

# Transport Policy

*April 2021*



## Summary: Sections and key policies

**Principles:** The Green Party vision is for a high-quality, accessible, sustainable, nationwide transport system, where the majority of journeys can be completed safely and comfortably by walking, cycling, or on public transport.

- Reduce the need for transport
- Switch to low-emission and active modes of transport
- Switch to state investment in public transport
- Decrease car use and car dependency
- Switch to cleaner, less polluting forms of fuel
- Switch to environmentally sustainable infrastructure and materials
- Effective regulation of aviation and maritime transport

**Planning:** Integrate Transport Planning: Make sustainable transport planning an integral part of all housing, urban renewal and planning policies.

- Urban renewal and densification: Town centres first
- 15-Minute Cities/Towns and Neighbourhoods
- Liveable cities
- Decrease work-related travel
- Sustainable school transport
- Accessible childcare facilities

**Active Transport:** Deliver a high-quality, accessible, active travel network that accommodates people of all age groups, abilities, genders, ethnicities, and socio-economic backgrounds.

- Deliver a high-quality, accessible, attractive, integrated active travel network in an equitable way across geographical areas, that accommodates people of all age groups, genders, ethnicities, abilities, socio-economic backgrounds.
- Ensure that local authorities and national bodies have the expertise, resources and organisational structures to ensure a collaborative approach across disciplines to deliver a high-quality active travel network.
- Revise and enforce standards and regulation of road and street design to ensure that active travel is safe, accessible, and comfortable, aligned with best international standards.
- Develop a new road safety strategy whose measurement of success is the number of people of all ages, genders, and abilities using active travel, and not solely the number of collisions and fatalities.
- Increase the number of journeys made by active travel, particularly shorter journeys.
- Ensure enforcement of existing traffic regulations as they affect active travel including speeding, red light jumping and illegal parking on footpaths, disabled parking spaces and cycle lanes.
- Integrate Greenways into the general transport network.

- Incentivise the adoption of cycling as a main mode of transport through financial supports to cover a wider range of bikes, e-bikes, adapted bikes and other micro-mobility solutions and to cover wider segments of society.
- Reduce the total distance travelled by building self-sustaining communities.
- Facilitate multi-modal transport by enabling efficient integration of different sustainable modes. Increase understanding among An Garda Síochána, the Judiciary and the Coroners' Service of the role they have to play in framing public attitudes towards active travel.
- Invest in active travel promotion and regulate advertising which promotes unsustainable modes of transport.

**Rail:** Ensure a step change in the quality and quantity of rail travel available in Ireland in terms of (a) inter-city (b) suburban heavy rail (DART) (c) metro and (d) Luas/light rail.

- Improve services on the existing rail network so that travel by rail is an accessible, convenient, fast, comfortable, clean, safe and efficient mode of transport for all users.
- Deliver an organised and coherent governance and management structure within which a modern and progressive rail network can develop.
- Commit to improving overall journey speeds on intercity lines to ensure rail is competitive with roads.
- Commit to building strategic heavy rail infrastructure to facilitate modal shift from cars to rail-based transport.
- Develop an all-Ireland Heavy Rail network that does not require trips through Dublin City. Improved connectivity between Irish cities will contribute to more balanced regional development.
- Commit to building strategic Light Rail infrastructure to facilitate modal shift from cars to rail-based transport.
- Commit to building strategic Metro infrastructure to facilitate modal shift from cars to rail-based transport.
- Commission a study for a new Dublin Central Rail Station.

**Buses:** Implement a high-quality, accessible, bus network as part of a sustainable, nationwide transport system.

- Greater development and improvement of bus routes on a local, regional and national basis to increase usage among all sections of society.
- Utilizing fair competition and effective governance to ensure best service for all stakeholders.
- Improve our rural transport and Local Link services.
- Greatly enhance the prioritisation of buses on Ireland's roads to reduce travel time for travellers.
- Place reliability at the core of our transport network.
- Transform stations into Transport Hubs.
- Affordable fares that are convenient to pay.
- Ensure accessible transport, so that our transport infrastructure must be considerate of the varying abilities and needs that exist within our society.

- Reduce the environmental impacts of Ireland's bus fleet, setting a precedent for other transport modes.
- Driving forward with joined-up thinking, to provide better outcomes for the end-user as well as delivering better value for the tax payer.

**Roads:** Create an accessible, equitable and sustainable road transport system with the minimum impact on the environment which makes use of renewable resources where practical and protects the vibrancy of our communities, ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of our people.

- Reduce the total use of our roads, the distance travelled by reducing journey lengths, particularly by encouraging the development and retention of local facilities and reduce the number of journeys made by unsustainable modes of transport, particularly by car, commercial vehicles, heavy goods vehicles.
- Encourage a switch to sustainable methods of transport through transport planning based on a hierarchy of modes and demand management.
- Reduce the environmental impacts of each form of road transport.
- Enable interconnectivity of different sustainable modes of transport so that these forms of transport are simple and efficient, including convenient interconnectivity for both passengers and freight.
- Ensure that all people of Ireland whether rural or urban have access to safe, sustainable means of travel that does not disadvantage them personally based on location.
- Ensure a just transition to more sustainable forms of transportation that creates a new Green transport economy for Ireland.

**Aviation:** Measure and monitor air travel emissions and regulate effectively to ensure the polluter pays principle is applied.

- Incorporate the principle of polluter pays in aviation.
- Mitigate the negative impact of airport capacity increases.
- Ensure increased responsibility at the individual and corporate level.

**Maritime:** Ensure the future growth of maritime transport is underpinned by the sustainable development of ports and the reduction of pollution to air and sea caused by shipping.

- Measure and benchmark air and sea pollution at Irish ports and Irish territorial waters.
- Implement mitigating actions against damaging emissions to climate, human health and biodiversity caused by shipping activities.
- Engender a culture of social and corporate responsibility for the commercial shipping and cruise sectors.

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# 1 Principles and General Policies

## 1.1 Introduction

### SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR COVID-19

At the time of writing this policy, hand-washing, physical distancing and the wearing of face masks remain the most effective approaches to limit the spread of Covid-19. These are measures which we fully support.

We acknowledge that scientific evidence, best practice and public health policy will continue to evolve and change rapidly in the coming months.

Therefore, we acknowledge that these will supersede the contents of this document and that this document will require amendments in light of these.

However, we fundamentally believe in the increased role that public transport plays and will play in the future of our lives. Accordingly, the importance of continued funding in light of COVID 19 is critical to ensure transport doesn't degrade in the coming 12-18 months. Cutting public transport is socially regressive and cost ineffective as there are increased costs elsewhere for the state.

## 1.2 Green Party Transport Policy Principles

<b>Inclusive Access</b>  A system that provides access for all to a reliable, frequent, affordable, clean, safe transport service		<b>Environmental Sustainability</b>  A low-carbon system with low impact on the environment
	<b>A Transport system For Sustainability and Wellbeing</b>	
<b>Economic Prosperity</b>  A system that ensures the efficient, sustainable transport of goods, customers and workers to ensure economic prosperity	<b>Resilience and Security</b>  A system that can adapt and recover from natural and man-made events and hazards	<b>Health, Safety and Wellbeing</b>  A system that ensures the safety, health and wellbeing of all its users

### 1.2.1 Environmental Sustainability

**This policy is informed by the issue of climate change and the need to reduce emissions in the transport sector.** By prioritising low-carbon modes of transport over high-carbon options, and by using careful planning to reduce the need for transport overall, this policy aims to support climate action, meet Ireland's obligations under the Paris Agreement, and reduce the harmful effects of air pollution on human health and biodiversity, ensure an enhanced quality of life for all and reduce the harmful effects of transport: e.g., congestion, all forms of pollution and accidents. The principle of rewarding clean energy needs to be applied to the transport sector to encourage less-polluting forms of transport, as well as careful planning to reduce the need for transport and car dependency. Green policy believes that the state needs to invest heavily in clean, green public transport services and active travel infrastructure, and that infrastructure should be publicly owned. The further issue of land use needs to be addressed, where a disproportionate amount of public space is given over to private vehicles, especially in city and urban areas. Finally, the current fleet needs to be upgraded to a cleaner, less fossil-fuel dependent fuel (i.e., renewable electricity/hydrogen/hybrid).



### **1.2.2 Inclusive Access**

This policy will address access to transport in both rural and urban areas, ensuring everyone has reliable, frequent and affordable access to suitable sustainable modes of transport regardless of age, gender, socio-economic or ethnic grouping, ability, level of mobility, or place of residence.

The issue of poor public transport services around the country is a common problem with many rural and suburban areas underserved by basic transport services necessary for living independently. Throughout suburban and rural Ireland, there is a high dependency on private car transport due to the lack of viable transport alternatives and ribbon development. This exacerbates the widespread problem of social isolation and loneliness particularly for those who do not or cannot drive. Inequalities in investment have left some localities, both rural and urban, behind in terms of access to safe and comfortable active travel infrastructure.

Meaningful consultation with people and communities can ensure that appropriate transport services are provided, including well-connected services for journeys requiring the use of more than one mode of transport and efficient local and national interconnectivity.

Many people with mobility issues or disabilities are unable to drive. The most vulnerable in our society are often dependent on public and active transport and must be at the core of transport planning to ensure that public transport is easily accessible and comfortable and that active travel is a viable option for all. All aspects of public transport services must be easily accessible: buildings, facilities, vehicles, information and ticketing, to ensure that all necessary infrastructure is in place to make it easy, safe and convenient for everybody to use.

People have a right to be able to access public transport and public amenities regardless of their circumstances. The design of our built environment and transport systems should encourage inclusion and social cohesion by allowing all people to access public and commercial services, engage with and enjoy their communities.

A fundamental human right of children as Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child insists: “*States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.*” A transport network and public realm that restricts the ability of children to move freely around their community denies them this fundamental right. Infrastructure that is unsafe for walking and cycling removes from children the ability to fully engage independently in the life of their community.

### **1.2.3 Economic Prosperity**

A fast, reliable and efficient transport service for goods and people is crucial for a functioning economy and needs to be developed in a sustainable way. Efficient, clean national transport for commuters, workers and business people is essential.

The Irish tourism and business travel industry prioritises having high quality, international transport connections (air, ferry and cruise), but continued growth in passenger traffic and increases in port and airport capacity need to be environmentally sustainable. Future growth needs to be underpinned by the sustainable development of ports and the reduction of pollution to air and sea caused by shipping.

A good national public and active transport system can support tourist transport needs as well as making our cities more attractive for tourists, which is good for business. The further development of greenways can create a sustainable tourism industry in Ireland.

We also recognise that transport is an important employer. Our aim for the transport employment sector is to uphold the highest international standards in regulatory, tax, corporate and ethical compliance to the benefit of all stakeholders. Employee rights, welfare and remuneration must be recognised across the transport sector to match the contribution of workers.

#### **1.2.4 Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

**This policy recognises the need to prioritise the health, safety, and wellbeing of our society.**

We aim to create a transport system in which fatalities and serious injuries are eliminated, and illnesses and deaths caused by harmful transport emissions are greatly reduced. Secondly, we aim to promote a high quality of life for all people by reducing the need for long commutes, easing congestion, and facilitating active forms of transport that enhance health and wellbeing. Good public transport and extensive active mobility options contribute to community building and help combat the adverse effects on mental health and wellbeing caused by social isolation.

The Road Safety Authority uses the number of fatalities and injuries as the primary measure of its effectiveness in making Ireland's roads safer. A broader range of metrics is necessary to properly capture the 'safety' of a road. Any assessment of the health and safety of our transport system should include wellbeing indicators, such as the numbers of people using active transport modes on a daily basis. These figures measure health and wellbeing as well as safety issues giving a more balanced picture of the overall effectiveness of our transport system in promoting health, safety and wellbeing.

At the heart of the Green Party's policy on road infrastructure investment is the belief that our roads do not belong solely to cars; we want to promote and prioritize a culture of walking, cycling, and increased use of shared and public transport. Pursuing such policies will reduce our carbon emissions, increase air quality, reduce noise and light pollution, and make our towns, cities, and countryside more pleasant places for everyone.

#### **1.2.5 Resilience and Security**

**Our transport system must be able to adapt and recover from natural and man-made events and hazards.** Our transport system needs to be resilient and secure to survive and overcome adverse conditions, including those caused by climate change, such as flooding, fallen trees, coastal erosion and fires. According to the United Nations, the greatest threat to global security is climate change. Transport policy must help to build resilient, healthy and cohesive local communities, investing in active travel infrastructure and favouring the most sustainable and least harmful transport modes. Stronger communities can better withstand external shocks resulting from the climate and biodiversity crises.

Pandemics can seriously undermine public transport. The Covid-19 pandemic has caused people to fear or avoid public transport and counter-measures (e.g. deep cleaning, better ventilation) are possible.<sup>1</sup> We

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<sup>1</sup> Marcus Finbom et al (2020) COVID-19 and Public Transport. [https://putspace.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/PUTSPACE\\_COVID-19\\_REPORT\\_2020-12-16\\_FINAL.pdf](https://putspace.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/PUTSPACE_COVID-19_REPORT_2020-12-16_FINAL.pdf)

must ensure that public transport is protected and not permanently downgraded.<sup>2</sup> It has also highlighted the differences between public and private bus services. Many private bus operators serving public routes have stopped operating for months, leaving communities stranded.<sup>3</sup>

Anti-social behaviour further undermines the usage of the transport system. Urban public bus operators are often the victims of verbal abuse. Anti-social behaviour on public transport, if left unchecked, can discourage people from using it.

Finally, an effective transport infrastructure builds resilient, healthy, and socially cohesive local communities. Stronger communities can better withstand external shocks resulting from the climate and biodiversity crises.

## **1.3 GENERAL POLICIES**

### **1.3.1 A reduction in the need for transport**

Planning for more integrated and effective transport is crucial as is the need to consider transport needs in urban and spatial planning. The 15-minute neighbourhood concept could in the long term significantly reduce transport needs. Road planning and infrastructure in built-up areas should aim to reduce reliance on private motor vehicles, and increase access and safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

(cf. Planning section)

### **1.3.2 A major switch to low-emission and active modes of transport**

Active travel infrastructure needs to be at the heart of any sustainable transport policy. A key objective of this policy is to develop the infrastructure for safe pedestrian and cycling in our villages, towns, cities and suburbs to allow people of all ages and abilities move freely and safely around their locality. Investment in building dedicated rural cycle ways, linking towns and villages is proposed. Such cycle ways will serve primarily as commuter routes, but will have the ancillary benefit of boosting tourism.

(cf. Active Transport section)

### **1.3.3 A major switch to state investment in public transport**

A high-quality, reliable, frequent and affordable public transport system is vital to cater for all our citizens and to reduce car dependency and usage, with all its undesirable consequences. This policy supports the 2:1 switch in favour of public transport investment in Budget 2020 and in all future budgets..

(cf. Rail and Buses sections)

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cnet.com/how-to/do-air-purifiers-work-for-covid-19/>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.waterfordlive.ie/news/motoring/564701/mounting-concern-over-suspension-of-waterford-bus-routes.html>

#### **1.3.4 A decrease in car use and car dependency**

A decrease in car use is essential to maintain continued population growth without a resultant increase in emissions. To improve the quality of life in our towns and cities, as well as reducing our carbon emissions, we believe that Ireland requires a fundamental shift away from its dependence on the private car as the primary means of conveyance. Developing alternatives is a key goal of this policy, and each section focuses on other modes of transport other than the motor car.

(cf. Roads section)

#### **1.3.5 A switch to cleaner, less polluting forms of fuel**

Encouraging a shift to cleaner fuel in the next 10 years is one of the most effective means of reducing emissions. Providing the necessary infrastructure and the renewable energy requirements needed are two of the challenges that must be overcome to bring this about. Further incentives and disincentives are recommended to bring about a paradigm shift to EV vehicles.

(cf. Roads section, bus/rail)

#### **1.3.6 A switch to environmentally sustainable infrastructure and materials**

Infrastructure needs to be environmentally conscious in terms of emissions, material selection, carbon footprint and life cycle energy consumption. The Green Party will strengthen amendments to the Government's 'Common Appraisal Framework' to prioritise environmental and emissions considerations when new infrastructures are being considered. All new road projects will be required to undergo an emissions study, which will contribute to the overall Cost Benefit Analysis of the project (cf. Roads section).

#### **1.3.7 Effective regulation of aviation and maritime transport**

The aviation and maritime sector needs to be properly regulated to ensure best practice and to monitor emission levels. Air and sea pollution at Irish ports and in Irish territorial waters must be measured and benchmarked, and mitigating actions against damaging emissions must be implemented. A further objective is to engender a culture of social and corporate responsibility for commercial and leisure maritime activities.

(cf. Aviation and Maritime sections)

#### **1.3.8 An overhaul of transport governance structures and agencies**

The governance of our transport system has evolved over the years into an unwieldy and fractured arrangement of government departments, agencies, authorities and semi-state bodies. There is a lack of clarity about responsibilities and authorities across different agencies with some having overlapping functions and with gaps in responsibility in other areas. This is hindering the development of a properly planned, efficient, economic and sustainable transport system. The Green Party proposes an overhaul of the entire system to ensure greater clarity, clear lines of responsibility and an overriding vision for an integrated transport system that incorporates all modes of transport and that recognises the integral part that transport has to play across all areas of society.

## 2 Planning and Transport

### Summary

The single biggest influence on transport needs is planning. We are suffering the consequences of poor planning decisions being made where greenfield sites are being developed for housing with no consideration given to the transport (or indeed other) needs of occupants.

### Key Policies

**Integrate Transport Planning:** Make sustainable transport planning an integral part of all housing, urban renewal and planning policies.

**Urban renewal and densification:** Town centres first

**15-Minute Cities/Towns and Neighbourhoods**

**Liveable cities**

**Decrease work-related travel**

**Sustainable school transport**

**Accessible childcare facilities**

## 2.1 Introduction

The single biggest influence on transport needs is planning. We are suffering the consequences of poor planning decisions being made where greenfield sites are being developed for housing with no consideration given to the transport (or indeed other) needs of occupants.<sup>4</sup>

### 2.1.1 Context

The rise in property prices has forced many people out of cities to suburbs and commuter towns with few transport options. This has led to a high degree of car dependency and long daily commutes.<sup>5</sup>

Car dependency and traffic congestion are associated with many negative outcomes including pollution and adverse effects on health and wellbeing.<sup>6</sup> The average daily commute in Ireland is 14.7 km, with almost half for work or shopping.<sup>7</sup> Reversing this trend should form a fundamental part of housing, planning and transport policies.

## 2.2 Policy Details

### 2.2.1 Integrate transport planning

The Green Party will make sustainable transport planning an integral part of all housing, urban renewal and planning policies.

Action
I.Mandate that all national planning and housing policies, county development plans, and other strategic development plans include sustainable transport considerations and targets.

### 2.2.2 Urban renewal and densification: town centres first

Transport journeys may be reduced through urban renewal and densification. The Green Party will prioritise returning vacant buildings to residential use in cities and towns, making urban living more family and people friendly, and building on urban vacant sites.

Actions
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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.dublinlive.ie/news/property/large-number-houses-built-areas-17739018>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cp6ci/p6cii/p6mtw/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/commuting-takes-its-toll/#:~:text=Physical%20symptoms%20range%20from%20headaches,and%20accidents%20all%20cause%20stress>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-nts/nts2016/>

- a. Work in tandem with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to address the **current legislative difficulties** experienced by local authorities in identifying and acquiring vacant properties and **resource** local authorities to proactively repurpose vacant properties.
- b. Work with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to introduce a **site value tax** to discourage land hoarding and **clarify the vacant sites levy** and broaden it to include properties less than .05 hectares.
- c. Actively encourage the use of vacant urban sites for good quality, high density, mixed use housing by giving **local authorities the resources** to acquire and build on vacant sites and by discouraging owners from leaving sites vacant.
- d. Re-introduce the **over the shop scheme** and actively target whole streets for renovation through funding from the European Green Deal.
- e. Prioritise and incentivise city and town centre brownfield site development over peripheral greenfield sites.
- f. **Plan** for green spaces, mixed-use housing, pedestrian friendly streets, and clean air in urban centres to make them attractive residential areas.
- g. **Implement the Town Centres First initiative** as promised in the programme for government.

Discourage **out of town retail parks** and where they do exist provide good public transport services.

### 2.2.3 15-minute cities/towns and neighbourhoods:

Embrace the concept of having all amenities within a 15-minute walk in cities, towns and neighbourhoods around the country, including ample green and recreational spaces.

#### Actions

- a. Plan and **install active and public transport infrastructure** in current housing estates around cities and towns to enable residents to safely cycle or walk to amenities or to use a frequent, reliable, sustainable and affordable public transport system.
- b. Grant **future planning permission** only to housing developments that are in close proximity to essential amenities.
- c. Mandate that **Active mobility** and public transport infrastructure forms part of the **planning application**, and that planning be granted subject to the provision of an active and public transport infrastructure.

