

expanding economical regions is enforced. Studies identifying population groups with increased susceptibility are warranted, especially for an ageing workforce.

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IS INCREASED WORKFORCE MOBILITY AND COMMUTING A THREAT FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORKING LIFE? A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY IN SOUTHERN SWEDEN

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Objectives The need for a mobile workforce inevitably means that the length of the total work day (work and travel time) will increase, but apart from perceived stress and the benefits of physically active commuting, the health effects of commuting have been surprisingly little studied.

Methods We used data from population based public health surveys 2004 and 2008 in Scania, Sweden (56% response rate). The final study population was 21 111 persons aged 18–65, working >30 h/week. Commuting time (one-way) and mode was reported. Outcomes were sleep deprivation, everyday stress, low vitality, psychological health, subjective general health, and sickness absence from work >5 days during the last 12 months. Covariates indicating socioeconomic situation, workplace characteristics, job strain and urban/rural living were included in multivariate analyses. Subjects walking or cycling <30 min were the reference category.

Results There were monotonic relations between duration of public transport commuting and the outcomes. For the >60 min category statistically significant ORs ranging from 1.2 to 1.6 for the different outcomes. For car commuting, the relationships were curved or flat, with increasing complaints up to 30–60 min (OR ranging from 1.2 to 1.4), and lower ORs in the >60 min category. A similar curved relationship was observed for sickness absence, regardless of mode of transportation.

Conclusions Negative side-effects of commuting on health need to be considered, when mobility of the workforce in