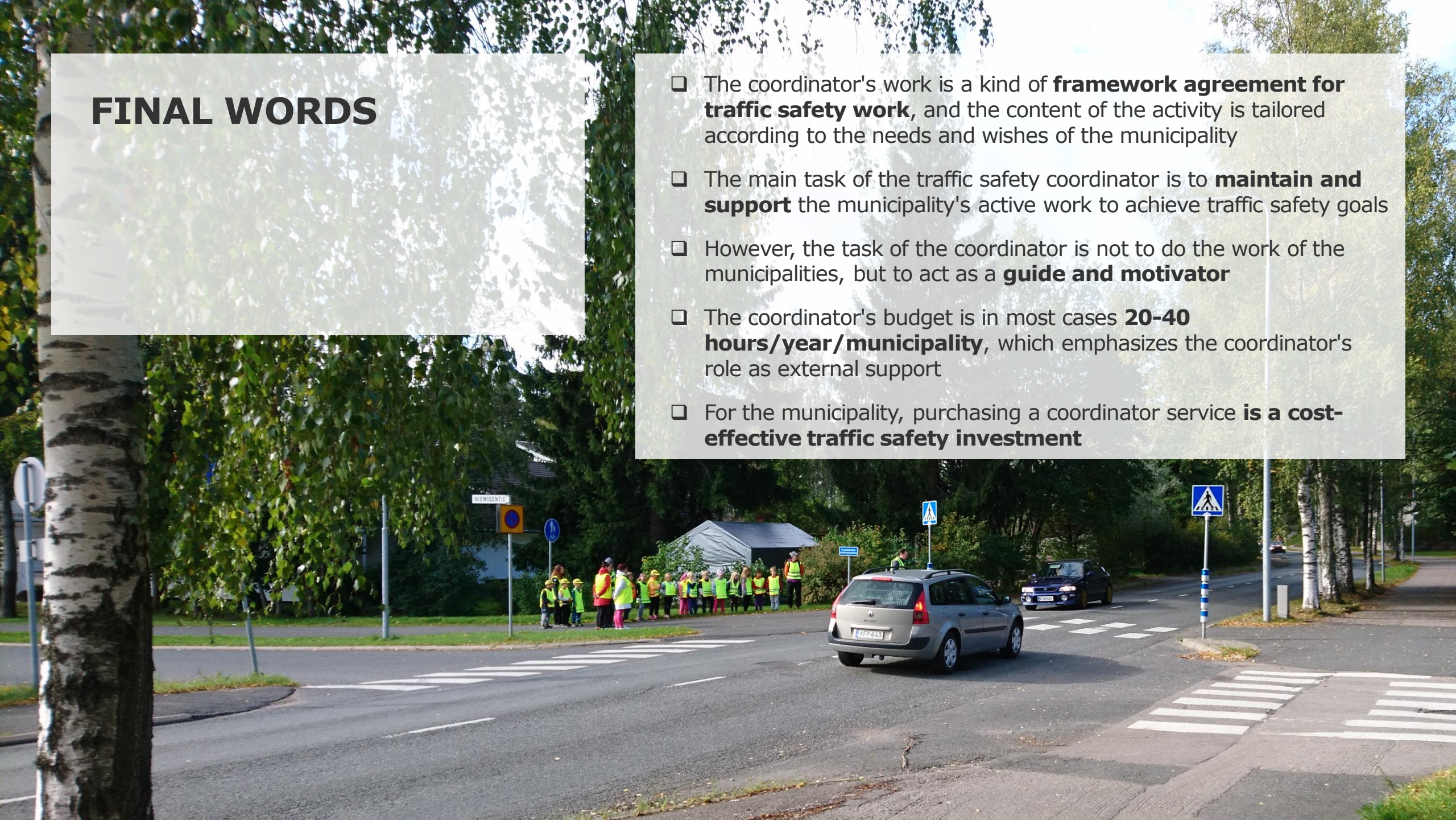
- ❑ Preparation of traffic safety working group meetings (2-6/y)
- ❑ Promoting lifelong traffic education in different municipal services (promoting good practices, marketing the services of Liikenneturva)
- ❑ Planning and coordination of events, campaigns and education (helping hand if needed)
- ❑ Sharing good practices, informing about current issues (training, events, campaigns, research, etc.) (monthly newsletters)
- ❑ Communication related to sustainable and safe mobility (citizens, municipal employees, policy makers)
- ❑ Analysis of the traffic safety situation, surveys about safe behaviour, perceived safety, safety walks etc.
- ❑ Small-scale traffic safety audits (plans, environment) and measure planning
- ❑ Preparation of annual follow-up reports



"The municipality and the regional Road Administration (ELY-Centers) are responsible for ordering coordinator projects (30/70 or 50/50)"

FINAL WORDS

- ❑ The coordinator's work is a kind of **framework agreement for traffic safety work**, and the content of the activity is tailored according to the needs and wishes of the municipality
- ❑ The main task of the traffic safety coordinator is to **maintain and support** the municipality's active work to achieve traffic safety goals
- ❑ However, the task of the coordinator is not to do the work of the municipalities, but to act as a **guide and motivator**
- ❑ The coordinator's budget is in most cases **20-40 hours/year/municipality**, which emphasizes the coordinator's role as external support
- ❑ For the municipality, purchasing a coordinator service **is a cost-effective traffic safety investment**



NOT FOR EVERYONE – BUT WHY I LIKE IT?

Rewarding

- A concrete solutions to the local challenges of sustainable and safe mobility
- Extensive cooperation and information sharing, working with “genuine people”
- Very versatile tasks and own role can be customised (at some parts)
- Collaboration rewards – most often
- Continuous learning of something new (that you can again share to others)

Good to have

- Strong social skills; facilitator attitude (inspiration), ability to work with different people (even difficult ones)
- Extensive interest in traffic safety challenges and knowledge of various solutions (Safe System thinking)
- The ability to manage millions of things simultaneously 😊
- Ability to write articles, reports, newsletters on various topics, act as a speaker/trainer on various occasions etc.