#### 2.2.4 Liveable cities

Eliminate traffic congestion and urban pollution and create walkable, liveable urban spaces.

Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Install efficient <b>park and ride facilities</b> on the outskirts of all towns and cities for both private cars and delivery trucks, with a last mile electric vehicle to transport goods.</li><li>b. Make city streets more pedestrian friendly, with <b>pedestrian priority</b> junctions.</li><li>c. Make streets greener by installing <b>greenery, trees and street furniture</b> in pedestrianised streets.</li></ul>

#### 2.2.5 Decrease work-related travel

Increase sustainable travel to work. Public institutions such as hospitals, schools, and government buildings could lead the way.

Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Task all places of employment to have a <b>Company Mobility Management plan</b> with clear targets to switch to sustainable travel options.</li><li>b. Mandate the local authority to work with companies to provide <b>safe active travel infrastructure to work</b>.</li><li>c. Encourage employers to <b>reward employees</b> for using public or active travel options and in turn, <b>reward workplaces</b> that reduce their work transport footprint.</li><li>d. Mandate local authorities to put <b>disincentives</b> in place (i.e. reduced or paid parking spaces) to encourage a modal shift to public or active travel to work. Parking spaces may be confined to employees with mobility issues and those with no public transport options available to them.</li><li>e. Ensure large enterprises locate in areas where there is <b>sufficient local residential accommodation</b> available for employees.</li><li>f. Ensure that <b>social and affordable housing</b> is available to people who work in any given area, in order to reduce the need to travel to work.</li><li>g. Enable public institutions to acquire <b>accommodation facilities</b> close to the workplace for their employees</li><li>h. Encourage <b>remote working</b> where possible.</li></ul>



- i. Introduce **co-working hubs** in villages and towns.
- j. Install an **excellent broadband network** throughout the country.

### 2.2.6 School transport

Reduce the negative impact of school commutes on traffic congestion, emissions, health, and wellbeing through better and more equitable planning and investment in active and sustainable school transport.

Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Require all transport decision-makers (Department of Transport, NTA, local authorities) to factor school commutes into transport planning, decision-making and investment.</li><li>b. Require local authorities to plan, in partnership with schools the provision of <b>segregated cycle lanes</b> to enable students and school staff to cycle safely to school.</li><li>c. Require the Department of Transport and Education to analyse census data on children's commutes separately from data for the adult population, and to identify areas with greater than average children's journey times and lower rates of active travel to school. Require the Department of Education and Skills to prioritise the <b>building of new schools</b> in the areas identified.</li><li>d. Make an <b>active transport plan mandatory</b> in school planning and offer outside expertise to support schools in creating this. Incentivise schools to promote active transport to and from school, by rewarding them for reaching targets. Active transport could be aligned with the PE curriculum in school.</li><li>e. Provide a <b>free, efficient school bus service</b> for primary and post-primary students.</li><li>f. Require all <b>planning applications</b> for new schools to take into account active travel options. Ensure the construction of an active transport infrastructure within the school catchment area.</li><li>g. Encourage schools to work <b>with local recreational organisations</b> to offer a full range of after-school activities, providing on-site activities or transport from school to recreational centres, ensuring more equitable access to leisure activities. Employ an officer to coordinate after-school activities in schools.</li><li>h. Undertake a review of the School Transport schemes and invest in ways to increase the numbers of <b>students in rural areas using active modes of travel</b> to pick-up and set-down points.</li></ul>

### 2.2.7 Accessible childcare facilities

Plan for childcare facilities to be within walking distance of home and close to existing schools.

Action
Consult with existing childcare facilities to implement over a period of time a move towards <b>co-locating with local schools</b> and in high demand areas.

## 3 Active Transport

### Summary

A high-quality, accessible, active travel network will accommodate people of all age groups, abilities, genders, ethnicities, and socio-economic backgrounds as part of a sustainable, nationwide transport system, where the majority of journeys can be completed safely and comfortably by walking, cycling, or on public transport.

### Key Policies

Deliver a high-quality, accessible, attractive, integrated active travel network in an equitable way across geographical areas, that accommodates people of all age groups, genders, ethnicities, abilities, socio-economic backgrounds.

Ensure that local authorities and national bodies have the expertise, resources and organisational structures to ensure a collaborative approach across disciplines to deliver a high-quality active travel network.

Revise and enforce standards and regulation of road and street design to ensure that active travel is safe, accessible, and comfortable, aligned with best international standards.

Develop a new road safety strategy whose measurement of success is the number of people of all ages, genders, and abilities using active travel, and not solely the number of collisions and fatalities.

Increase the number of journeys made by active travel, particularly shorter journeys.

Ensure enforcement of existing traffic regulations as they affect active travel including speeding, red light jumping and illegal parking on footpaths, disabled parking spaces and cycle lanes.

Integrate Greenways into the general transport network.

Incentivise the adoption of cycling as a main mode of transport through financial supports to cover a wider range of bikes, e-bikes, adapted bikes and other micromobility solutions and to cover wider segments of society.

Reduce the total distance travelled by building self-sustaining communities.

Facilitate multi-modal transport by enabling efficient integration of different sustainable modes. Increase understanding among An Garda Síochána, the Judiciary and the Coroners' Service of the role they have to play in framing public attitudes towards active travel.

Invest in active travel promotion and regulate advertising which promotes unsustainable modes of transport.

## **3.1 Introduction**

The Green Party vision is for a high-quality, accessible, active travel network that accommodates people of all age groups, abilities, genders, ethnicities, and socio-economic backgrounds as part of a sustainable, nationwide transport system, where the majority of journeys can be completed safely and comfortably by walking, cycling, or on public transport.

### **3.1.1 Principles**

#### **3.1.1.1 Economic prosperity**

Investing in walking and cycling infrastructure will directly boost local economies including improved access to employment and will help offset costs associated with traffic congestion and emissions.

A recent report by the European Cycling Federation suggests that each kilometre driven by a car incurs an external cost to the economy of €0.11, whereas cycling and walking bring benefits of €0.18 and €0.37 per kilometre, respectively. Using these figures, the total cost of automobility in the European Union amounts to €500 billion per year. On the other hand, due to their positive health effects, walking and cycling are associated with benefits worth €24 billion and €66 billion per year.

Increased active travel investment produces tangible and measurable benefits to local economies. International studies in urban areas have found that shoppers who arrive on foot, by bike or by public transport tend to visit more frequently and spend more over the course of a month. Greenway projects have rejuvenated rural communities and can offer even higher returns when integrated into a broader active travel network.

#### **3.1.1.2 Environmental sustainability**

Both walking and cycling have the capacity to replace shorter car journeys and contribute to the reduction of Ireland's transport emissions. Cycling in the Dublin area takes up to 60,000 cars off the roads each day. Every year cycling in Dublin saves 28,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions, equivalent to the carbon footprint of 400,000 people taking flights from Dublin to London Heathrow. 21% of adults don't currently cycle but would like to. (NTA 2020 Bike Life Report on Dublin Metropolitan Area)

#### **3.1.1.3 Healthy and safe people**

A high-quality active travel network has a direct impact on a population's physical, mental and social health. There are multiple health and wellbeing benefits of physical activity throughout a person's life. Physical inactivity is a demonstrated clear risk to health in Ireland and sedentary behaviour is associated with acute and chronic diseases.

A recent European study found that the lowest depression rates among teenagers in Europe is in the Netherlands and this has been linked to the greater independence afforded by access to active travel.

## **3.2 Policy details**

Currently, 74% of journeys nationally are made by car, of which 26% are less than 2 km, and 57% are less than 8 km. Excluding Dublin residents, 50% of trips made by those living in the rest of Ireland are still under 8km. Walking is less prevalent in rural areas and highest in Dublin city and other urban areas (National Household Travel Survey 2018). Car usage is significantly lower in Dublin city when compared to the whole country. Cycling rates nationally are low. Only 2% of all secondary students cycle to school in Ireland, whereas 75% of all secondary school students in the Netherlands do.

The design and management of our built environment is the main barrier to more people embracing walking and cycling as their chief mode of transport. This was recognised in 2003 by the Traffic Management Guidelines: ‘Design consideration for motor vehicles has come to dominate the shape and layout of developments. This has often been to the detriment of other road users and there are many examples where the road design and speed of traffic has discouraged pedestrian and cycle movement because of concerns over safety’(DMURS, 2019, p. 6).

The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets sets out a hierarchy of transport modes: ‘To encourage more sustainable travel patterns and safer streets, designers must place pedestrians at the top of the user hierarchy. Walking is the most sustainable form of transport. Furthermore, all journeys begin and end on foot. By prioritising design for pedestrians first, the number of short journeys taken by car can be reduced and public transport made more accessible. The need for more walkable communities is also an issue of social equity as it is the poorest and most vulnerable in society, including children, the elderly and the disabled for whom car travel is less of an option’(DMURS, 2019, Section 2.2.2).

Car dependence continues to be accommodated and prioritised in local mobility and development plans, compounding negative consequences for people’s health, local economies, social cohesion, the climate and the environment.

**3.2.1 Deliver a high-quality, accessible, attractive, integrated active travel network in an equitable way across geographical areas, that accommodates people of all age groups, genders, ethnicities, abilities, socio-economic backgrounds**

**3.2.1.1 Short Term Action (12 months)**

- a. Deliver an updated National Sustainable Transport Policy and develop a Sustainable Rural Mobility Plan which incorporates active travel measures.
- b. Allocate 10% of the total annual transport capital budget for cycling projects and 10% of the total road transport capital budget for walking infrastructure.
- c. Ensure that decisions around transport are based on a transparent process and prioritise equality, demonstrated need and the greatest impact on achieving climate action targets.
- d. Ensure all active travel infrastructure is inclusive of people of all abilities and at all life stages. New walking and cycling infrastructure should accommodate all types of mobility aids and children's buggies. Ensure all cycle parking includes provision for adapted cycles and cargo bikes. Remove any barriers from existing infrastructure e.g. kissing gates, cyclist dismount signs. Resource the National Disability Inclusion Strategy<sup>8</sup>, and ensure that it includes measures to increase access to active travel.
- e. Develop zones in town and city centres free of motorised traffic to assist the development of active travel.
- f. Mandate local authorities to design active travel network plans for towns and cities with a population over 15,000, with prioritisation given to those network plans which will have the greatest impact on traffic congestion. Selected towns should be piloted for network roll-out in parallel with the Town Centres First<sup>9</sup> approach.

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<sup>8</sup> The National Disability Inclusion Strategy: The National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017 - 2021 is the key framework for policy and action to address the needs of people with disabilities.

<sup>9</sup> Town Centres First: The 'Town Centre First' policy approach is founded on the Town Centre Health Check research, to ensure that our cities and towns become vibrant places for living and working in.

- g. Invest in active travel research across different disciplines, developing a clear pathway from research findings to an evidence-based approach to, and knowledge base on, active travel policy.
- h. Ensure that quantitative and qualitative data on active travel and modal share is collected by Local Authorities and is publicly available.

#### **3.2.1.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Mandate and support all Local Authorities to establish and maintain bike and e-bike share schemes in their administrative areas - rural, urban and suburban.
- b. Introduce legislation for Experimental Traffic Orders to enable local authorities to carry out experimental trials of active travel interventions which can be trialled, evaluated and iterated.

#### **3.2.1.3 Long Term Action (3-5 years)**

- a. Target the provision of active travel investment to connect areas of socio-economic deprivation with public transport, health services, education campuses, employment opportunities, and social amenities.
- a. Maintain a continuous funding stream for active travel within the transport capital budget.

**3.2.2 Ensure that local authorities and national bodies have the expertise, resources and organisational structures to ensure a collaborative approach across disciplines to deliver a high-quality active travel network**

**3.2.2.1 Short Term Action (12 months)**

- a. Invest in extensive active travel training provision, across multi-disciplinary sectors to assist in the recruitment of suitable professionals for design and implementation of the active travel network.
- a. Expand and enhance the expertise on active travel needed to dramatically improve infrastructure and participation both in the National Transport Authority and local authorities to include expertise in place-making, community engagement, urban design, active transport infrastructure design and universal design.
- b. Review and extend the statutory remit of the NTA, under the oversight of the Dept. of Transport, to support local authorities to design and develop active transport strategies with a strong legal basis in our cities, towns, and regions.
- c. Instigate a nationwide review of attitudes towards active travel, implementation challenges and modal shift among all local authority executives and national agencies.

**3.2.2.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Mandate all local authorities to employ a suitably qualified multidisciplinary Active Travel team or teams with clear powers and roles in the local authority. The teams should comprise those with expertise in place-making, community engagement, urban design, public health, active transport infrastructure design, landscape design and universal design. Ensure that gender balance is achieved on each team.
- b. In larger urban areas Active Travel teams may be structured on a Local Area basis to provide sufficient density of expertise.
- c. Empower the National Transport Authority to coordinate active travel infrastructure development where infrastructure requirements span local authority boundaries.



### 3.2.2.3 Long Term Action (3-5 years)

- a. Ensure cross-departmental cooperation between relevant government departments, e.g. Transport, Health, Education, Housing, Planning, Environment and Justice.

## 3.2.3 **Revise and enforce standards and regulations of road and street design to ensure that active travel is safe, accessible, and comfortable, aligned with best international standards**

### 3.2.3.1 Short Term Action (12 months)

- a. Develop and adopt a Sustainable Safety<sup>10</sup> policy for road safety based on the approach adopted in the Netherlands which operates on the principle of keeping fast, heavy traffic away from slower traffic and vulnerable road users.
- b. Develop a new national transport modelling standard, moving away from a Predict and Provide model to a more dynamic and adaptive approach to transportation planning.

### 3.2.3.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)

- a. Pilot Sustainable Safety policy in selected towns under the rollout of the 'Town Centres First' approach.
- b. Review and update existing active travel design standards including the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, the National Cycling Manual and the National Cycling Policy Framework to align with best international standards in infrastructure design with particular reference to the Dutch CROW manual and the UK Local Transport Guidelines 2020.

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<sup>10</sup> Sustainable Safety: The vision of Sustainable Safety is an optimal approach to improve road safety, originating from the Netherlands. <https://www.swov.nl/publicatie/sustainable-safety-3rd-edition-advanced-vision-2018-2030>

- c. Include air quality and noise levels as part of the assessment of all transport infrastructure. Mandate measurement of air quality and traffic noise outside schools and on high motorised traffic locations in all village, town and city centres, with publicly accessible, real-time data.
- d. Align Local Authority Development Plans with national policies to include specific measures to help achieve national targets for active travel
- e. Mandate Local Authorities to conduct walkability and cyclability audits of their built environment to identify what improvements are required to meet these updated national standards.
- f. Establish the National Transport Authority's Permeability<sup>11</sup> Best Practice Guide on a statutory footing.
- g. Incorporate updated National Disability Authority Universal Design Approach<sup>12</sup> guidelines for the Built External Environment into new standards for active travel infrastructure.

### **3.2.3.3 Long Term Action (3-5 years)**

- a. Review national standards for the design of active travel infrastructure networks on a five-yearly basis.
- b. Review Building Regulations Part M: *Access & Use*<sup>13</sup> with a view to examining the possibility of extending the regulations to include the external environment.

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<sup>11</sup> Permeability: Permeability in an urban area permits the movement of people by walking or cycling and provides a competitive advantage for people choosing walking and cycling over other modes of transport.

<sup>12</sup> National Disability Authority Universal Design Approach: The NDA 'Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach' provides comprehensive best practice guidance on how to design, build and manage buildings and spaces so that they can be readily accessed and used by everyone, regardless of age, size, ability or disability.

<sup>13</sup> Technical Guidance Document M: Access & Use <https://www.housing.gov.ie/housing/building-standards/tgd-part-m-access-and-use/technical-guidance-document-m-access-and-use-2>.

**3.2.4 Develop a new road safety strategy whose measurement of success is the numbers of people of all ages, genders, and abilities using active travel, and not solely the number of collisions and fatalities**

**3.2.4.1 Short Term Action (12 months)**

- a. Introduce a default 30 km/hr speed limit to all urban and suburban centres, and on approaches to rural schools with accompanying traffic calming measures.
- b. Review speed limits on rural roads, particularly on 'L' class rural roads, as existing limits pose a danger to people walking and cycling.
- c. Legislate for the use of e-scooters and other electric powered micro-mobility devices.
- d. Make contra-flow parking illegal.
- e. Increase fines for illegal parking on footpaths and cycle lanes to match those for parking on disabled parking bays.

**3.2.4.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Introduce a road safety strategy targeting a Vision Zero<sup>14</sup> strategy through the principles of Sustainable Safety.
- b. Revise the remit and strategy of the RSA to include a physical activity and health aspect. Ensure all road health and safety campaigns are evidence-based. Restructure the board of the RSA to include a wider range of disciplines to reflect their new remit.
- c. Introduce media reporting guidelines to provide best practice reporting guidelines for road collisions.

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<sup>14</sup> Vision Zero: Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.

- d. Ensure that data regarding minor injuries sustained on the roads is collated and included in statistical reports, including health system data which is not reported to An Garda Síochána.

#### 3.2.4.3 Long Term Action (3-5 years)

- a. Prioritise the consolidation of the existing road traffic legislation and ensure that the prioritisation of active travel road users is reflected in the legislation.

### **3.2.5 Increase the number of journeys made by active travel, particularly shorter journeys.**

#### **3.2.5.1 Short Term Action (12 months)**

- a. Ensure modal shift to active travel, nationwide, by a reorientation of investment to walking, cycling and public transport.
- b. Improve the quality of the walking network by ensuring priority for people walking, shorter pedestrian crossing waiting times, longer green-man phase, wider footpaths, better surface finish, pedestrian priority crossing side roads with a continuous walking surface, age-friendly public seating, water refill stations and street trees.
- c. Ensure that all places of employment have a Company Mobility Management plan with clear targets to switch to sustainable travel options. Mandate local authorities to put disincentives in place (i.e. reduced or paid parking spaces) to encourage a modal shift to public or active travel to work. Parking spaces may be confined to employees with mobility issues and to those with no public transport options available to them.
- d. Extend the ban on five-axle HGVs to all suburban areas and implement a 3-axle ban in all urban and residential areas in accordance with the principles of Sustainable Safety.
- e. Remove derogations allowing multi-axle HGV's to travel through urban areas to avoid tolled roads.
- f. Progress the use of active travel solutions for last mile deliveries in urban centres.

#### **3.2.5.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Ensure that active travel infrastructure takes precedence over the privilege of the parking of private cars in a public place.
- b. Give Local Authorities the authority to apply charges for the parking of private cars in all public places.

- c. Restrict on-street parking in urban centres while ensuring adequate disabled parking bays and age-friendly car parking.
- d. Ensure that walking and cycling routes are as direct as possible by introducing filtered permeability and contraflow cycling lanes.
- e. Require high quality, secure cycle parking to be installed outside all public buildings (including community centres, libraries, leisure centres, swimming pools and sports facilities).

#### **3.2.5.3 Long Term Action (3-5 years)**

- a. Investigate financial incentives to restrict private car use in urban areas including congestion charging and Time-Distance-Place (TDP) Road Pricing.

### **3.2.6 Increase the number of children safely travelling to school by active modes and decrease the burden of commuting on children and families.**

#### **3.2.6.1 Short Term Action (12 months)**

- a. Require the Departments of Transport and Education to analyse census data on children's commutes separately from data for the adult population, and to identify areas with greater than average children's journey times and lower rates of walking and cycling to school.
- b. Require all transport decision-makers (Department of Transport, NTA, Local Authorities) to factor school commutes into transport planning, decision-making and investment.
- c. Require the Department of Education to base decisions on where to establish new schools on children's commuting data as well as demographics. In towns and cities, prioritise the building of new schools in areas with longer commuting times and where percentages of students walking and cycling to school is low.
- d. Undertake a review of the School Transport Schemes and invest in ways to increase the numbers of students in rural areas using active modes to travel to pick-up and set-down points.
- e. Ensure that all children are given cycling training in primary and secondary school under the Cycle Right programme.<sup>15</sup>
- f. Expand local authority-led initiatives to promote traffic calming and filtering through-traffic near schools such as School Zones and School Streets.<sup>16</sup> Schools must be designated as priority destinations within all active travel network plans.

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<sup>15</sup> Cycle Right: Cycle Right programme is the National Standard for Cycle Training and provides practical cycle safety and skills training to promote competent and confident cyclists.

<sup>16</sup> School Zones are areas of a street near a school where measures may be introduced to slow vehicular traffic. School Streets restrict access to vehicular traffic at certain times. <http://schoolstreets.org.uk/>

### **3.2.6.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Establish national benchmarks for maximum acceptable average school commutes in towns and cities. In principle, no urban Electoral Division should have an average commute time greater than 10% above the State average.
- b. In towns and cities, target the provision of active travel investment in Local Electoral Areas with greater than average school journey times and lower relative rates of walking/cycling to school.
- c. Develop and implement targets for walking and cycling to school to be achieved by schools and local authorities. Provide rewards to schools for achieving increases in numbers of students using active transport modes.

### **3.2.6.3 Long Term Action (3-5 years)**

- a. Conduct a review of policies outlined above, to evaluate their impact.



**3.2.7 Ensure enforcement of existing traffic regulations as they affect active travel including speeding, red light jumping and illegal parking on footpaths, disabled parking spaces and cycle lanes.**

**3.2.7.1 Short Term Action (12 months)**

- a. Enforce a zero-tolerance approach to blocking active travel infrastructure.
- b. Establish clear responsibilities of enforcement between An Garda Síochána and Local Authorities to ensure that no Road Traffic Laws are left unenforced.

**3.2.7.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Expand the numbers of Traffic Wardens nationwide and ensure that they have the authority to enforce Road Traffic laws which inhibit active travel.
- b. Develop an online portal, which will accept camera footage, for reporting of road traffic offences to An Garda Síochána.
- c. Establish a Garda bike-theft unit to reduce bike theft whose sole function is to prevent bike crime, locate stolen bikes and reunite them with their owners.

**3.2.7.3 Long Term Action (3-5 years)**

- a. Consolidate road traffic legislation into a single Road Traffic Act and Road Traffic Regulations to ensure that there is clarity about the law and that those responsible for enforcing the law have a clear understanding of it.

### **3.2.8 Integrate Greenways into the general transport network.**

#### **3.2.8.1 Short Term Action (12 months)**

- a. Expand the Greenways design and funding process to ensure that the Greenways are an integrated part of active travel networks in nearby towns and villages.
- b. Introduce an Agri-Biodiversity scheme to landowners whose lands are used as part of future Greenway routes.

#### **3.2.8.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Develop an integrated national network of greenways to be used by commuters, students, leisure cyclists and tourists with local authorities and appropriate agencies working in collaboration
- b. Prioritise the delivery of select Urban Greenways where they can demonstrate the effectiveness of active travel infrastructure in reducing traffic congestion and impacting on modal shift.
- c. Plan for Greenways alongside disused railway lines to allow for potential reopening of railways.

#### **3.2.8.3 Long Term Action (3-5 years)**

- a. Develop an integrated national Greenways strategy to ensure coordination across local authority boundaries, and with central government.

**3.2.9 Incentivise the adoption of cycling as a main mode of transport through financial supports to cover a wider range of bikes, e-bikes, adapted bikes and other micromobility solutions and to cover wider segments of society.**

**3.2.9.1 Short Term Action (12 months)**

- a. Expand the current Bike to Work Scheme to include all of society and to include disability bikes, hand cycles, ebikes, trikes, and cargo bikes.
- b. Expand the SEAI Electric Vehicle Grant system to include e-bikes.
- c. Include free access to Bike Share Schemes for those with the Travel Pass, people with disabilities, and asylum seekers.
- d. Reduce Value Added Tax for essential equipment, such as bicycle lights, bells, bike locks, replacement parts.
- e. Subsidise cycle skills training for adults, from beginner skills through to competency cycling.
- f. Fund community groups that organise walking and cycling programmes with a focus on encouraging more children, immigrants, women, and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds to become involved.
- g. Provide training for people of older age to help them continue walking or cycling habits.
- h. Introduce a Bike Repair voucher system to encourage repair and re-use of older bikes and support bike repair shops.
- i. Promote the City & Guilds accredited training course in bike mechanics supported by the Training Support Grant.

### 3.2.9.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)

- a. Incentivise workplaces to invest in facilities or activities to encourage active transport among employees, e.g., cycle parking, ebike chargers, installation of showers, lockers or a gear storage room; cycle skills training.

### **3.2.10 Reduce the total distance travelled by building self-sustaining communities.**

#### **3.2.10.1 Short Term Action (12 months)**

- a. Establish a nationwide planning strategy for ‘15-minute neighbourhoods’<sup>17</sup> to create self-sufficient communities where schools, workplaces, green spaces, health centres, shops, restaurants, and sports facilities are a walk or bike ride away.

#### **3.2.10.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Support co-working hubs in local communities to enable people to work close to home and review potential of train stations and post offices to act as co-working community hubs.
- b. Target communities with poor walking and cycling permeability and apply the principles of the National Transport Authority’s Permeability Best Practice Guide to improve connectivity to local amenities.
- c. Developing a strategy for remote working and remote service delivery, taking advantage of the opportunity for a rapid roll-out of the National Broadband Plan.

#### **3.2.10.3 Long Term Action (3-5 years)**

- a. Mandate Local Authorities to adopt the ‘15-minute neighbourhood’ strategy into statutory Development Plans.

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<sup>17</sup> The 15-minute neighbourhood is a reference to the ‘15-minute city’ concept developed by Professor Carlos Moreno in Paris where daily urban necessities are within a 15-minute reach on foot or by bike.

### **3.2.11 Facilitate multi-modal transport by enabling efficient integration of different sustainable modes.**

#### **3.2.11.1 Short Term Action (12 months)**

- a. All public transport stops and stations to be included as priority destinations in the design of local active travel infrastructure networks.
- b. Require all public transport stations and stops to provide comfort and shelter e.g. age-friendly seats, water refill stations, and real-time audio and visual information.
- c. Ensure sufficient, high quality, cycle storage facilities at all bus stops, bus stations, train stations (including DART and LUAS), ferry ports and airports that meet national standards. Ensure this parking can accommodate disability cycles, hand cycles, trikes, and cargo bikes, and site parking as close as possible to stations.
- d. Include secure ebike battery charging facilities at all public transport stations, post offices, and co-working hubs.
- e. Review and update existing national standards for bicycle parking and make these mandatory.
- f. Increase the bicycle carrying capacity of all regional and commuter trains to at least eight bikes.
- g. Make the transport of bicycles on all trains and inter-city buses free of charge.
- h. Ensure that all public transport services are accessible to people with a disability.

#### **3.2.11.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Increase the supply of park-and-ride schemes at the perimeters of towns and cities to enable drivers to complete their journey by bus, bike or lift share with accompanying low-cost car parking.

- b. Set targets for train platform lift and bus station lift repair to happen within 24 hours. Ensure lift upgrades are carried out at off-peak times and completed within 48 hours.

- c. Pilot the use of bicycle carrying racks on buses and taxis.

#### **3.2.11.3 Long Term Action (3-5 years)**

- a. Require airports and ferry ports to develop plans to increase the number of foot and cycle passengers and promote integrated multimodal transport.

- b. Provide bicycle hire services at train, bus stations, ferry ports and airports.

- c. Clearly signpost safe cycle access routes to all train stations and bus stations, ferry ports and airports.

**3.2.12 Increase understanding among An Garda Síochána, the Judiciary and the Coroners' Service of the role they have to play in framing public attitudes towards active travel.**

**3.2.12.1 Short Term Action (12 months)**

- a. Instigate a review of attitudes towards active travel victims of road traffic incidents within the Justice system and recommend measures to improve the experiences and outcomes for victims and their families.

**3.2.12.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Provide Continuous Professional Development training for Gardaí on road safety as it pertains to active travel, sustainable safety and the road user hierarchy, the impacts of driver behaviour on active travel, and the societal benefits of active travel.
- b. Provide continuing education and training to the Judiciary, facilitated by the Judicial Studies Committee, on road safety as it pertains to active travel, sustainable safety and the road user hierarchy, the impacts of driver behaviour on active travel, and the societal benefits of active travel.
- c. Increase visible community policing in rural and urban communities.

**3.2.12.3 Long Term Action (3-5 years)**

- a. Increase the numbers of Gardaí on foot and using cycles in community policing.



### **3.2.13 Invest in active travel promotion and regulate advertising which promotes unsustainable modes of transport.**

#### **3.2.13.1 Short Term Action (12 months)**

- a. Develop a campaign to encourage young girls to cycle.
- b. Promote the value of active travel as part of a physically active life, at all life stages, with reference to the National Physical Activity Strategy.
- c. Promote the reliability and convenience of walking and cycling for short journeys.
- d. Raise awareness of best practice in locking bikes.

#### **3.2.13.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Provide on-the-ground wayfinding signage to promote the convenience of walking and cycling to access services.
- b. Promote active retirement and positive ageing initiatives to encourage older people to use active travel modes.
- c. Introduce an Air Quality Rating, similar to the Building Energy Rating, which is required for all existing buildings offered for sale or rent.
- d. Regulate motor advertising to restrict ads which are misleading with regard to the impact of motoring on the environment, on urban congestion and on road safety, and ads which glamourise unsustainable modes of transport.

#### **3.2.13.3 Long Term Action (3-5 years)**

- a. Introduce a Public Health Obesity Act, including restrictions on promotion and advertising aimed at children which glamourise unsustainable modes of transport.
- b. Require the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) to adopt a more active enforcement role for advertising. Direct the CCPC to ensure that there is

full disclosure of partnerships, sponsorships and other advertising relationships between media and motoring brands, and that the obligations and the consequences for non-compliance are clearly set out and enforced.

## 4 Rail

### Summary

Create a dramatic improvement in the quality and quantity of rail travel available in Ireland in terms of (a) inter-city (b) suburban heavy rail (DART) (c) metro and (d) Luas/light rail.

### Key Policies

Improve services on the existing rail network so that travel by rail is an accessible, convenient, fast, comfortable, clean, safe and efficient mode of transport for all users.

Deliver an organised and coherent governance and management structure within which a modern and progressive rail network can develop.

Commit to improving overall journey speeds on intercity lines to ensure rail is competitive with roads.

Commit to building strategic heavy rail infrastructure to facilitate modal shift from cars to rail-based transport.

Develop an all-Ireland Heavy Rail network that does not require trips through Dublin City. Improved connectivity between Irish cities will contribute to more balanced regional development.

Commit to building strategic Light Rail infrastructure to facilitate modal shift from cars to rail-based transport.

Commit to building strategic Metro infrastructure to facilitate modal shift from cars to rail-based transport.

Commission a study for a new Dublin Central Rail Station.

## 4.1 Introduction

Increased rail provision will make a major contribution to reducing carbon dioxide emissions from transport and allow more accessible mobility that is not dependent on owning a private car.

### 4.1.1 Principles and context

Irish carbon dioxide emissions from the transport sector are high by European standards; Ireland has systematically failed to meet its own targets for reduction set by the previous national Climate Action Plan. One reason for this is that for most journeys there is no realistic alternative to the private car. The dramatic and systematic expansion of the Irish motorway system has not only shortened journey times between main cities but has facilitated the greater use of private cars for all travel and so contributed to unsustainable suburban sprawl. By contrast investment in rail has been slow, haphazard, and subject to continual stops and cancellations. Although there are plenty of plans for more rail lines, there is currently not a single major rail project in progress and not even a single project shovel ready. This is a major institutional failure and a political scandal.

Almost everywhere in the world rail systems went into decline in both absolute terms (number of passengers carried) and relative terms (modal share) from the 1950s. In most countries this has involved the closing of lines and stations and in some cases (e.g. Argentina) the almost complete destruction of previously extensive railway systems. At times, this destruction – and again Argentina is the obvious example – has been accelerated by privatisation.

However, since at least the 1990s passenger rail travel has been reviving (both absolutely and relatively) in terms of inter-city, suburban rail, and urban rail (metros and trams). This has been associated with new technologies, most obviously high-speed rail (HSR) and new automated metro systems; there has been the revival of tram systems. Rather less glamorous but with impact across whole systems have been incremental improvements in rolling stock, signalling systems etc allowing greater speeds on ‘normal’ lines. Overall, the expansion has involved both the construction of new lines using new technologies, the re-opening of closed lines and stations and the re-using and re-purposing of legacy systems. Irish participation in this revival has been at best half-hearted.

High Speed Rail (usually defined as running speeds over 200km/h) was first introduced in France in 1981. Since then the French system has been continually expanded most recently with the TGV-Est; perhaps more dramatic has been the creation since 1992 of a completely new Spanish system in little more than 25 years which now links all major Spanish cities. Within Western Europe rail has now replaced cars for many inter-city journeys such as Paris-Brussels. European cities are the ideal distance apart for high speed rail connections, but while China with roughly the same geographical size has built its own China-wide high-speed network, European high-speed rail – like conventional rail – remains fragmented into distinct national systems. The European Union competition policy deregulated European airlines, thus facilitating massive intra-European mobility in an environmentally damaging mode. By contrast, the Union’s reliance on market-making policies has meant the EU has been unable to develop more sustainable high speed rail into a European wide network. Central to any Green transport policy must be the accelerated development of a European HSR network.

Within Europe the other major innovation has been the revival of tram systems and their redevelopment as light rail. Trams were abolished in most cities in Western Europe during the 1950s. Beginning in France in the 1980s, new tramways have been built in cities such as Nantes and Strasbourg; especially in France trams are now an important part of urban mobility. Light rail is an especially

European transport mode (over 50% of the global total light rail length is in Europe).<sup>18</sup> Unlike heavy rail or metros, trams can be threaded into densely built up urban centres and share space with people actively moving around such public spaces. They can therefore enhance rather than undermine urban design and are well suited to the attractive centres of Europe's historic cities. For passengers, riding a tram is a qualitatively more pleasant experience than using other modes<sup>19</sup>. Indeed, it is noticeable that light rail/trams are seen by aesthetically more attractive than the allegedly cheaper Bus Rapid Transit<sup>20</sup>. Like the Luas, outside the city centre trams can function on separate tracks and can operate at speeds of up to 70 km/h. They can thus function both to expand mobility within the urban core ('the pavement city') and connect suburb to suburb and suburb to city centre.

The new importance of rail both for inter-city and urban mobility has led to the renovation of some major railway stations and even the construction of new main stations. Across the world in the 1960s iconic railway stations were destroyed: Penn Central in New York, Euston in London (in both countries this vandalism kick-started architectural preservation movements). However today major cities such as Berlin and Vienna have built new central stations which again showcase the attraction of inter-city rail travel, as well as directly connecting to their urban rail systems.

Within European cities there has also been reinvigoration of existing heavy rail systems (e.g. London Overground) as well as the S-Bahn systems of Germany and Austria. Central to this has been the creation or strengthening of regional or urban transport authorities able to initiate city level projects and integrate different transport modes (e.g. Transport for London). Along with the continued expansion of existing metro/underground systems there has also been the construction of new metro systems using completely separated tracks and automated vehicles (e.g. London's Docklands Light Rail; Copenhagen Metro). Unlike light rail, automated metros have to be completely segregated from their environment and therefore, just like an urban motorway, necessarily create 'community segregation' with a physical barrier between adjacent neighbourhoods.

The revival of rail is the main driving force behind the move away from the private car in urban centres in Europe and indeed globally. Comparative studies show that where cities such as Vienna have reduced car usage, a key factor has been their sustained investment in rail systems<sup>21</sup>. Importantly for Ireland, the effectiveness of new light rail and improved suburban rail systems is no longer limited to large cities<sup>22</sup>. For example, in the city of Nantes Europe's first rebuilt tram network (1985) and suburban rail network has helped reduced car usage and enhanced the quality of life<sup>23</sup>.

Massive investment in rail infrastructure is crucial to achieving carbon emission targets. While all forms of rail already have much lower carbon intensity than other forms of mechanised transport, the full

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<sup>18</sup> TER4RAIL project (2019) [https://ter4rail.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/TER4RAIL\\_PPT\\_VersionFFE-UITP-NEWO-FFE-UIC\\_090720.pdf](https://ter4rail.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/TER4RAIL_PPT_VersionFFE-UITP-NEWO-FFE-UIC_090720.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> Naukkarinen, Ossi (2003) Mobile cities: The tram and the uses of urban space, Place and Location III eds Virve Sarapik and Kadri Tuur, Tallinn, pp.249-261.

<sup>20</sup> Hensher, David (2016) Why is light rail starting to dominate bus rapid transit again? *Transport Reviews* 36.2: 289-292. For economists like Hensher, a preference for light rail based on aesthetic standards or perception of passenger pleasure is 'irrational'. This comment suggests that no economists should be allowed anywhere near the design of our cities....

<sup>21</sup> Buehler, R. et al (2017) Reducing car dependence in the heart of Europe: Lessons from Germany, Austria and Switzerland, *Transport Reviews* 37.1: 4-28.

<sup>22</sup> Newman Peter et al (2013) Peak car use and the rise of global rail: Why this is happening and what it means for large and small cities, *Journal of Transport Technologies* 3.4.

<sup>23</sup> See for example the account in TER4RAIL op. cit.

benefits come when rail is electrified. According to the International Energy Authority (2020), an ‘aggressive, strategic deployment’ of rail investment would ensure that CO2 emissions from global transport peaked in the late 2030s.

Along with Portugal, Ireland is in the third class of the Railway Performance Index<sup>24</sup> of European states (all the other countries in this category are New Member States) because of its poor quality of service and low intensity of use. Especially outside of the Greater Dublin Area, many Irish people hardly use rail from one year to the next: nationally 51% of those aged 18 and over never use any form of rail service and the most common reason was the lack of any nearby mainline train service (National Travel Survey 2019). Mainline rail connects Dublin with other major cities (Cork, Galway, Limerick) and connects Dublin with most but not all towns. Outside of Dublin, there are only very limited connections between towns and, apart from the Dublin-Cork route, mainline rail is not competitive with the car for inter-city journeys.

A national rail system could connect the major towns and cities of Ireland contributing to more balanced regional development. Such a national rail system would be the backbone of sustainable mobility, significantly reducing the need for the private car and favouring greater population density within urban areas. An inter-urban rail network thus facilitates active mobility within cities and towns. Expanding the different forms of rail (heavy rail, light rail, metro) is the only way to produce a substantial modal shift in commuting journeys of the scale needed to reduce Ireland’s transport emissions towards the climate change targets.

At the middle of the current pandemic many commentators suggest that the growth of working from home may make the daily commute from suburb to city centre redundant. We may see a move towards population clusters in a multi-polar urban area. Urban rail is ideal to connect these centres, enabling citizens to move across the wider city and offering an attractive alternative to the private car.

## 4.2 Policy details

The current pandemic crisis has had contradictory results. On the one hand many cities such as Dublin have promoted active mobility with new infrastructure, while on the other hand public transport usage has been actively discouraged. Public transport ridership collapsed during the initial lockdown and has hardly recovered, while private car usage is nearly back to pre-pandemic levels. Although investment in public transport has been central to proposals for a ‘Green Recovery’, if public transport usage continues to be discouraged, it is possible that the new rail projects will yet again be postponed and even cancelled.

During the pandemic public transport must be supported and immediate measures taken to make it more safe (regular deep cleaning). Service levels must be high enough to allow social distancing and to allow travel in comfort and safety. Indeed, the pandemic is the opportunity to finally end the assumption that normal public transport is over-crowded. Accelerated investment in rail infrastructure is central to a green and socially inclusive response to the Covid-19 crisis. Rather than simply propping up existing employment in sectors where many firms’ business models depend on low cost precarious labour, rail investment creates real jobs in construction and operation. Ireland can no longer afford a

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.bcg.com/en-ch/publications/2017/transportation-travel-tourism-2017-european-railway-performance-index>

rail policy that amounts to drawing lines on maps, announcing new projects and then abandoning them two years later. The climate and the economy require fast-tracked investment now.

#### 4.2.1 **Make Rail Travel Desirable; Improve services on the existing rail network so that travel by rail is an accessible, convenient, fast, comfortable, clean, safe and efficient mode of transport for all users**

##### 4.2.1.1 Short Term Action (12 months)

###### Planning and Accessibility

- a. Create a 5-year service improvement plan with separate budget, management and KPI's to deliver the following...
- b. Services should be inclusive to all rail users. Access through all stations and onto trains will be provided to mobility impaired users without impediment. An adequate number of disabled parking spaces will be provided at all train station car parks, which will be located as close as possible to the station building.
- c. Where appropriate, train stations will be designated as transport hubs in many of our cities and towns, interchanging with other forms of public transport modes. Bus services will be timetabled to meet trains for onward trips, and cross-over trips. A review of towns and stations where this could be implemented will take place.

###### Sustainability and Buildings

- d. All Rail / Public transport buildings and bus stops should be easily identifiable, legible and navigation through them should be intuitive and logical to infrequent users. A rail user audit on every existing station should be completed and works to make them consistent will be carried out.

###### Security and Safety

- e. Measures to dramatically improve security measures on the rail network will be taken. Consideration should be given to either significantly increasing the current security staff on the network, and giving them powers of arrest, or to creating a dedicated Garda Transportation sub-division. This division could begin in the Dublin Commuter zone initially and be rolled out nationally in time.
- f. The provision of a train Guard (member of staff) on all trains would go a long way to eliminating anti-social behaviour and would have the added benefit of enforcing seat booking disagreements which take place all too often.
- g. Implement legislation to ensure a zero tolerance of verbal and racial abuse.



#### Travel Information

- h. Develop one website and booking system for all public transport modes, accessible to those with disabilities (i.e., visually impaired people).
- i. Develop one fare structure across all transport modes, one transport logo, one department, one CEO and one minister / mayor in charge of it all.
- j. Customer care should be at the genuine core of the day to day operations of Rail management.
- k. The public must be consulted properly on proposed schemes and timetable changes. Timetables must be designed to fit around the customers' requirements rather than how best they suit logistically. Timetables should also be made available for those with visual impairments.
- l. A system of route names / numbers / colours etc should be incorporated into the identification of commuter and intercity routes. Services frequencies, origins and destinations throughout the day should be consistent and be logical to infrequent users.

#### Pricing and Fares

- m. Review the current fare structure across the network.
- n. Fully support the 90-minute journey plan currently proposed within the Dublin commuter zone and work to its timely implementation. Consideration shall be given to adding an outer commuter zone and to developing more competitive monthly and annual multi-modal commuter tickets.
- o. It is currently extremely easy to evade paying for a ticket on the rail network, this results in widespread fare evasion and lost revenue. Increase ticket checking and increase staffing levels on the network, both on trains and in stations.

## Maintenance

- p. Mandate Irish Rail to commit to fixing broken lifts within 24 hours. Daily inspection of lifts at all stations on the network shall be carried out. A maintenance contract for all lifts across the network will be tendered. Real Time Passenger information signs will also be fixed within 24 hours of them breaking. A twitter account will be created to notify interested people of any broken lifts on the network. Other methods of communicating with people not on Twitter will also be explored.

### 4.2.1.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)

- a. Upgrade our main train stations throughout the country so that they are accessible, modern, and airy, akin to airport terminals. There are many international examples of how this can be done.
- b. Restore older buildings to their former condition and guarantee their proper future maintenance, the more worthy of them not already designated as protected structures being so designated, as befits their heritage.
- c. Provide better facilities at stations for passengers. Accessible and clean toilets and comfortable heated waiting rooms in most stations as a minimum and left luggage, car rental, shops, restaurants etc. in larger stations.
- d. The Leap card system will be reviewed to bring it into its next iteration. Consideration will be given to moving it onto mobile devices with E-ticketing. Dublin Bikes and other bike share apps should also be incorporated into the service. Ways of increasing the benefits of the Leap card will also be explored, for example, could the Leap card be used as a loyalty card? Giving users discounts to train station shops and services, or for discounts to the food trolley on trains, or to free trips after building up credit. Perhaps a points system should be considered.

#### **4.2.2 Deliver an organised and coherent governance and management structure within which a modern and progressive rail network can develop.**

##### **4.2.2.1 Short Term Action (12 months)**

- a. Review the current departments and authorities in charge of rail transport in Ireland, with a view to streamlining and possibly amalgamating some or all of them. Consideration will be given to transposing CIE functions to the NTA and giving the NTA the proper powers required to run an efficient network.
- b. Commit to being more ambitious and progressive towards rail investment than has ever been the case since the foundation of the state. Develop an overarching Rail Master Plan, in conjunction with a broader Public Transport Plan. This master plan will consider how the development of the network and its governance should progress over the coming 50 years. This will be a statutory document that can be amended only under certain and exceptional circumstances. The master plan will set out projects to be completed with a hierarchy of priority and importance. The plan will be developed in consultation with rail users, with particular emphasis on engagement with groups representing those with varying mobility needs or disabilities, so that infrastructure can be designed with this in mind from the start.
- c. Review all of CIE's assets with a view to using them for their most practical use, be it developing land adjacent to stations or to using railway arches more effectively. Consideration will also be given to developing air rights over lines to generate revenue where feasible and appropriate.
- d. Institutional arrangements will be put in place to deliver physical infrastructure more speedily and sequentially through the planning and design stages. Develop the competencies and resources required within the state to deliver these infrastructural projects speedily.

##### **4.2.2.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Encourage local and national user groups (Tidy Towns, West on Track, Wexford Rail Group, Dublin Commuter Alliance, RailUsers Ireland ) to engage with improvements to Rail facilities and services.
- b. Continue to support the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland (an all-Ireland body) in its work in both preservation of our railway heritage and bringing the past to the public through excursions and exhibitions.

- c. Develop a Rails Users Assembly, selected from a panel of diverse rail users, including people with disabilities, of different ages, genders, ethnicities, and from different socio-economic backgrounds who will sit at the executive level of the board of CIE / Irish Rail, so people's concerns are addressed at the highest levels.

### 4.2.3 **Commit to improving overall journey speeds on intercity lines to ensure rail is competitive with roads.**

#### 4.2.3.1 Short Term Action (12 months)

- a. Undertake a full review of all intercity and commuter routes. This review would be akin to the route and branch review of the Dublin Bus Network that is currently being implemented (Bus Connects). This review would consider consistency of routes under some key parameters (i.e., stops, frequency, timetables). Develop timetables where different modes complement each other rather than being in competition (i.e., Buses linking up with rail services). This can be enhanced by combined ticketing.
- b. Commission a study on the feasibility of building a new Dublin City Station in the Sheriff Street Yard to connect all the intercity and commuter lines together.
- c. Intercity services should be dedicated to larger towns and cities only. Unnecessary stops at smaller stations add time onto Intercity journey times. These smaller stations could be picked up by a local feeder train to bring them to the next large town / city on the intercity route where they could connect with the faster intercity trains for onward journeys.
- d. Dual track the network to improve speeds and reduce timetabling and crossover delays. We will also invest in signalling and track improvement where necessary and provide grade separated junctions on intercity lines to improve speeds (i.e., outside Kildare town).

#### 4.2.3.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)

- a. Improve frequency towards 'turn up and go' level of services on all commuter and intercity services.
- b. Improve timetable legibility by providing consistent clock face, departure times throughout the day where possible.
- c. Provide more trains at off peak times and to provide earlier and later services including on weekends.

- d. Electrify both the Belfast and Cork lines and then the remaining network in due course. Existing rolling stock on the Belfast and Cork routes could be used to improve services on other non-electric lines until they are themselves ready to be upgraded to electric.

#### 4.2.4 Commit to developing suburban heavy rail infrastructure to facilitate modal shift from cars to rail-based transport.

##### 4.2.4.1 Short Term Action (12 months)

- a. **Dublin:** Fully commit to the DART expansion project. This project will dramatically increase much needed capacity on the existing rail network in the greater Dublin area. The Maynooth and M3 Parkway lines should be completed as soon as possible with the Kildare, Northern and Southern lines following promptly thereafter. Electrification should be completed in full thus obviating the need to purchase expensive and less sustainable hybrid (battery) rolling stock.
- b. **Dublin:** Progress to the planning and detailed design stages of the Dart Interconnector scheme as soon as possible. This project is the keystone to providing a dramatic improvement to the greater Dublin area rail infrastructure network for the next 100 years. This scheme unlocks the true potential for Dublin to have a world class rail-based transport network. Consideration will be given to reviewing the alignment of the route to improve interchange points with the proposed MetroLink project at St. Stephens Green and to providing a second interchange location with existing DART at North Strand Road.
- c. **Dublin:** Designate Kishogue, Clondalkin/Fonthill or Park West/Cherry Orchid stations as being an additional station at which Intercity trains stop at to serve the Greater Dublin Area as well as the City Centre at Heuston Station. This would greatly improve accessibility to intercity services to people living in the greater Dublin Area wishing to make trips on the Waterford, Cork, Tralee, Limerick, Galway and Westport lines. It would negate the need for passengers to go into the city centre to get these intercity services. Build a large drop off and park and ride car park at this station to accommodate park and ride trips.
- d. **Meath:** Complete a full review of the proposed Navan Rail line route with a view to reviewing the currently proposed route alignment to provide better catchment to Dunshaughlin, Ratoath and Ashbourne. Any proposed rail line to Navan town must not ignore these large commuter towns. Once an improved alignment has been agreed this scheme should proceed to the planning and detailed design stages as soon as possible.
- e. **Dublin / Wicklow:** Consider opening new commuter rail stations in the Greater Dublin Area at the following locations: Porterstown, Ballybough/North Strand Rd, Ballyfermot / Inchicore, Cabra, Woodbrook, Heuston Platform 10.
- f. **Nationwide:** Ensure the existing rail network is more resilient to weather related events to make them more reliable. Fixing existing notoriously unreliable sections such as the flooding that regularly occurs on the Limerick – Ennis line will be prioritised. The Dublin – Wexford line will also require significant enforcement works to make it less susceptible to weather related events.

- g. Kildare:** Investigate the feasibility of a better connection to Naas town centre from Sallins Station that meets every Sallins train. This does not necessarily need to be heavy rail based, but could be in the form of bus, autonomous bus, pod or improved cycle facilities etc.
- h. Cork:** Support the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy findings and commit to funding the light and heavy rail aspects of the strategy.
- i. Galway:** Introduce a rail commuter service between Athenry and Galway with new stops in strategic locations. Double tracking of the line between Galway and Athenry would also therefore become essential.

#### **4.2.4.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Limerick:** Develop a more ambitious Limerick Transport Plan which will be tasked with outlining areas where light or heavy rail could be developed to create a commuter service within the city. Consideration will be given to the overall feasibility of existing services on the Nenagh line and ways of improving timetables and patronage.
- b. Limerick:** Double track the line between Limerick City and Limerick Junction.
- c. Galway:** Improve and reconfigure the rail infrastructure at Athenry. A westbound curve from the Limerick line onto the Galway line should be provided. This coupled with a new Athenry Park and Ride Station close to Junction 17 on the M6 motorway would allow for a large park and ride facility with a direct link onto the M6 to be created. This could potentially divert many vehicles from the M6 and remove vehicular congestion in Galway City Centre. It would also speed up trains on the Galway - Limerick route, as it would remove the turn-back which is currently required. These plans should be incorporated into the county development plan and the lands required should be zoned accordingly.



**4.2.5 Develop an all-Ireland Heavy Rail network that does not require trips through Dublin City. Improved connectivity between Irish cities will contribute to more balanced regional development.**

**4.2.5.1 Short Term Action (12 months)**

- a. Begin a rail service between Waterford and Galway via Limerick.
- b. Mothball the Waterford - Rosslare line to prevent its further deterioration.
- c. Commission a feasibility study for the extension of the Sligo line north into Derry or Letterkenny.

**4.2.5.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Redevelop the line between Athenry and Claremorris.

**4.2.5.3 Long Term Action (3-5 years)**

- a. Redevelop the line between Claremorris and Sligo.

#### **4.2.6 Commit to building an extensive light rail infrastructure to facilitate modal shift from cars to rail-based transport.**

##### **4.2.6.1 Short Term Action (12 months)**

- a. All Green Line Luas trams should serve all stations to Broombridge given the demand placed on it.
- b. Introduce enforcement cameras on Luas trams to catch motorists driving in Luas Lanes / breaking red lights, for safety and enforcement reasons.
- c. Support the proposed extension of the Luas Green Line from Broombridge to Finglas and onto Charlestown. This scheme should be delivered earlier than currently proposed (2030). Consider a further extension from Charlestown towards Northwood / Ballymun where it could interchange with the proposed Metrolink route and carry out a feasibility study as soon as possible.
- d. Provide a largely new Luas line from Dublin city centre to Lucan and beyond. A feasibility / route selection study of a possible route should be completed immediately.
- e. Extend the Red Line Luas from the Point stop eastwards across the Liffey and towards Ringsend. A feasibility / route selection study of a possible route should be completed immediately.
- f. Support the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy and the proposal of a light rail line for Cork City.
- g. Carry out a route selection study for a light rail line in Galway City. Any possible emerging preferred route should be protected from development until such time as it can be developed.

##### **4.2.6.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Reconfigure the siding into Connolly Station so that the existing Connolly and Busarás stations are amalgamated, negating the requirement for the Connolly siding. Every tram shall serve all stations to The Point station all day.
- b. Within three years bring to the planning stage the extension of the Luas Green Line south from Cherrywood towards Bray where it could interchange with existing Dart services.

#### **4.2.7 Commit to building Metro infrastructure to facilitate modal shift from cars to rail-based transport.**

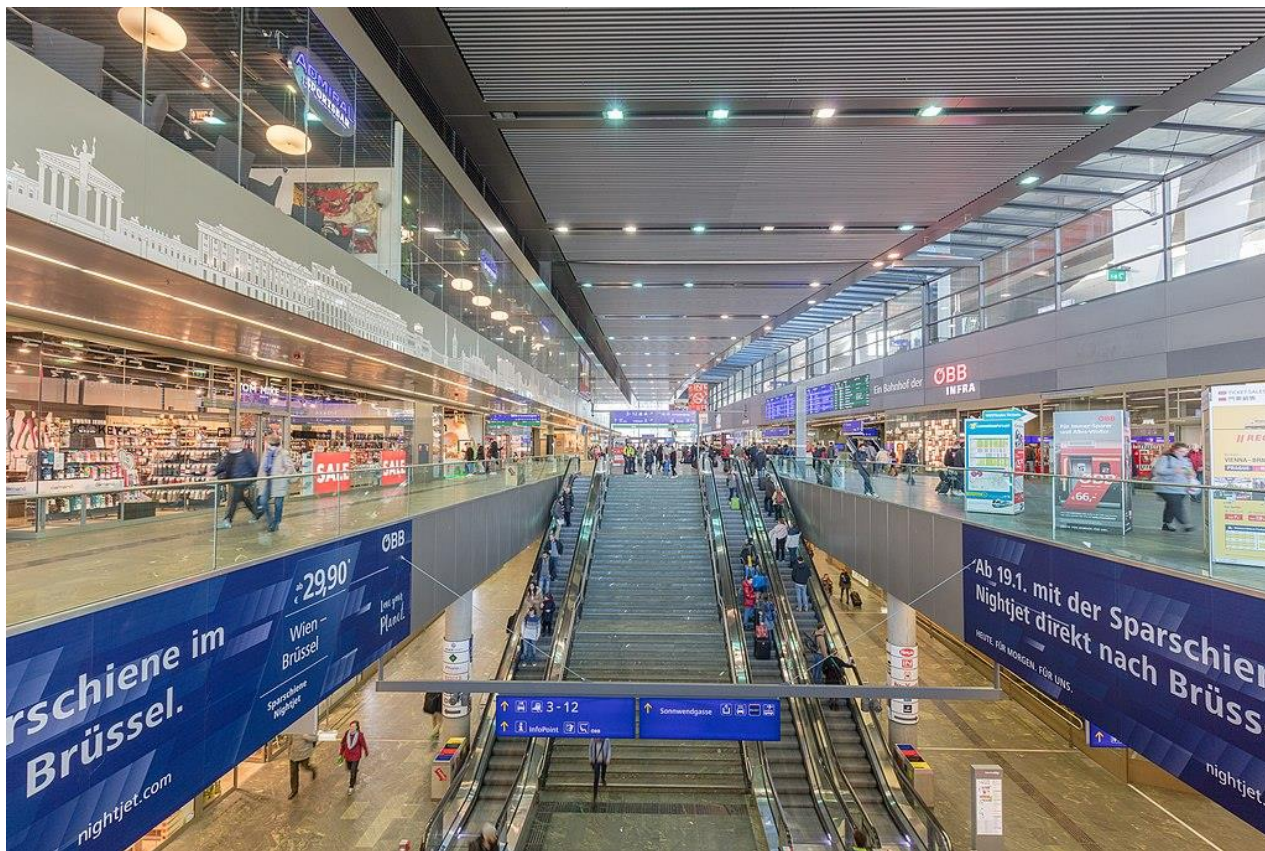
##### **4.2.7.1 Short Term Action (12 months)**

- a. Support the progression through planning and onto construction of the Metrolink Project. Every effort will be made to prioritise this project and to begin construction as soon as possible.
- b. Keep alive the possibility of a Metro line beside or near to the M50, similar to the previously proposed Metro West Scheme, as it would enable motorists to park and ride into the City or to travel between suburbs and provide access to industries along the route.

##### **4.2.7.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Develop plans for the MetroLink phase 2 project and develop what to do with the Luas Green line upon completion of the MetroLink project. Options include some or all of the following: upgrade existing Green Line to Metro Standard, extend a new MetroLink route to the south east, extend a new MetroLink route to the south west.

#### 4.2.8 Commission a study for a new Dublin Central Rail Station



*Main concourse of new Vienna Central Station (Wien Hauptbahnhof) opened in 2015*

*Photo: By Diego Delso, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=87544207>*

##### 4.2.8.1 Short Term Action (12 months)

- a. Ensure the Sheriff Street Yard is recognised as having great potential and that it is strategically located to facilitate a new Dublin Central Station. This site must not be sold or developed in a manner that would endanger this potential use.
- b. Investigate using the existing Sheriff St. Yard / Docklands Station as a new Dublin City Central Station that would serve all National, Regional and Greater Dublin Area Rail lines to facilitate a properly joined up National Rail Network. This could be akin to the Birmingham New Street Train Station recently developed in England.
- c. Recognise that the site is uniquely placed to be a multi modal interchange hub for Dublin City as well as the country as a whole. It is connected to all heavy rail lines, existing Dart line, Luas Red line, great road network via the Dublin Port Tunnel, cycle and pedestrian network. It is strategically located within the city centre and the IFSC. It is located on the proposed Dart Interconnector. It is on land that is currently not

being used and allows for regeneration of a neglected part of the city. There are opportunities to develop over the station for retail, office and residential uses.

- d. Recognise that there is an opportunity to also develop a new National Bus Station on the site.

#### **4.2.8.2 Medium Term Action (1-3 years)**

- a. Progress design concepts for a possible station layout and how it could integrate into the existing network.
- b. Begin design and planning process on the New Dublin Central Station.

## 5 Buses

### Summary

A high-quality, accessible, bus network that accommodates people of all age groups, abilities, genders, ethnicities, and socio-economic backgrounds as part of a sustainable, nationwide transport system, where the majority of journeys can be completed safely and comfortably by walking, cycling, or on public transport.

### Key Policies

Greater development and improvement of bus routes on a local, regional and national basis to increase usage among all sections of society.

Utilizing fair competition and effective governance to ensure best service for all stakeholders.

Improve our rural transport and Local Link services.

Greatly enhance the prioritisation of buses on Ireland's roads to reduce travel time for travellers.

Place reliability at the core of our transport network.

Transform stations into Transport Hubs.

Affordable fares that are convenient to pay.

Ensure accessible transport, so that our transport infrastructure must be considerate of the varying abilities and needs that exist within our society.

Reduce the environmental impacts of Ireland's bus fleet, setting a precedent for other transport modes.

Driving forward with joined-up thinking, to provide better outcomes for the end-user as well as delivering better value for the taxpayer.

## 5.1 Introduction

The Green Party vision is for a high-quality, accessible, bus network that accommodates people of all age groups, abilities, genders, ethnicities, and socio-economic backgrounds as part of a sustainable, nationwide transport system, where the majority of journeys can be completed safely and comfortably by walking, cycling, or on public transport.

### 5.1.1 Principles

#### 5.1.1.1 Context

Transport is a major component of consumer spending, costing the average Irish household €2,500 a year in 2016, up €200 from €2,300 in 2015. This is 25% higher than the EU average of €2,000 a year (Transport Trends 2019). Between 2005 and 2019, roads received an average of 60% of land transport funding while public transport averaged 37% over the same period (Transport Trends 2019). More than €11 billion is earmarked for roads projects around the country under the NDP.

Despite the increases since 2012, transport investment today is significantly less than in 2008. It remains the case that Ireland is investing less than it historically has, less as a proportion of GDP than other OECD states, and less than the estimated level to maintain the current system. On top of this, Ireland has more than three times the road density of the UK (6.4 km per 1,000 inhabitants).

Travel by bus remains the largest public transport mode. In 2017 Dublin Bus accounted for the greatest number of passenger movements with 139m journeys, with Bus Éireann being the next largest provider with 79m passenger journeys. Additionally, buses provide an important role in supporting rail and connecting with ports and airports. Last year buses for example transported thousands of passengers to Irish airports.

*“Bus is an essential transport mode in providing mobility within the Greater Dublin Area. Bus currently carries the largest share of public transport users and will continue to carry a major share in the foreseeable future.” (NTA, 2012, Bus Rapid Transit)*

However, the sector is in need of expansion, support and in some cases complete overhaul.

Whilst we recognize and support the work being done by the NTA on the Dublin Area Bus Network as part of BusConnects Core Bus Corridor Project, there is no visibility as to when projects may launch in the other towns and cities around our country. Given the mounting demands of climate change, this is not good enough. Interest rates are currently at historic lows and we should utilize this opportunity to increase the funding and resources to rapidly increase both the numbers of projects and the rate of delivery.

Investing in public transport infrastructure will have many tangible effects, including improved access to employment, and will help offset costs associated with traffic congestion and emissions. The cost of traffic congestion in the Greater Dublin Area alone was estimated at €358m in 2012 and is projected to reach €2.08bn by 2033. Traffic Congestion reduces labour mobility, connectivity, and quality-of-life required for a competitive economy and the creation of attractive places to work and set up business.



International studies in urban areas have found that shoppers who arrive on foot, by bike or by public transport tend to visit more frequently and spend more over the course of a month.

#### 5.1.1.2 Rural Transport

The Green Party recognises the underinvestment in rural public transport in the past. We further recognise that in many cases, private car ownership is a necessary part of rural life. Whilst we are on the cusp of many new technologies perhaps changing this (e.g. autonomous, on-demand vehicles), none of these can be called upon to provide an immediate alternative. Therefore, we see it as imperative to strategically focus our efforts, and, combined with improvements in active transport and electrification of the national fleet, we see a viable opportunity to reduce the number of kilometres travelled by private vehicles with combustible fuel engines.

*“In Ireland, the importance of transport is regarded as a key determinant in combating social exclusion as well as enabling access to health and social services, education, and employment opportunities. The lack of availability of public transport significantly diminishes the quality of life for people who are heavily dependent on it.” - Sustainable Mobility Policy Review*

UK research shows transport as the single most important concern of rural dwellers. Transport services provided in rural areas therefore need to be appropriate to the specific needs of people in rural areas, including the key target groups (e.g. by being accessible, demand-responsive).

Furthermore, the Green Party recognises the people most at risk of social isolation and who rely on public transport services in rural areas are generally older people, people who have disabilities, people on low incomes and young people. Additionally, we recognise that the generation that will be retiring in coming years is a generation used to mobility through the widespread and ubiquitous use of private cars, creating higher barriers to behaviour change.

The challenges impacting rural transport have been outlined in many past reports and most recently in the Sustainable Mobility Policy Review 2019, including but not limited to:

- a. Cost
  - b. Image
  - c. Reliability
  - d. Infrastructure
  - e. Low-density populations resulting in low patronage
- a. The importance of planning and coordination between government departments;
  - b. The need for door-to-door service for people with disabilities and older people;
  - c. Problems of accessibility to public transport for people with disabilities;



The Green Party recognises the challenge of providing rural transport in highly dispersed areas. In general, there is a strong relationship between public transport usage and population density, therefore underlining the important relationship transport has with land-use planning. However, transport in rural areas of Ireland needs to be viewed in a wider context as an essential way of connecting communities, contributing to mobility and ensuring balanced development across the Island.

*“Land-use patterns in Ireland are dominated by low to medium density development in suburban areas, highly dispersed rural populations and the growth in peripheral development of services and employment. This settlement and employment locational context, which dictates travel demand, is difficult to serve by public transport.” - Sustainable Mobility Policy Review 2019*

#### 5.1.1.3 Environment

Whilst we acknowledge the lower impact of buses on carbon emissions compared to private cars on a national level, *“From the most recent (2017) emission inventory by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), it is estimated that just 3.4% of all transport-derived CO2 comes from bus and coach fleets”*, we must also note the effect of large diesel engines of our urban buses on our city and town air quality. Particulate matter (PMs) and other emissions such as Nitrous Oxide, contribute to the growing health epidemic, resulting in tens of thousands of premature deaths.

This policy strives to increase the usage of public transport such as buses in place of private cars. We must however be conscious that this will further increase the output of emissions from the bus sector if we have not successfully electrified the national fleet by then.

#### 5.1.1.4 Governance of Transport in Ireland

As a social good, we fully believe that the public transport infrastructure should be provided for by the state. Equally many of the routes (and especially in rural areas) will need to be subsidised by the state. However, the Green Party recognises the important contribution of private bus operators throughout Ireland, both to transport and to the economy. We believe that there is a balance to strike between being fully state-owned and operated, compared with a totally private sector.

In many cases, private buses are filling some of the gap between demand and what CIE provides. With better licensing, regulation and co-operation between public and private, more passengers could be carried whether by satisfying underlying demand and partly by attracting more passengers to public from private motorised transport.

## 5.2 Policy Details

### 5.2.1 Greater development and improvement of bus routes on a local, regional and national basis to increase usage among all sections of society

5.2.1.1 <u>Short-term Action (12 months)</u>	
a.	Initiate an independent review into transport routes across the island of Ireland to ensure that the most wide-ranging, direct, frequent, punctual and cost-effective services are provided to all. This will encapsulate the work being conducted by the BusConnects project for Dublin, the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS), the Limerick joint initiative and other ongoing regional projects and ensure there is a cohesive, national approach. This review will consider multi-modal transport options to ensure alignment across all services.
b.	Continue to support the BusConnects project and its ongoing work with communities to optimise the layout of the proposal, ensuring that facilitating active travel and creating a quality environment are primary goals of the project.
c.	Review feasibility of expanding 24 hour bus routes which began in Cork (route 220) and have since been implemented on two Dublin Bus routes (routes 15 and 41). Carry out a review to determine whether this should be rolled out across more bus routes and a possible trial outside of Dublin and Cork, such as Limerick, Galway and Waterford.
5.2.1.2 <u>Medium term action (1-3 years)</u>	
a.	Provide all towns of nominally 5,000 (87 settlements) or more residents with a bus service linking the principal parts of the town to each other, in addition to being a commuter service through the middle of the town. Smaller-sized local buses are ideally suited to this service in a “hail and ride” type service. The recently introduced bus networks in Kilkenny City and Athlone are great examples of such possible routes (see Figure 1). This service could be replicated in cities and large towns across the country with the right planning and investment.
b.	Push for greater alignment with train timetables so that buses can help bridge a crucial gap and reduce the need for private car travel to train stations.

- c. Introduce further orbital routes to increase the connectivity and efficiency of suburbs and peripheral employment centres. Most cities and large town suburbs are served by radial routes from their centres with few cross-routes. Linking suburbs and peripheral communities and towns directly will decrease journey time between these areas via public transport, reduce strain on city centre routes and reduce the need to make these journeys via private vehicles. Successful examples of this include the 201 and 225 services in Cork.
- d. Increase the subsidy paid to Ireland's bus operators. In 2020, the state subsidy to Dublin Bus is lower than EU average. For the Green Party, buses are like street lights, in that they need to be thought of as essential infrastructure that enables cities and economies to function.

5.2.1.3 Long Term Action (3-5 years)

- a. Propose expanding the bus network to provide increased connections between towns and cities across the country. Bus Éireann services are focused too heavily on connecting a dozen bus stations across the country with each other and their peripheral towns, rather than connecting small and medium-size towns in their own right. These routes, like all public transport routes should be reliable, timely and cost effective services, accessible to all.
- b. Examine the relocation of bus transport routes to the continent through Cherbourg or other French ports. Increase support for these services to provide a more viable alternative to flying. Prioritize comfort and cost. Currently the Eurolines bus service provides the main bus links between Ireland and major cities across the United Kingdom. From London, Eurolines provides bus services linking to 25 other countries. However, as Brexit unfolds currently, we will need to ensure that such bus routes are not inhibited by any restrictions and allow for safe and legal passage as is currently afforded to those within the European Union.
- c. Develop and test new routes on an ongoing basis. Where possible, with respect to data privacy and GDPR, utilize data to inform and strengthen traffic models. As examples, this may be anonymised data from fleet vehicles (e.g. capturing bus capacity throughout the journey), anonymised data from third party route mapping companies and data from traffic infrastructure. Prioritize the improvement of the road infrastructure to allow for easier anonymous data collection and processing.
- d. Lean into the mindset of piloting, trialling and testing (combined with clear communication to all stakeholders) to rapidly uncover that which might improve or hinder the bus service. Encourage this approach among all suppliers to the NTA.

e.	Leverage the same data-driven decision-making that has been successful within private industry to identify routes that will have the greatest impact on reducing the need for private vehicles. This will likely heavily focus on commuter and school routes; however, due focus must be given to under-served communities to increase their ability to access work, services and amenities.
f.	<p>Target the development of tourist routes, together with the Department of Tourism. These would be markedly different to bus tours, and would have the goal of promoting less well known tourist sites around the country and to provide viable means to tourist and heritage sites without needing private transport, linking with local hospitality businesses such as restaurants, hotels or hostels.</p> <p>Some examples could include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wicklow Mountains National Park (Glendalough via Larragh), Cliffs of Moher (via Lahinch) and Powerscourt waterfall from Dublin City Centre</li> <li>2. Newgrange from Dublin City Centre</li> </ol>
g.	Utilize ticket information to provide the most efficient bus type for each route at any given time (e.g. larger buses are not needed for quieter routes or at less busy times).
h.	Revise the eligibility criteria for School Transport Schemes to include pupils living closer to their schools than the current minimum distances in towns that suffer from chronic traffic congestion and do not have safe cycling routes to schools.
i.	Aim to empower local authorities to influence the planning, strategy and decision-making within their specific regions, in keeping with our party ethos of decision-making at the lowest possible level. Invite broad consultation among all stakeholders on route development, planning and implementation.
j.	Commit to trialling autonomous shuttle buses. At the time of writing this policy, autonomous shuttle buses are being tested in various locations globally, including within Dublin. Whilst not a replacement or substitution for bus and coach drivers, these vehicles present an opportunity in terms of creating new shuttle routes. If this technology manifests, it greatly increases the feasibility of shuttle bus routes between housing developments and commuter services / shopping facilities / social venues etc. Active transport is always a key priority for the Green Party but in some circumstances, this may not be feasible at all times.

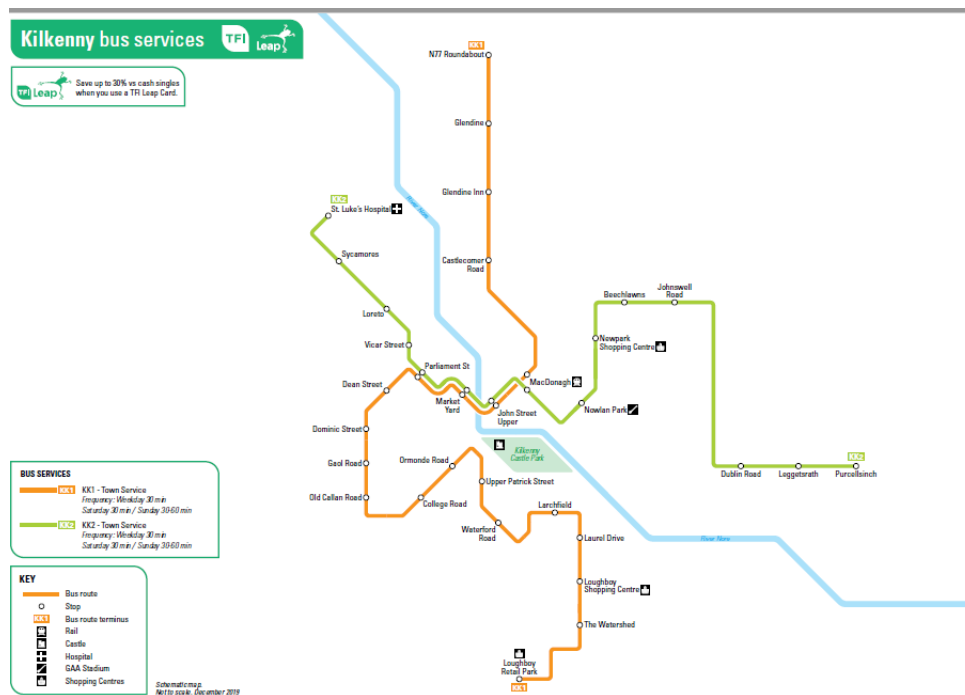


Figure 1: Kilkenny bus route map, 2020

## 5.2.2 Utilizing fair competition and effective governance to ensure best service for all stakeholders

5.2.2.1 <u>Short-term Action (12 months)</u>	
a.	Invite tenders from CIE and private operators for certain services such as Dublin and the main provincial routes. Continue the existing process which has started within certain Dublin bus routes where nearly 10% of bus routes are operated privately.
b.	Ensure private operators are providing sufficiently different routes e.g. Waterford city offering similar services.
c.	Ensure that all private operators adhere to the same regulations, regardless of location. Currently, those outside of Dublin fall under different regulations, which are often less stringent than those inside the GDA. The CIE subsidiary should be a standard bearer to which other operators should be required to match or better, while still participating in a level playing field.
5.2.2.2 <u>Medium term action (1-3 years)</u>	
a.	Review the current structure of the National Transport Authority, with a view to increasing ownership and decision-making at local authority level for certain routes.
b.	Call for more oversight of working conditions of drivers, workers etc. that work for private operators on behalf of NTA. This could be managed by the NTA.

## 5.2.3 Improve our rural transport and Local Link services

5.2.3.1 <u>Short-term Action (12 months)</u>	
a.	Require the NTA to quickly and efficiently deliver on the below actions outlined in the Action Plan for Rural Development.
b.	Require that a separate division within the NTA be made responsible for the delivery of the Rural Transport Plan. As stated previously, the Green Party believes that Bus Éireann services are focused too heavily on connecting a

dozen bus stations across the country with each other and their peripheral towns, rather than connecting small and medium-size towns in their own right. In light of Ireland's unique spatial development, this limited vision of bus public transport is a serious impediment to the development of a truly all-inclusive bus service.	
<b>5.2.3.2    <u>Medium term action (1-3 years)</u></b>	
a.	Integrate (without reduction in service) the budgets for public school bus services and for public funded rural transport schemes into the main route structure of Bus Éireann, opening bus services to a wide range of people, as well as creating a more efficient way of spending that budget. This is placed in the context of an overall vision for rural public transport and sees bus transport as the micro level of the bus network.
b.	Apply wider socioeconomic KPIs to determine whether particular services are effective, recognizing that access and mobility are key issues in the decision-making process.
<b>5.2.3.3    <u>Long Term Action (3-5 years)</u></b>	
a.	Commit to open dialogue and consultation before the introduction or change of any future or existing services within communities affected.
b.	Increase funding of Local Link and make it easier for other community transport schemes to access funding whilst simultaneously reducing the legal challenges preventing schemes from taking place.
c.	Exercise flexibility in the provision of transport services in rural areas. In very isolated rural areas the demand for travel may not support the provision of bus services but may have to be met by local hackney services or community car schemes where they exist. Legal and regulatory frameworks are primarily geared towards conventional public passenger transport whereas innovative transport services can be neglected. This is especially relevant in rural areas with dispersed population where it is difficult to provide cost-effective conventional public transport.
d.	Upgrade Local Link services. Rural Transport Programme (RTP) funding amounts to €14.9m in 2019. In addition, Public Service Obligation (PSO) funding of over €6m is allocated for Local Link regular commuter services in

	2019, bringing the total funding for Local Link services in 2019 to €21m. This doesn't allow for any significant upgrades to services or vehicles.
e.	Support Local Link fleet owner companies to make their fleets wheelchair accessible. No replacement buses have been purchased in recent years by the fleet-owning companies due to a lack of funding.
f.	Advocate high quality national transport services with pick-up points on national routes where local bus routes can feed into larger bus routes connecting major cities and towns.
g.	Advocate for an updated Land Use Plan for Ireland that incorporates current and future transport needs.

No.	Action	Timeline	Responsible Bodies
251	Conduct a full review of public transport policy, including the rural transport dimension, to ensure that it meets the needs of rural communities.	2017	DTTAS, NTA
252	Work with rural communities to assess and implement improvements to existing rural transport routes and develop new rural transport routes as necessary.	On-going	NTA
253	Rollout a programme of awareness of the Rural Transport Programme among rural communities.	On-going	NTA
254	Ensure that RTP vehicles are accessible, having regard to all passenger needs.	On-going from 2017	NTA
255	Examine the potential for integration of HSE non-emergency transport services with rural transport services.	On-going	NTA, HSE
257	Conduct a review of the small public service vehicle driver licensing framework to ensure the availability of taxi/hackney services including rural areas.	2017	DTTAS, NTA

Figure 2. Action Plan for Rural Development



#### 5.2.4 Greatly enhance the prioritisation of buses on Ireland's roads to reduce travel time for passengers

5.2.4.1 <u>Short Term Action (12 months)</u>
<p>a. Increase the priority of buses on roads (thereby reducing journey times for passengers and giving greater turnaround of buses, the latter permitting more frequent services and/or reduction in the number of buses required) by:</p> <p>Examining and trialling the use of bus gates at peak hours to further increase the permeability of our cities to buses and active transport as per Bus Connects.</p> <p>Constructing Bus Rapid Transit (the provision of high quality, dedicated bus corridors that combine the efficiency and reliability of light rail with the lower infrastructural costs of those for buses) on the less dense commuter routes. The selection of such routes would be made using the best available data to ensure the greatest impact can be achieved. Cork City has been identified as being particularly suitable.</p>
5.2.4.2 <u>Medium Term Action (1-3 years)</u>
<p>a. Ensure that signalling at road junctions favours emergency services, active modes of transport, public transport and finally private vehicles in that order (therefore, respecting the road user hierarchy outlined in DMURS May 2019).</p>
<p>b. Initiate a Park and Ride review for the whole of Ireland, to understand the opportunities for expansion of P&amp;R facilities with particular focus on the commuter belt around Dublin, Cork and Limerick. The M50 and M4 are examples where significant opportunities are available. In the cases of certain LUAS P&amp;R sites, already existing facilities can be utilized whilst additionally offering greater shuttle options, e.g., Red Cow LUAS P&amp;R.</p>
<p>c. Examine the use of tolling of private vehicles at major congestion points as another potential means to improve the performance of the bus network. Direct tolling should be considered <b><u>only after</u></b> other means have been fully exhausted and alternative methods of transport needs are in place beforehand, such as Park &amp; Ride facilities.</p>



Figure 3: Bus Rapid-Transport, NTA report 2012

## 5.2.5 Placing reliability at the core of our transport network

5.2.5.1 <u>Short Term Action (12 months)</u>	
a.	Align our vision for our bus network to that of the Vienna model, focusing on reliability, frequency, and affordability for all passengers.
b.	Enable Transport for Ireland to monitor and enforce reliability and punctuality of all transport services.
c.	Launch a transparent mechanism for members of the public to lodge feedback, ideas and complaints and for these to be addressed in an effective manner. This would utilize technological resources to ensure this is as accessible as possible and be open to all public transport modes including rail.
d.	Create one customer-focused website with all information, timetables and ticket purchasing facilities.
5.2.5.2 <u>Medium Term Action (1-3 years)</u>	
a.	Support the tracking of all public transport vehicles in operation with GPS and the dissemination of this information to the public using technology. This can be utilized on the individual level as well as for tracking performance and standards on a wider level.

## 5.2.6 Transforming stations into Transport Hubs

5.2.6.1 <u>Short Term Action (12 months)</u>	
a.	Prioritize the creation of Transport Hubs where transport interconnects. Align transport services around the existing stops and stations and implement those that are feasible. An example of this would be the Europa Buscentre and Great Victoria Street Train Station in Belfast. Bus stops should align with other transport facilities for the same reason. This will further increase the viability of public transport over private vehicles, especially for longer, multi-leg journeys.
b.	Increase the number of bus shelters and Real Time Information Displays across the country and not just in urban settings. These resources should be located for the convenience of passengers first and foremost.
5.2.6.2 <u>Medium Term Actions (1-3 years)</u>	
a.	Ensure that appropriate active transport storage (secure bike shelters) is provided close to stops and stations. These should be appropriate both in terms of security and quantity to ensure that active transport becomes an easy addition to multi-modal journeys.
b.	Trial biodiversity-friendly bus stops (similar to those that have been trialled in the Netherlands). These provide increased pollinating opportunities, especially within the urban setting where similar might be scarce.
c.	Provide park and ride facilities where no local transport links are feasible. Ensure these facilities are utilized for their intended purposes and not as convenient free parking for private vehicles.
d.	Encourage all local agencies to work with local artists to brighten up local bus shelters. Embracing artwork may reduce the need to police shelters for vandalism.
e.	Support the opening of our transport hubs to private operators to provide improved customer services and amenities.
f.	Review the current bus depot facilities and locations within our cities to ensure that valuable land assets are best utilized to reduce the housing crisis and create a more vibrant local community. These needs must be balanced against the needs of the various bus providers. Clear examples of this include the bus depots in Donnybrook, Ringsend and Broadstone.

### 5.2.6.3 Long Term Action (3-5 years)

- a. Review feasibility of expanding the current Busáras station or a completely new station close by. Currently as it stands, the station is overstretched and at capacity.



Figure 5: Pollinator-friendly bus stop, Netherlands

## 5.2.7 Affordable fares that are convenient to pay

5.2.7.1 <u>Short Term Actions (12 months)</u>	
a.	Support the NTA in the process of moving towards a nationwide Account-Based Ticketing system – a move which will aim to accelerate the release of a Digital Leap Card. Complete this move as soon as possible to bring Ireland's transport system in line with other leaders in the EU and create an easier transport experience.
b.	Create an inclusive tech system – designed in tandem with a Diversity and Inclusion advisory group.
c.	Create an Account-Based Ticketing system, to enable commuters to move fluidly between modes of transport on a single trip without incurring additional fees. This will also support the use of public transport by tourists and visitors to the island, whereby a single app is much easier to engage with.
d.	Examine a fare system that is based on the final destination rather than the number of interchanges, which will help travellers who are not on direct routes.
e.	Review what populations are supported by the Free Travel Card and where this could be expanded to enable and encourage vulnerable groups to travel safely on public transport.
f.	Make public transport free for all students (up to and including 3 <sup>rd</sup> level) and pilot a €365 public transport annual pass modelled on the fare structure first introduced in Vienna in 2013.
g.	Allow accompanied children to travel free on public transport at weekends.
h.	Introduce a flat fare for Dublin Bus one-off tickets, with Advanced tickets and Leap Card being proportionally cheaper.
5.2.7.2 <u>Medium Term Actions (1-3 years)</u>	
a.	Support all public and private transport operators in their adoption of an Account-Based ticketing system in order to provide a seamless customer experience
b.	Examine the various segmentations used internationally (for example, time-based tickets in Berlin, Germany and zone-based tickets in the Paris Metro system) to understand which has the best outcomes for improving public transport usage and implement similar for Ireland.

5.2.7.3 Long Term Action (3-5 years)

- a. Examine the outcomes of ‘free mobility’ in Luxembourg to better gauge the costs and benefits of such actions. Based on this examination, we commit to conducting a full feasibility study with the goal of implementation if the overall rewards outweigh the costs.



## 5.2.8 Ensuring accessible transport, so that our transport infrastructure must be considerate of the varying abilities and needs that exist within our society

5.2.8.1 <u>Short Term Actions (12 months)</u>	
a.	Utilize digital technology to provide a better experience for those with different needs by:
a.	improving on-board stop displays (to allow headphone use for people who suffer from sensory processing difficulties).
b.	providing multilingual transport information, prioritizing our commitment to the Irish language as well as engaging minority groups and tourists.
c.	Prioritise those with increased mobility needs for queuing and boarding. <sup>15</sup>
d.	Open up dialogue with relevant representative groups, to develop an understanding of how public transport could better facilitate citizens of Ireland of varying abilities and needs.
5.2.8.2 <u>Medium Term Actions (1-3 years)</u>	
a.	Ensure our buses provide suitable amenities onboard, especially for longer journeys, with consideration to onboard wifi, charging ports and toilets. Physical spacing and onboard comfort are also crucial considerations to ensure that public transport can be a much more attractive option.
b.	<p>Ensure that all bus infrastructure (both the stops and the buses themselves) are suitable for those with increased mobility needs, for wheelchair users and those with pushchairs.</p> <p>We reference the good work done in the Sustainable Mobility Policy Review Background Paper 1 – Public Transport and Accessibility in examining the ability of the various modes of public transport to accommodate those with increased mobility needs. However it is difficult to envision how intercity transport can be a viable replacement for private car transport when 24 hours advance notice must be given to make space for a wheelchair on these buses. Therefore, we will examine what solutions exist globally to solve this issue and commit to trial various arrangements and roll-out the best across our national fleet.</p>
c.	Trial the use of bike racks on our urban buses, similar to services provided within Canada. <sup>16</sup>



### 5.2.9 Reduce the environmental impacts of Ireland's bus fleet, setting a precedent for other transport modes

5.2.9.1 <u>Short Term Actions (12 months)</u>	
a.	Support the continued phasing out of diesel buses within our urban public fleet and strive to speed this up process. A clear benefit from this policy would be to the air quality in our urban areas.
5.2.9.2 <u>Medium Term Actions (1-3 years)</u>	
a.	Prioritize the transition of our long-distance fleet away from fossil fuels. At the time of writing this policy, whilst there have been rapid advancements in battery technology for private cars, there is no one clear solution to this issue for long haul coaches and buses. Therefore, we will also commit to supporting trials of various technologies including but not limited to biogas, hybrid, fully electric and hydrogen powered transport.
b.	Commit to utilizing technology to monitor and manage vehicle speeds as opposed to the building of speed bumps. Whilst these are cost effective at the time of building, they cause an externality in that they take a toll on the longevity of all vehicles on our roads, public and private alike which runs contrary to the principles on a sustainable and circular economy. The increased burden of wear and tear, their inconsistent sizing and maintenance as well as the impact upon the flow of active travel make speed bumps that straddle the entire road a hindrance.
c.	Advocate for speed bumps that are spaced to allow free flow of active transport and the bus fleet, where technology may not be feasible. Support the maintenance of national road infrastructure to ensure smooth transition of our bus fleet, as outlined in other sections of this policy.
d.	Within the lifetime of the policy, all urban bus operators must provide at least one Zero Emissions route in each urban area and provide a plan to eliminate fossil fuel urban buses by 2030.

Figure 2.1: Ireland's transport CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per mode in 2017

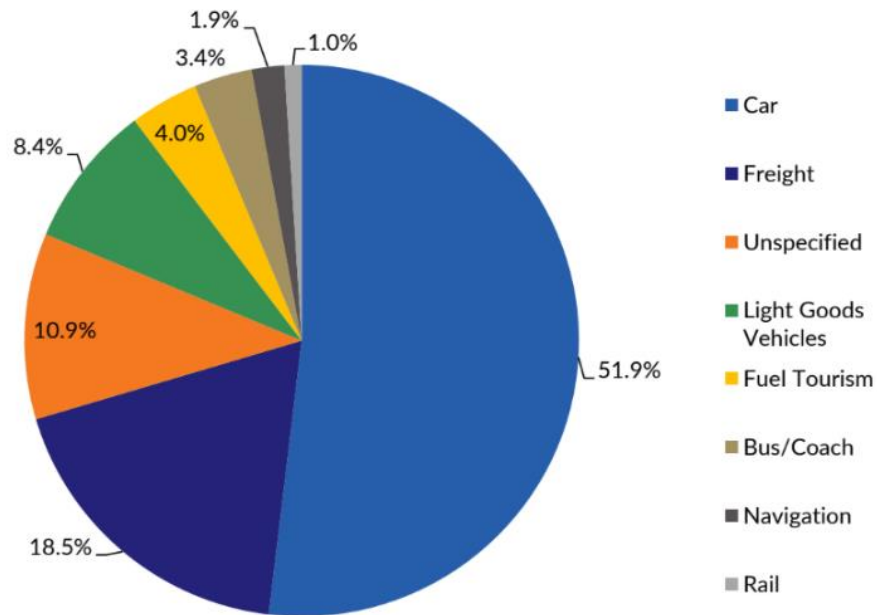


Figure 7: Ireland's transport CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per mode 2017, NTA report

## 6 Roads

### Summary

An accessible, equitable and sustainable road transport system with the minimum impact on the environment will as far as practicable use renewable resources and protect the vibrancy of our communities, ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of our people.

### Key Policies

Reduce the total use of our roads, the distance travelled by reducing journey lengths, particularly by encouraging the development and retention of local facilities and reduce the number of journeys made by unsustainable modes of transport, particularly by car, commercial vehicles, heavy goods vehicles.

Encourage a switch to sustainable methods of transport through transport planning based on a hierarchy of modes and demand management.

Reduce the environmental impacts of each form of road transport.

Enable interconnectivity of different sustainable modes of transport so that these forms of transport are simple and efficient, including convenient interconnectivity for both passengers and freight.

Ensure that all people of Ireland whether rural or urban have access to safe, sustainable means of travel that does not disadvantage them personally based on location.

Ensure a just transition to more sustainable forms of transportation that creates a new Green transport economy for Ireland.

## 6.1 Introduction

An accessible, equitable and sustainable road transport system with the minimum impact on the environment will as far as practical use renewable resources and protect the vibrancy of our communities, ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of our people.

### 6.1.1 Context

Roads form an essential building block of Ireland's transport system. Our country of 84,421 km<sup>2</sup> has developed in such a way over the centuries that we have approx. 49,100 cities, towns, villages, and townlands that form the communities we all live in. With an ever-growing population, approaching five million in the Republic and over six million on our entire island our roads transport policy must be one for all the people of our island.

Population growth has been modelled and projected past 2030 for Ireland by the CSO and a Green policy today for road transport is essential to ensure we can decouple transport emissions from that growth while reducing our impact on the environment and ensuring the connectivity and access all our people require.

The majority of our population live outside of our five main cities. This policy will be one for all the people of Ireland.

Transport represents the second largest source of greenhouse gas emissions on a national level, accounting for over 12,000 kT of CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions in 2018. Road Transport accounts for 76% of all transport emissions. In 2018 according to the EPA diesel accounted for the most significant portion of our national transport emissions at over 9,000 kT CO<sub>2</sub>e.

Population has a significant impact on transport emissions – more people means more cars, buses, trains, heavy goods vehicles, and airplanes. If we continue on our current trajectory unchecked the national transport emissions will exceed 20,000 kT CO<sub>2</sub>e per annum in Ireland. We need change today to meet our national emissions targets to make a meaningful impact on the climate emergency. System change to sustainable modes of transport is essential together with immediate and sustained transformation to zero exhaust emissions in private cars consistent with the National Development Plan and Climate Action Plan 2019 commitment to register only zero-exhaust-emissions cars from 2030. We must ensure that there is an almost immediate shift towards purchase of electric vehicles for all new cars. The average age of a car in Ireland is nine years and thus to ensure government targets of one million electric cars on our road by 2030 almost all new cars purchased from 2021 to 2030 must be electric.

This policy is structured with seven key principles in order of priority for the party in delivering our vision for the future of road transport in Ireland. For each of the six core policies a number of actions are proposed to achieve the policy objectives. The policies are subdivided into short, medium and long-term actions. It is our intention that the policy actions can be fluid, dependent on the country's changing needs, technologies and society, but the core policies will remain.

### 6.1.2 Principles

The principles on which this road transport policy document is based are:

- Accessibility rather than mobility.

- Transport to be equitably accessible to all people irrespective of their age, wealth, rural or urban status or disability, with local needs given priority over travelling greater distances.
- Where mobility is desired or needed, to satisfy this principally through sustainable modes of transport.
- Transport and its infrastructure to have the minimum impact on the environment.
- Transport systems should make use of sustainable and renewable resources.
- Community is ingrained in us as Irish citizens. Community, whether urban or rural, should be enhanced by our transport systems and policies and should not be impacted negatively where possible.
- Road Transport should ensure our nation's health, safety and well-being are protected, and where possible our roads should enable the safe use for active travel such as walking or cycling.

## 6.2 Policy Details

### Policy Core

The core policies which our Road Transport Policy aims to enact are:

- **Reduce the total use of our roads**, the distance travelled by reducing journey lengths, particularly by encouraging the development and retention of local facilities and reduce the number of journeys made by unsustainable modes of transport, particularly by car, commercial vehicles, heavy goods vehicles.
- **Encourage a switch to sustainable methods of transport** through transport planning based on a hierarchy of modes and demand management.
- **Reduce the environmental impacts** of each form of road transport.
- **Enable interconnectivity of different sustainable modes** of transport so that these forms of transport are simple and efficient, including convenient interconnectivity for both passengers and freight.
- Ensure that all people of Ireland whether rural or urban have access to safe, sustainable means of travel that does not disadvantage them personally based on location.
- Ensure a just transition to more sustainable forms of transportation that creates a new Green transport economy for Ireland

**6.2.1 To reduce the total use of our roads, the distance travelled by reducing journey lengths, particularly by encouraging the development and retention of local facilities and reduce the number of journeys made by unsustainable modes of transport, particularly by car, commercial vehicles, heavy goods vehicles.**

**6.2.1.1 Short Term Actions (1-3 YEARS)**

- a. Encourage working remotely where possible – a carbon tax credit paid by the Revenue Commissioners on an annual basis could encourage more people to work closer to home, once again breathing life back into our rural and regional communities and reducing the distance a large portion of our population travel to work each day.
- b. Develop an all-Ireland transport strategy with a focus on interconnectivity of modes – road, rail, cycling and walking. The development of this strategy should feed our national and local development plans to ensure a uniform approach to planning our villages, towns, cities of the future ensuring that essential services are located as close as possible to where we live.
- c. Encourage car-share schemes in all urban areas.
- d. Encourage the local authorities to repurpose space currently used for on-street parking in urban areas to encourage recreational, leisure or cultural improvements in the quality of life in these spaces.
- e. Recognise free parking for public servants is a form of fossil-fuel subsidy, and plan its phaseout and recycling of the revenues to subsidise sustainable transport, starting with the Civil Service.
- f. National Transport Climate Action Media campaign focusing on Road Transport emissions reductions– similar to road safety campaigns – raise awareness of the benefits.

**6.2.1.2 Medium Term Actions (3-6 YEARS)**

- a. Encourage the provision of essentially equal basis to serve villages, towns and cities. Develop systems for community/technology-based solutions to improve access to services to serve all the people of Ireland – rural and urban. There are solutions to ensure that our Post Offices, Garda Stations, Medical and Healthcare Services, Local Authorities, Schools, Childcare, Shops, Places of Work can serve all of our communities without the need to travel excessive distances by road.
- b. Encourage locally sourced materials and foods where possible – the distance travelled by many of the raw materials we use, the food we eat and its life cycle carbon emissions as a result of this distance negatively impacts our environment and also hampers a long term goal for a circular economy.

- c. Independently verified carbon footprinting to ISO14067 standards of all products should be a long-term strategy to which Ireland should aspire. This simple low-cost action could provide consumers with the insight into their choice of products and consequently locally sourced materials and foods would appear more attractive. This measure would also encourage the manufacturers of material, products, and foods to develop new ways to reduce the carbon footprint from raw materials through to end of life creating a new greener economy and jobs for our people.
- d. Legislate to enable local authorities to decide whether or not to introduce a Workplace Parking Levy and Congestion Charge in their jurisdictions, in respect of decision making at the lowest effective level, recognising the threat system change in transport poses to current tax revenues, and supporting decentralisation by shifting revenue-raising powers from national level to local level.



## 6.2.2 Encourage a switch to sustainable methods of transport through transport planning based on a hierarchy of modes and demand management.

The scale of the emissions reductions required to address the climate emergency are significant. To deliver these savings we need to consider a significant shift to more sustainable transport modes. The Climate Action Plan 2019 details a range of sustainable mobility programs which are necessary but not sufficient. The following policies will encourage a step change in the shift to sustainable transport modes for the people of Ireland.

### 6.2.2.1 SHORT TERM ACTIONS (1-3 YEARS)

- a. To develop zones in the city centres that are free of private vehicles and car parking spaces to encourage a shift to sustainable modes of transport.
- b. Task the local authorities to develop 'Car free Sundays' in our most populous cities and towns. There are a number of examples around the world where such a policy significantly reduces emissions and improves the quality of life for urban dwellers.
- c. Development of walking and cycling infrastructure as part of all upgrades to roads in both rural and urban areas where appropriate – public investment in roads should enable a shift to the most sustainable modes of transport.
- d. Eliminate extra charges on public transport for interchanging and travelling as part of a family or group, particularly on intercity routes, to ensure that bus and rail are the first choice for all of our people on long-distance journeys.
- e. Promotion of Clean Air Zones in cities thus reducing the numbers of fossil fuel powered vehicles in centres encouraging more people to use sustainable transport.
- f. Recognizing that particulate matter from braking is a major source of environmental and health damage, encourage the development of standards and methods within two years at EU and national level to reduce the impact of these emissions.

### 6.2.2.2 MEDIUM TERM (3-6 YEARS)

- a. Shift the emphasis of park and ride from driving most of the way and using public transport near the end, to driving to the nearest public transport service and using public transport for most of the journey - to ease any concerns about range anxiety, congestion and parking, and to revitalise the whole country through maximised footfall around bus stops and train stations.
- b. Development of more park and ride facilities in and around our five largest cities so as to enable the final leg of journeys to be completed on a sustainable transport mode (e.g. walking, cycling, or by bus / light rail).

- c. Development of park and ride car sharing facilities on all major motorways close to population centres. This practice currently exists in many cases and supporting, funding and provision of a safe place to park would encourage a greater uptake in this practice. This could be done in three stages:
  - a. Phase 1: Provide free surface car parking along key motorway junctions to allow individuals who are carpooling to have a dedicated parking area.
  - b. Phase 2: Provide an express bus service which utilizes the motorway only, delivering individuals to key city centres (Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick, etc.). Where possible extend local town and city bus services to include these motorway carparks in their route.

#### **6.2.2.3 LONG TERM (6-10 YEARS)**

- a. Phase 3: As the motorways become closer to city destinations, have dedicated bus-lane/carpool-lane for three passengers or more, on roads consisting of three or more lanes.

### **6.2.3 Reduce the environmental impacts of each form of road transport.**

Road transport emissions account for 76% of our total transport GHG emissions. There are other environmental impacts of road transport – air quality, light pollution, noise, particle dust and other effects which can impact on the environment we and other species live in. There are a number of modes of transport which fall into this category:

- Motorcycles
- Cars
- Light Commercial Vehicles
- Heavy Commercial Vehicles
- Buses
- Work Vehicles

#### **6.2.3.1 Motorcycles**

Motorcycle emissions can be reduced through a switch to more sustainable fuels over time. It is expected that in the future electric motorcycles will be common on our roads, but currently there are limited options in this area.

Motorcycle Safety is a significant issue in Ireland - Motorcyclists are over-represented in collision statistics in Ireland: they represent less than 2% of licensed vehicles but 10% of road deaths (RSA) – The Green Party supports developing further safety training for drivers of all road vehicles to further improve the road safety for motorcyclists.

#### **6.2.3.2 Cars**

The average age of a car in Ireland is nine years old. The switch to electric cars is widely recognised as the technological solution to reduce GHG emissions. Given the long lead time to widespread adoption of electric vehicles the following policies should be considered to accelerate the switch and enable Ireland to meet our transport goals if we have any hope of achieving the government's Climate Action Plan vision for one million EV's on the road by 2030.

There are approximately 120,000 new cars purchased per year in Ireland on average. Of the 117,110 cars sold in Ireland in 2019 only 3,444 of these were EVs. Given the average age of the cars in Ireland is nine years, in 2030 there will be limited stocks of used EVs available for purchase. If the target of one million EVs by 2030 is to be reached, this requires that virtually all new cars are EVs by the middle of the decade!

The challenge in accelerating the adoption of EV technology is the relatively high current purchase costs of EVs compared with fossil fuel vehicles. The challenge is complex: placing punitive VRT on fossil fuel vehicles without also incentivising EVs may result in the average age of cars increasing over time, thus limiting the potential to reduce emissions.

### Short Term (1-3 years)

- a. Acceleration of the EV infrastructure plan for Charging and Grid with a focus on rural areas, 1:7 ratio is best practice in areas of dense population and where population is more dispersed a 1:15 ratio or more should require government intervention.
- b. In villages and towns, invest in state support for community-based EV car schemes to assist those most in need of connectivity to services (e.g persons with mobility challenges). Such facilities may also be used on evenings and weekends, possibly with support from local businesses, to support free connectivity to social outlets for residents. Such community-owned and operated schemes can help support local economies and employment, particularly in areas where public transport services are currently insufficient.
- c. Mandate the provision of EV charge points in all new buildings, as part of the planning regulations, in homes, apartments, offices, shopping centres, schools, with no exceptions where parking spaces will be provided.
- d. Incentives such as the Accelerated Capital Allowance should be opened up for developers and property owners of all property types to install EV charge points under a retrofit basis.
- e. Development of a Climate Action Labelling System for all motor vehicles regardless of fuel type.
- f. Life cycle carbon emissions carbon footprint label – from raw materials to end of life. Such a policy would provide a clear and transparent comparison of cars across the entire industry and enable consumers to choose the most sustainable options to take climate action. This would also encourage improved sustainability and energy efficiency in the supply chain and manufacturing processes and encourage the development of car designs which consider the impacts at end of life also.
- g. Sustainable and ethical material sourcing labelling – to encourage manufacturers to display verified information on their raw materials.
- h. Cost per km labelling – develop a labelling system which mandates a fair comparison of consumer costs per km including maintenance, fuel, and other consumable costs on an average basis over the lifetime of the vehicle.
- i. Promote green finance incentives with low or 0% APR loans.
- j. Promotion of electric vehicles as a benefit to employees.
- k. Extension / certainty of the BIK free status of EVs to at least 2030.
- l. Mileage expenses rates from Revenue to be based on a kW rating or other suitable basis – the current system based on litres of car engine size can penalize electric

	vehicle owners and also reward large vehicle owners and provides incentives to drive rather than use more sustainable transport modes and to drive long distances. EV owners in general have higher costs in purchase and depreciation. This should be a tiered system over time:
1.	Apply kW rating immediately.
2.	Flat rate for all cars after 2 years.
3.	Removal of expenses allowable for any car over ~80g / km WLTP by 2030.
4.	Interest only payments for public servants – factory gate scheme to promote EV ownership.
m.	Place an immediate ban on the purchase of any new vehicles which consume fossil fuels by Government bodies (public, state and semi-state). If it can be demonstrated that there is not a suitable non-fossil fuel vehicle, then refer to Department of Transport for tender.
n.	Hybrid is not enough and in almost all cases there is a technical solution available. Cork City Council is an excellent example of what can be achieved.
o.	In order to assist consumers in determining the benefits of electric cars, development of a government supported application for mobile phones, allowing users link to software such as Google Maps to track their location over an agreed period and to develop a driver profile that can be used to calculate on a fair and transparent basis the benefits of different electric vehicle choices.
p.	Introduce variable motor tax rates based on the car's last emission test. Emissions of existing vehicles are based on manufacturers' emissions data provided at date of sale. Over time the emissions of a vehicle can increase significantly, particularly if the car is poorly maintained. The NCT tests some emissions, however the testing system has anomalies. <u>All vehicles which burn fossil fuels including hybrids should undergo a comprehensive emissions test at each NCT.</u> The result of this test will determine the rate of motor tax due until the next NCT test. This test should be based on CO2 equivalents and include all emissions converted to their CO2 equivalents for global warming potential. This would encourage improvements in maintenance on all cars and would also enable the state to develop a database of emissions from various manufacturers over time.
<b>MEDIUM TERM (3-6 YEARS)</b>	
a.	Green number plates system should be evaluated in detail over the course of this government's tenure. This could provide limits on the number of non-green number plates issued on an annual basis to reduce the new fossil fuel vehicles sold each year supporting the transition to registering only zero-exhaust-emissions vehicles from 2030. This number could be dynamic based on demand.

b.	Limit all used car imports from outside of the EU based on emissions standards.
c.	Gradual increase in VRT over time on fossil fuel vehicles to discourage their purchase – e.g. 5% increase year on year from 2021 to 2025.
<b>LONG TERM (6-10 YEARS)</b>	
a.	Electric vehicles represent a significant opportunity in the area of demand side management for the national electricity grid. As renewables increase on the grid the need for energy storage increases – electric car batteries can be used as a virtual power plant or for fast frequency response. Policies and standards for EVs and charge points will need to be developed to promote this type of system. We commit to working with the EU to support developments in this area.
b.	Encourage the development of regulations and standards that enable the transition to the smart grid application and develop a method by which electric car owners can benefit financially from involvement in the scheme.
c.	Government action on electric cars use with rental companies – reducing cost meaning these can be the first choice for all car rentals.
d.	The switch to electric cars will inevitably result in a reduction of the number of mechanics required. We propose a national upskilling program funded by the government to develop these experienced tradespeople to be the future of transport – sustainable transport will create new types of roles.

### 6.2.3.3 Alternative Fuel Cars

Electric cars are widely accepted as being the technology solution to reduce the environmental impact of personal and commercial small vehicles. However, there are other options and the Green Party supports **providing appropriate benefits to all low carbon alternatives.**

Short Term (1-3 years)	
a.	Incentives for conversion of existing petrol cars to Bio-LPG (grant for installation). Bio-LPG is a near zero carbon emissions fuel produced as a by-product of manufacturing biodiesel. The fuel is available readily in Ireland across the country in over 269 fuel stations.
b.	Incentives to promote any conversion of an existing vehicles which can reduce the GHG emissions to near zero.
Long Term (6-10 years)	
a.	Hydrogen Fuel Cell cars are currently being developed. These cars represent an opportunity to increase the distance travelled. Incentives for hydrogen fuelled vehicles should be equal to those available for electric cars.
b.	Dearman Engines / Liquid Air or similar type liquid nitrogen or oxygen engines have been developed which have significant benefits in reducing emissions. Further studies should be commissioned to evaluate their benefits to Ireland's transport system.

#### 6.2.3.4 Heavy Goods Vehicles

##### Short Term (1-3 years)

- a. Transport route optimization software represents an opportunity to reduce the GHG emissions of transport for limited investment. The Green Party supports policies that ensure that this technology will be mandatory for all Heavy Goods Vehicles operators over a certain size by 2023. This technology represents an opportunity to reduce the fuel used in HGVs by up to 33%.
- b. Heavy Goods Vehicles impact the air quality and quality of life in our villages, towns, and cities. The Green Party supports the local authorities in developing plans to reduce or remove HGVs from entry to all towns and cities between the hours of 8am to 7pm. This policy is already in place in some of our cities and towns. The final leg of the journey for deliveries within these hours should be undertaken with electric vehicles. This policy could be implemented by 2023.
- c. The driver theory test for all vehicles including HGVs should include fuel efficiency driver training. This could potentially improve the driving performance and thus fuel efficiency by approximately 10%.

##### Medium Term (3-6 years)

- a. Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) represents an opportunity to act as a transition fuel between diesel for HGVs and Hydrogen as the fuel of choice. The Green Party supports the development of CNG refuelling stations in line with Gas Networks Ireland plans.

##### Long Term (6-10 years)

- a. Hydrogen represents an opportunity to decarbonize long distance travel. Pure hydrogen fuel cell technology for long distance vehicles such as HGVs is currently being developed. Gas Networks Ireland have developed a long-term strategy for decarbonisation of the national grid by 2030. Within this plan the development of hydrogen infrastructure is expected. GNI have also developed a plan to increase the number of CNG refuelling stages in Ireland. The Green Party supports the development of a national hydrogen strategy in line with the EU strategy which develops the fuel as a transport fuel option in the absence of alternatives.



#### 6.2.3.5 Buses

Hybrid Diesel technology for buses has not demonstrated significant benefits in reducing emissions. The Green Party believes that there are three potential options to reduce the GHG emissions from our buses – all with their merits:

- CNG / Biogas
- Electric
- Hydrogen

All of the above technology solutions have been implemented in other EU countries. All options reduce emissions and thus a combination of the above options should be considered to reduce our bus transport emissions. Any significant purchases by our national operators should undertake a full life cycle analysis of the emissions benefits to engine technology changes.

#### 6.2.3.6 Work Vehicles

Work vehicles such as tractors and construction machinery typically operate on diesel. There are currently limited technical solutions available in the market for these vehicles however some manufacturers offer electric solutions. **The Green Party would support a government study on the feasibility of electric work vehicles across a number of typical Irish farms** to determine the suitability for inclusion in future policies. It is expected that the move to autonomous work vehicles in future may accelerate the transition to electric vehicles.

#### 6.2.3.7 Autonomous Vehicles

Autonomous vehicles represent an opportunity to accelerate a different model of car ownership and shared car ownership. They also represent an opportunity to optimize our emissions from our journeys and increase road safety. There are a number of policies that the Green Party believes will help Ireland accelerate technology in this area.

##### Short Term (1-3 years)

- a. We must establish Ireland as a test bed for autonomous vehicles in our cities and rural areas.
- b. Autonomous vehicles for commercial transport will also present a significant opportunity to reduce the HGVs on our roads. We believe that Ireland should request expressions of interests from manufacturers in developing test cases here in Ireland for this technology.

#### 6.2.4 **Enable interconnectivity of different sustainable modes of transport so that these forms of transport are simple and efficient, including convenient interconnectivity for both passengers and freight.**

There are a number of policy actions which can be taken to meet this core policy:

Short Term (1-3 years)

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| a. | Promote a new vision of park and ride at the level of towns and villages as starting points to connect to frequent, reliable, and low-cost public transport services for most of the journey. |
| b. | Promote a new and speedy national intercity public transport network to link rural communities with urban centres for intercity travel.   |
| c. | Develop further park and ride facilities outside of our five main cities on all approaches. Consider expansion of park and ride facilities to other towns with sufficient population.         |
| d. | Promote bike sharing schemes at all rail, bus and park and ride facilities in Ireland. Incentivise the local community to develop these schemes through a low-cost loan scheme.               |
| e. | Develop Local Link transport services across Ireland and increase awareness of the availability of these services.  |

### 6.2.5 To ensure that all people of Ireland whether rural or urban have access to safe, sustainable means of travel that does not disadvantage them personally based on location.

Ireland is a collection of communities right across our island. The majority of our people live outside of our five largest cities and thus it is important that all people have access to a safe sustainable means of travel. The following policies address the challenges posed by the above core policy.

#### 6.2.5.1 Rural Transport

Short Term (1-3 years)	
a.	Increased provision of rural bus services – both in terms of frequency and additional routes.
b.	Implement slow zones appropriately in clusters of ribbon development housing in rural communities.
c.	Provide pedestrian and cyclist connectivity, with provision located behind ditches and hedgerows. The development of rural cycle routes on roads is not necessary and sometimes there may be opportunities to develop these inside the ditch or in direct routes between population centres.
d.	Require all rural house developments to have an electric car charger installed – this will require a modification to planning regulations.
e.	Recognising the current importance of cars to the lives of rural dwellers, and their role in providing connectivity between our people and communities and services, we will encourage the acceleration of electric vehicle ownership / shared availability in rural areas. We will dedicate resources specifically to rural areas and villages. These will include local fast charge points at community centres, GAA grounds, and church car parks, so that vehicle charging will be community-based rather than centralised in ‘stations only’.
f.	Provide carbon tax rebates and other incentives for those who choose to work from home. This promotes rural living and also reduces the volume of our rural and urban traffic. This policy will significantly reduce emissions.
Medium Term (3-6 years)	
a.	Pursue a ban on the development of retail, large residential areas, schools, creches outside of towns, villages, cities. We are committed to realising the 15-minute city where these can all be within walking or cycling distance of population centres.

#### 6.2.5.2 Road Safety

**The safety of all road users must be a key priority for any road transport policy. The following policy actions will promote the road safety of all road users.**

### Short Term (1-3 years)

- a. Legislate for a default speed limit of 30km/hr in all urban areas nationwide including small towns and villages. We are committed to starting from a point of maximum safety within close proximity to town centres. A 30km/h speed limit will increase safety for all road users, decrease emissions such as CO<sub>2</sub>, and NO<sub>x</sub>, increase air quality, improve fuel efficiency for drivers, and reduce noise pollution.
- b. Revive and enact legislation for graduated penalty points for speeding.
- c. Encourage the development of a process where local communities can in co-operation with their local authorities develop active speed limits or modify speed limits on roads within the immediate vicinity of the town or village. This process would enable the development of roadways where walkers, cyclists and other users can share the space. This process may be particularly applicable to rural dwellers who may not have good pathways, cycle lanes etc.
- d. Visual indicators on roads in villages/towns/cities to identify change in area.
- e. Active speed limit systems on motorways.
- f. Pursue average speed detection systems.
- g. Active lighting systems for all streetlights, to reduce energy consumption and light pollution while also increasing road safety.
- h. Intelligent lighting solutions should be evaluated on all upgrades or new road developments.
- i. Improve urban speed management through better engineering (build outs and chicanes), looking to solutions other than ramps (which contribute to particle emissions, noise, and car damage).
- j. Implement a strategy to physically segregate cycling infrastructure from general traffic nationwide, ensuring paint on the ground is backed up physically.
- k. Implement speed limits dependent on the availability of pedestrian / cycling infrastructure in the wider urban area, (so as to favour the most vulnerable road users).
- l. Introduce ribbon development speed limit reductions – assuming sustainable planning regulations that ensure that the speed limit reduction does not open up these areas for further development.

## 7 Aviation

### Summary

Aviation is crucial to Ireland's trade and tourism but strategic policy decisions need to be underpinned by the UN's Sustainable Development to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.

### Key Policies

Incorporate the principle of polluter pays in aviation.

Mitigate the negative impact of airport capacity increases.

Ensure increased responsibility at the individual and corporate level.

## 7.1 Introduction

### 7.1.1 Principles

#### 7.1.1.1 Context of Aviation in Ireland and Internationally

The aviation sector is increasingly being recognised as a major contributor to climate change. Direct emissions from aviation account for about 3% of the EU's total greenhouse gas emissions and more than 2% of global emissions.<sup>25</sup> If global aviation were a country, it would rank in the top 10 emitters. The UN regulatory body for civil aviation, the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) forecasts that by 2050, aviation emissions could grow by a further 300%.<sup>26</sup> In the absence of additional measures by 2050, ICAO predicts that emissions could grow by up to 700%. In 2020, global annual international aviation emissions are already around 70% higher than in 2005.

This growth has led to increasingly widespread calls for aviation emissions to be more strictly regulated, particularly in light of the goals of the 2015 Paris Agreement. ICAO is calling for two global aspirational goals for the international aviation sector of 2% annual fuel efficiency improvement through 2050 and carbon neutral growth from 2020 onwards.

In 2016 verified emissions from the aviation sector in the European Economic Area (EEA) was 61.4 million tonnes, or 3.6% of the European Union's total greenhouse gas emissions and 13.4% of emissions from the transport sector. Significantly, emission calculations based on CO<sub>2</sub> do not take into account the radiative forcing – the impact on the overall energy balance of the planet – caused by non-CO<sub>2</sub> warming pollutants, such as water vapour, aerosols and nitrogen oxides.<sup>27</sup>

By 2040, air traffic in Europe is expected to grow to just over 16 million flights in the most-likely scenario, according to EUROCONTROL, corresponding to an average growth of 1.9% per year without policy interventions. Although these forecasts were made before the Covid-19 pandemic, and it is estimated that traffic will fall by 40% in 2020, evidence from previous shocks to global aviation such as oil crisis and 2008 recession, is that traffic recovers with historical long-term ten-year average growth rates of 5.5%.<sup>28</sup>

In spite of the EU's long held philosophy of an open skies policy, the European Commission is now concentrating its aviation policy towards reducing aviation emissions. Since 2012, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from aviation have been included in the EU emissions trading system (EU ETS). An attempt to include aviation into the EU Emissions Trading Scheme from 2012 has met considerable resistance from US and Asian governments, leading to the EU limiting application of ETS to aviation to only intra-EU services.

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<sup>25</sup> [European Commission: Transport Aviation Emissions](#)

<sup>26</sup> [ICAO Resolution A40-18: Consolidated statement of continuing ICAO policies and practices related to environmental protection - Climate change](#)

<sup>27</sup> [The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\) Report 1999](#)

<sup>28</sup> [KPMG, The State of the Aviation Industry, Aviation Industry Leaders Report 2019](#)

### 7.1.1.2 Significance of Aviation to Irish Economy

Ireland is a leading force in global aviation, with more than 50 aircraft leasing companies based here; it is also home to Ryanair, one of Europe's biggest and most well-known budget airlines.

Ireland's aviation infrastructure plays a critical role in the Irish economy with its five main airports serving 267 scheduled routes in 2017. In 2019, a total of 38.1 million passengers passed through the main Irish airports, an increase of 4.2% over the previous year.

Growth in Irish aviation demand and activity is led by Dublin Airport which accounted for 85.7% of all air passengers carried in 2019. Since 2013, passenger numbers at Dublin Airport have increased by 30%. The impact of Ireland's extensive air route network coupled with lower real travel costs, has benefitted Irish consumers, businesses and the international tourist and trade sectors. Pre-Covid-19 it was estimated that consumers would spend 1% of world GDP on air transport in 2020. Irish air carriers continue to grow and increase their presence in both European and International markets. The 5 main carriers (Ryanair, Aer Lingus, Norwegian Air International, Cityjet and Stobart Air) account for a total of 629 aircraft and a further total of 175 aircraft to be delivered by 2024.

European Commission emissions data for individual aircraft operators in each EU Member State reveal that Irish-registered carriers represent a significant portion of the total verified emissions from aviation in the EEA.<sup>29</sup> In 2016 verified CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the aviation sector in the EEA represented 61.4 million tonnes and aircraft operators administered by Ireland reported 10.5 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> or 17% of the total.

The price of air travel for users continues to fall, after adjusting for inflation.<sup>30</sup> Compared to 20 years ago real air transport costs have more than halved.<sup>31</sup> To put fares in context, the average Ryanair fare per passenger in 2019 was €37.<sup>32</sup> (*Ryanair's average fare is falling, and its CEO sees no reason why passengers couldn't fly for free in the future*<sup>33</sup>). In the near-term, IATA forecasts that consumers will face lower real travel costs as airlines are significantly discounting ticket prices to stimulate demand when travel restrictions are lifted as a result of Covid-19.<sup>34</sup>

### 7.1.1.3 Environment

The main pollutant of concern around airports is nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). NO<sub>2</sub> is formed by nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) emissions from surface traffic, aircraft and airport operations. PM<sub>2.5</sub> is also of concern, since particulate emissions from jet exhausts are almost all in this fine fraction.

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<sup>29</sup> [EU ETS Phase Information 2016-2020. Transport & Environment, a Brussels-based non-governmental organisation, also publishes this information on its website; see https://www.transportenvironment.org/state-aviation-ets](https://www.transportenvironment.org/state-aviation-ets)

<sup>30</sup> [International Air Transport Association \(IATA\). Economic Performance of the Airline Industry Report 2019](#)

<sup>31</sup> [International Air Transport Association \(IATA\). Economic Performance of the Airline Industry Report 2019](#)

<sup>32</sup> [Easyjet vs Ryanair – Low Cost Airlines Comparison for 2020](#)

<sup>33</sup> [Ryanair reveals its average fare - and you could soon fly for free](#)

<sup>34</sup> [IATA 2020 Mid-year report](#)

NO<sub>x</sub> in the lower atmosphere contributes to the production of ozone; ozone in the lower atmosphere is a pollutant and contributes to global warming. Nitrogen oxides from high-altitude supersonic aircraft are thought to damage the stratospheric ozone layer, the protective layer that filters out harmful radiation from the sun.

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) sets international standards for smoke and certain gaseous pollutants for new large jet engines; it also restricts the venting of raw fuels. The latest standards came into effect in 2013 and apply to engine types certified after this date. Reductions in emissions from aircraft engines have generally been lower in recent years than in other sectors, where technologies such as selective catalytic reduction and exhaust gas recirculation have been employed. There are also increasing numbers of larger aircraft movements, which have disproportionately higher emissions than smaller aircraft.

Aviation is also a significant source of carbon dioxide emissions and presents a major threat to Government targets in terms of emissions growth. This is for three reasons, firstly aviation is predicted to grow significantly, secondly emissions at altitude are thought to have a greater effect on climate change than those at ground level, and finally there is no practical alternative to kerosene fuelled jet engines currently on the horizon. As other sectors reduce emissions aviation is therefore likely to become responsible for a far larger proportion of global climate change emissions.

The regulations<sup>35</sup> set an annual mean limit value of 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> for NO<sub>2</sub> and a 24-hour PM<sub>10</sub> limit value of 50 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. According to Dublin Airport's Air Quality Monitoring Annual Report 2019 the annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> are below the threshold limits. However this is misleading as the pattern of activity shows that daily limits of both NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> regularly reach 80 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. or double the permissible limit.

## 7.2 Policy Details

The Green Party recognises the crucial importance of aviation to Ireland's trade and tourism but strategic policy decisions need to be underpinned by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. The Green Party believes that no developments or alterations to Irish aviation infrastructure, air operations or flight scheduling should result in a breach of the EU limit values or EU air quality objectives or worsen current breaches. Emissions considered must include direct emissions from aircraft, air-side service vehicles and plant, and the surface access required for airports.

In tandem with the principle of the polluter pays, it is also important that the travelling public is fully informed of the repercussions of their respective choice of flight has on their individual footprint. While airports and airlines and regulatory bodies have fully embraced fully transparent processes and procedures for security and safety, with extensive publicity material about citizen's obligations, there is very little communication and dissemination about the carbon footprint of flights.

The current paradigm where traffic is at an all-time low due to Covid-19 presents a major opportunity to Ireland, both within its own legislative remit of aviation governance and as a member of the

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<sup>35</sup> [DIRECTIVE 2008/50/EC 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe](#)



European Parliament. A core component of the policy will be to re-balance the untrammelled consumer demand for low cost air travel against the damaging effects on the environment by ensuring that the pricing of those which harm the environment reflects the cost of the resultant remediation.

Our Strategy on Sustainable Aviation is ambitious with the goal of carbon neutral growth from aviation from 2020 onwards. The following principles will inform the actions:

### 7.2.1 Incorporate the rationale of polluter pays

The Green Party recognises the crucial importance of aviation to Ireland's trade and tourism but future growth needs to be underpinned by Sustainable Development which in turn will rely on the implementation of proper governance and regulation of suppliers. Aviation has a unique taxation regime that is characterised by a lower level of taxation than many other economic activities due to the Open Skies policy adopted by the EU in 2002.<sup>36</sup> The low-tax regime is supported by a number of interacting national, European, global and bilateral rules and agreements. Irish national aviation policy further distorts the market in reducing the real economic cost of air travel and pushing fares down. Subsidies for internal national regional services should be removed and facilitated for more sustainable transport modes. Internal domestic Irish flights should not be competing with a bus or train route. The incentives which need to be addressed are:

- a. Under EU law, there is an exemption of airline tickets from VAT while airlines are permitted to deduct input VAT.
- b. Under current EU law, aviation kerosene (AVTUR) used in jet engines is exempt from tax and the imposition of tax or excise duty by the Irish Government would be contrary to EU law. According to the CSO, the Irish revenue foregone Aviation Fuel in 2016 was almost €500 million.<sup>37</sup> The tax-free status of aviation fuel effectively acts as a subsidy for the aviation industry, and should therefore be fully factored into economic analysis of the costs and impacts of the industry. The fuel subsidies also reduce the incentive for airlines to invest in more efficient aircraft.
- c. Ireland's Regional Airports Programme (RAP) provides capital grants and operating subvention to four regional airports in Ireland—Donegal, Farranfore (Kerry), Ireland West Airport Knock (IWAK) and Waterford—as well as funding two Public Service Obligation (PSO) domestic air services between Donegal-Dublin and Kerry-Dublin. In 2018 the cost to the Irish taxpayer of the RAP was €15.46 million.<sup>38</sup> To put this in perspective, this translates into an average operating subvention per flight of approx. €300-350 per flight, per year at Donegal, Kerry and IWAK airports. In terms of PSO, the subsidy per passenger using Donegal airport in 2018 was €83 per person and for Kerry airport €59 per person.
- d. Currently airport landing charges are set by the Aviation Commission and capped in favour of incentivising travel and lowering fares. The maximum charge for handling passengers at Dublin Airport is €8.12 per passenger up to 2024.

#### 7.2.1.1 Actions

- a. Support the completion of the single, Europe-wide air traffic control system at EU level.

<sup>36</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/collection/eu-law/eu-case-law.html>

<sup>37</sup> [CSO Fossil Fuel and Similar Subsidies 2012-2016](#)

<sup>38</sup> [A Review of the Regional Airports Programme 2018](#)

b.	Strongly lobby for the European Commission to follow through on its commitment to produce a report on aviation's substantial non-CO2 emissions (i.e. to have a total radiative forcing Index, or RFI) originally planned for 1 January 2020.
c.	Influence Irish Members of EU Parliament to support the anticipated amendment of the Energy Taxation Directive to in order to remove the special EU-wide exemption from VAT for aviation fuel.
d.	Lobby strongly for the construction of Metro North proposal, due to start in 2027, and outlined in the PfG, which will reduce the 5,000 daily car journeys towards Dublin Airport. Ireland is the only capital in Europe where there is no metro/light rail service from the airport to city centre. The development would also serve air travellers who live outside the capital.
e.	Resource the EPA with the same powers as the Data Protection Commission in order to monitor and enforce compliance with international and national environmental regulations (Currently the DPC costs €20 million p.a. double that of EPA).
f.	Phased introduction of levies and penalties by the EPA targeted at activities in breach of pollution, air quality, waste, noise and urban congestion.
g.	Intercity buses serving Dublin Airport should be protected to ensure sustainable and equitable access for citizens living outside the capital.
h.	Remove regional airport subsidies OPEX, PPR-O, PPR-C (this would yield an estimated €8.21m p.a.).
i.	Remove PSO for Domestic flights (would yield an estimated €7.25m p.a.).
j.	From 2024, at the next review of the airport charges price cap, add €1.00 - €1.50 levy on landing charges to reflect 'negative externalities of aviation on the community and the environment'.
k.	Introduce a congestion charge at Dublin Airport for high-emission buses and cars that are dropping off or using airport car parks. Cost benefit analysis would need to be carried out.
l.	Provide financial support to bus operators serving Dublin airport to convert to low emission vehicle types by 2030.

### 7.2.2 Mitigating the negative impact of airport capacity increases

Planning development to meet the projected increased demand in passenger air traffic is a cause for concern. While emissions from road vehicles are expected to decrease, this will be offset by growth in surface access movements around airports. Increasing capacity in more rural areas or at regional airports will lead to the erosion of tranquillity, loss of habitats for wildlife and increased surface traffic.

In Dublin Airport's Annual Report 2019<sup>39</sup>, the Bus and Coach station at Dublin Airport has certified higher levels of emissions than anywhere else in the airport.

Aircraft noise is the most significant cause of adverse community reaction related to the operation and expansion of airports. Noise may adversely affect the health of the community and can include effects such as stress, sleep disturbance, high blood pressure and even hearing loss. There are no operating restrictions based on noise in place at any Irish airports at present. Currently, aircraft noise at Dublin Airport is self-certified and not monitored or policed by a regulatory body which has access to comprehensive, full data on aircraft noise. Under the Aircraft Noise (Dublin Airport) Regulation Act 2019, Fingal County Council is the appointed competent authority with responsibility for regulating noise at Dublin Airport, but does not have the necessary expertise and resources to monitor and police noise at Dublin Airport.<sup>40</sup> The Aircraft Noise (Dublin Airport) Regulation Act 2019 states that the airport authority shall be liable to pay a monthly, biannual or annual charge (referred to as the "airport levy") in respect of the costs incurred by the competent authority (Fingal County Council) in the performance of its functions under the Aircraft Noise Regulation Acts. In other words, Fingal County Council can look to Dublin Airport to fund an independent, regulated and audited Noise monitoring and evaluation system.

7.2.2.1 <u>Actions</u>
a. As the appointed competent authority with responsibility for regulating noise at Dublin Airport, Fingal County Council should be endowed with the necessary expertise and resources to monitor and police noise at Dublin Airport.
b. The DAA is seeking to amend the proposed operating restrictions on movements at the new north parallel runway at Dublin Airport. Fingal County Council requires additional resources to challenge this case.
c. Ensure that the EPA is resourced to go set more ambitious targets than Dublin Airport's commitment to 'achieving carbon neutral status by 2020' under the ACA programme Level 3+ Carbon Programme'.

<sup>39</sup> [Dublin Airport Air Quality Monitoring Annual Report 2019](#)

<sup>40</sup> [Aircraft Noise \(Dublin Airport\) Regulation Act 2019](#)

d.	Dublin Airport should be mandated to report to the EPA the hourly and daily levels of NO <sub>2</sub> and PM <sub>10</sub> limits which are currently reported on an annual or daily ‘mean’ basis, which does not take account of peak time activity. It is highly likely that hourly peak-time daily activity which is not recorded is in breach of the limits set under regulation the EU Directive 2008/50/EC on Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe.
e.	The EPA to ensure that the DAA to meet its zero waste to landfill by 2020 commitment.

### 7.2.3 Increasing responsibility at the individual and corporate level.

The Green Party believes that the success of any paradigm shift in changing the culture of frequent and low-cost air travel to more sustainable levels will necessitate a higher level of awareness and responsibility at the individual and corporate level.

7.2.3.1 <u>Actions</u>	
a.	Mandate all point of sale and airport terminals to advertise carbon footprint figures in user friendly format (similar to calories on menus). The cost should be borne by airport operators and airlines.
b.	Conduct major public information campaigns to inform the public about the environmental impact of air travel. The cost would be similar to cost of the Covid-19 information campaign.
c.	Foster a culture of environmental corporate governance among industry stakeholders to influence a transformation to a greener and more sustainable aviation industry.
d.	Mandate full transparent reporting of carbon footprint data at point of ticket sale and airport terminals.
e.	All state owned aviation authorities, such as Irish Aviation Authority (IAA), The Commission for Aviation Regulation (CAA) should include Environmental Statements of Intents which set out targets for achieving carbon neutral operations.
f.	Introduce mandatory aviation travel carbon emissions reporting to the EPA by medium and large businesses, as well as by the public and semi-state sectors. In addition, The Irish government and state organisations should lead the way in reducing the amount of flights, in particular through encouraging maximum use of video-conferencing for international and EU-level

## 8 Maritime

### Summary

**Maritime transport is crucial to Ireland's trade and tourism but future growth needs to be underpinned by the sustainable development of ports and the reduction of pollution to air and sea caused by shipping.**

### Key Policies

**Measure and benchmark air and sea pollution at Irish ports and Irish territorial waters.**

**Implement mitigating actions against damaging emissions to climate, human health and biodiversity caused by shipping activities.**

**Engender a culture of social and corporate responsibility for the commercial shipping and cruise sectors.**

## 8.1 Introduction

Maritime transport is crucial to Ireland's trade and tourism but future growth needs to be underpinned by the sustainable development of ports and the reduction of pollution to air and sea caused by shipping.

### 8.1.1 Policy Actions

The following principles will inform the policy actions:

- a. Measure and benchmark air and sea pollution at Irish ports and in Irish territorial waters
- b. Implement mitigating actions against damaging emissions to climate, human health and biodiversity caused by shipping activities
- c. Engender a culture of social and corporate responsibility for commercial and leisure maritime activities

### 8.1.2 Principles

#### 8.1.2.1 Context of shipping in Ireland and international context

Maritime transport emits around 1,000 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> annually and is responsible for about 2.2-2.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions, according to the Third IMO GHG Study 2014.<sup>41</sup> According to the 2014 Report, shipping emissions are predicted to increase between 50% and 250% by 2050 – depending on future economic and energy developments.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has called for reducing emissions to 50 per cent of 2008 levels by 2050, as well as pursuing global agreements for ship building and pollution.<sup>42</sup> The IMO has published an Initial Strategy on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships for ratification in 2023. As part of that strategy, the IMO has issued a roadmap of short-, mid- and long-term guidelines for states to implement to achieve the target of 2050 to improve to identify and develop the mechanisms to achieve the limitation or reduction of GHG emissions from international shipping.

Due to its dependence on fossil fuel combustion and the fact that it is one of the least regulated anthropogenic emission sources, emissions from the marine transport sector contribute significantly to air pollution and climate change.<sup>43</sup> Shipping fuel – heavy fuel oil - emits large quantities of sulphur and other pollutants, as well as greenhouse gases.

Compared to other economic sectors, shipping is currently one of the most unregulated sources of air pollution. Air pollution from shipping harms health, increasing heart disease, respiratory illnesses and premature death in some cases. Some of these air pollutant emissions also damage the environment through acidification and eutrophication.

Emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases from the shipping sector have increased substantially in the last two decades, contributing to both climate change and air pollution problems, according to a 2013 report from the European Environment Agency (EEA).<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> [Third IMO GHG Study 2014](#)

<sup>42</sup> [INITIAL IMO STRATEGY ON REDUCTION OF GHG EMISSIONS FROM SHIPS 2018](#)

<sup>43</sup> [EEA 2013: The impact of international shipping on European air quality and climate forcing](#)

<sup>44</sup> [EEA 2013: The impact of international shipping on European air quality and climate forcing](#)

Due to the characteristics of the shipping sector, global operations in trade, registration of ships in different countries — sometimes even in countries other than the owner company's country — and the fact that marine fuel can be bunkered in any location in the world makes environmental and other legislation a challenge.

Shipping fuel is exempt from taxation in EU Member States under Council Directive 2003/96/EC which states that shipping shall be exempt from taxation on ‘energy products supplied for use as fuel for the purposes of navigation within Community waters (including fishing)’ (European Council, 2003). This in effect means that shipping is subsidised although it is harmful to the environment. In the European Green Deal, the philosophy is based on the polluter pays. Embedded in the Green Deal is the statement “The price of transport must reflect the impact it has on the environment and on health.<sup>45</sup> Fossil-fuel subsidies should end and, in the context of the revision of the Energy Taxation Directive, the Commission will look closely at the current tax exemptions including for aviation and maritime fuels and at how best to close any loopholes. Similarly, the Commission will propose to extend European emissions trading to the maritime sector”.

### 8.1.2.2 Environment

#### **GHG emissions**

Analysis from Eurostat/UNFCCC which shows emission by mode for Ireland indicates that maritime transport contributed 4.6% of all GHG emissions in 2017. Converted into actual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, this is estimated at approx. 561.67 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2018.<sup>46</sup> Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections 2019-2040<sup>47</sup> published by the EPA does not include projections for shipping. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy in the UK (BEIS) has also put a figure on ferry transport at 18g of CO<sub>2</sub> per passenger kilometre for a foot passenger, which is less than a coach passenger, or 128g for a driver and car, which is more like a long-haul flight.<sup>48</sup>

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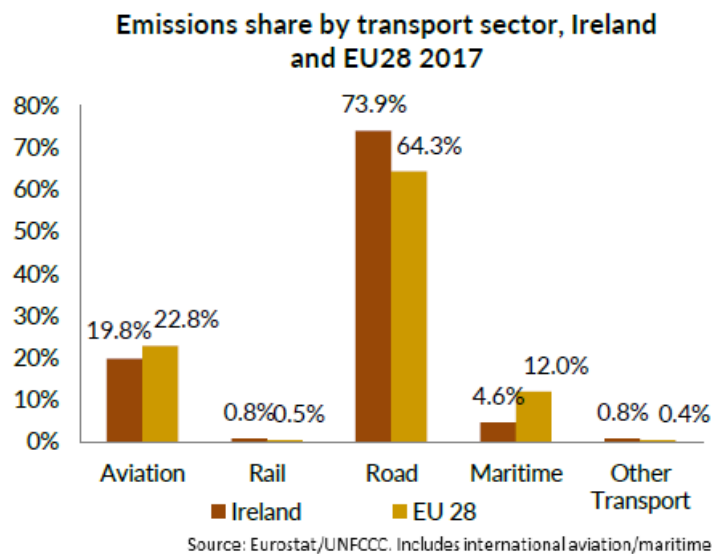
<sup>45</sup> [The European Green Deal](#)

<sup>46</sup> [Annual European Union approximated greenhouse gas inventory for the year 2018](#)

<sup>47</sup> [Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections 2019-2040](#)

<sup>48</sup> [BEIS Greenhouse gas reporting: conversion factors 2019](#)



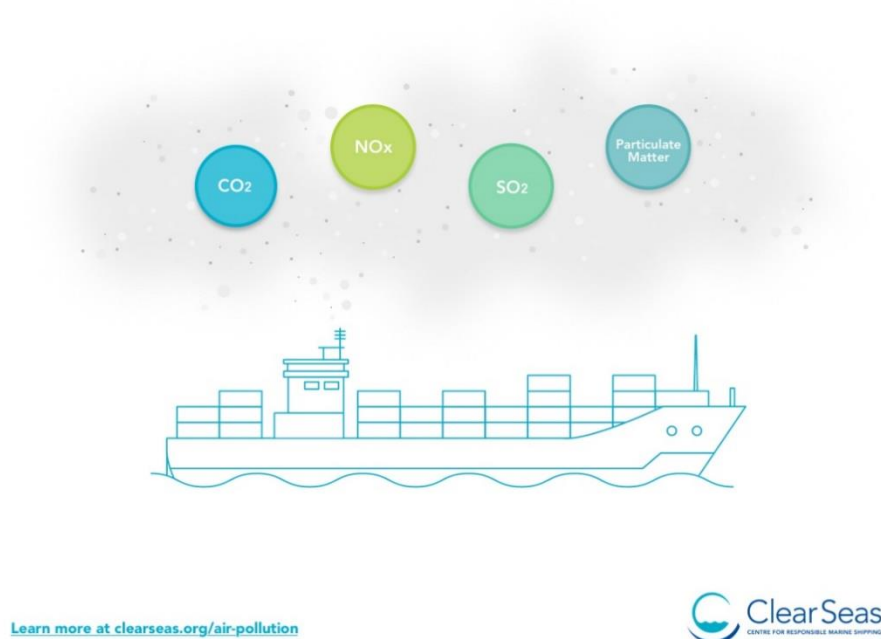


### SOx and Nox air pollution from ships

Commercial ships burn fuel for energy and emit several types of air pollution as by-products. Ship-source pollutants most closely linked to climate change and public health impacts include carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), sulphur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>) and particulate matter. Nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) emissions from shipping are a major concern for public health and environmental protection in Europe, particularly in coastal regions. Sulphur Oxide (SO<sub>x</sub>) emissions from ships' combustion cause acid rain and generate fine dust that can lead to respiratory and cardiovascular disease. In some areas, ships can contribute up to 20-30% of the local fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) concentrations. Around some busy ports and shipping channels ships can contribute as much as 80% of nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) and sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) pollution. On a global scale, the marine shipping industry's share of total emissions from human sources is CO<sub>2</sub> (2.2%) per year NO<sub>x</sub> (15% per year) and SO<sub>x</sub> (13% per year).<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> [EEA Report on International Shipping 2016](#)

Pollution Types from Marine Shipping



7

Source: Short dissemination document to inform the public about E-PRTR Maps on Releases from Diffuse Sources into Air

### **Marine plastic litter**

Marine plastic litter enters the marine environment as a result of a wide range of land- and sea-based activities. Both macroplastics (for example, large plastic items such as plastic bags, water bottles and fishing gear) and microplastics (small plastic particles generally five millimetres or less in size) persist in the marine environment and result in harmful effects on marine life and biodiversity, as well as negative impacts on human health. In addition, marine plastic litter negatively impacts on activities such as tourism, fisheries and shipping. Studies demonstrate that despite the existing regulatory framework to prevent marine plastic litter from ships, discharges into the sea continue to occur.

### **Underwater Noise Pollution**

Ocean noise pollution is a serious threat to marine animals and the health of our oceans. Sound travels further in water than in air. Ship engine noise can reach the intensity of a rock concert and travel hundreds of kilometres underwater. Marine animals are impacted because they all use sound to hunt, find mates, reproduce, and communicate. Persistent background noise from shipping reduces their ability to communicate, navigate, locate prey, avoid predators, and find mates. Ship speed restrictions are an effective measure to reduce noise. Ships can also be built or modified with noise reduction measures such as modified propellers and hulls and isolating noisy machinery. Ports could incentivise better ship design by offering discounts to ships meeting best practice environmental standards. The Port

of Vancouver has implemented a program which offers discounts on harbour dues to vessels meeting voluntary environmental best practices that reduce emissions, underwater noise and other environmental impacts.

### **The environmental impact of the cruise industry**

The cruise industry has long been under pressure to reduce environmental impacts ranging from waste disposal to air pollution, as well as high emissions - not only from travel but also from powering all the on-board facilities.<sup>50</sup>

### **Dumping of waste at sea**

The London Convention 1972 (and subsequent Protocol of 1996), is one of the first global conventions to protect the marine environment from human activities and has been in force since 1975. Its objective is to promote the effective control of all sources of marine pollution and to take all practicable steps to prevent pollution of the sea by dumping of wastes and other matter. The OSPAR<sup>51</sup> (The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic Area ) Convention 1992 requires Contracting Parties to protect the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic from pollution and regulate dumping at sea.

Dredged material is the most important category of waste or other matter that can still be dumped in the OSPAR maritime area. In 2007, 350 sites in the OSPAR maritime area had been licensed for the deposit of dredged material and the number is expected to increase due to more ship traffic and the increasing use of bigger ships which require deeper and wider navigation routes and berths. Dredged material, especially from harbours, may contain harmful contaminants such as trace metals. There is potential that these contaminants are redistributed and released from the deposited sediments to the water column where they are more available for up-take in the food chain. The deposit of sediments on the seabed may bury benthos which may become smothered or crushed and may lead to changes in habitats and biological communities. Progress on investigating biological responses to the disposal of dredged material has been slow in OSPAR and more effort is needed for a wider and more systematic application of bioassays in the testing of dredged sediments. There is also scope for a more harmonized approach to the methodologies recommended under the OSPAR Guidelines to further reduce pollution from dredged material.

Dumping at sea in Irish water licenses is managed and enforced by the EPA's Office of Environmental Enforcement (OEE). Under the Dumping at Sea (Fees) Regulations 2012 (S.I. No. 270 of 2012), the application fees to the EPA for a Dumping at Sea Permit are graded depending on the amount of material to be dumped at sea. Dumping at Sea permits issued by the EPA require reporting of all key environmental data each year through the Annual Environmental Report (AER).

### **Sulphur content of marine fuels**

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<sup>50</sup> [BEIS Greenhouse gas reporting: conversion factors 2019](#)

<sup>51</sup> [JAMP assessment of the environmental impact of dumping of wastes at sea](#)

Since 2012, the EU has taken firm action to reduce the sulphur content of marine fuels through the Sulphur Directive.<sup>52</sup> In 2016, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) maintained 2020 as entry-into-force date of the global 0.5% sulphur cap. There are agreements at EU level on Sulphur Emission.

Under the Directive SOx Emission Control Areas (SECAs) can be defined but Ireland did not (at least initially) set these up. This allows ships to use fuel with a much higher sulphur content in Irish waters than in other Northern European waters, adversely affecting the health of Irish citizens. From 1 January 2020, the maximum sulphur content of marine fuels is reduced to 0.5% (down from 3.5%) globally – reducing air pollution and protecting health and the environment.

### **International Directives to monitor Marine plastic litter**

Recognizing that more needs to be done to address the environmental and health problems posed by marine plastic litter, the IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) adopted (on 26 October) the action plan, to be completed by 2025, which relate to all ships, including fishing vessels.<sup>53</sup> The action plan supports IMO's commitment to meeting the targets set in the UN 2030. To tackle **plastic pollution** within our oceans, the EU adopted [new rules on port reception facilities](#), making sure that waste generated on-board ships or fished at sea is collected and treated in ports.<sup>54</sup> Discharging plastics into the sea is already prohibited under regulations for the prevention of pollution by garbage from ships in the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), which also obliges governments to ensure adequate port reception facilities to receive ship waste.

The EU is also working with the IMO to address concerns regarding discharge waters from after-treatment systems used by ships. The objective is to ensure full sustainability of those systems, possibly by setting stricter and uniform legislative requirements.

In addition, the [European Green Deal](#), presented by the President of the Commission Ursula von der Leyen in December 2019, sets out further action to make shipping more sustainable such as the extension of the European emissions trading to the maritime sector.

## **8.2 Policy Details**

### **8.2.1 Measure and benchmark air and sea pollution at Irish ports and Irish territorial waters**

In order to reduce emissions and address marine pollution caused by shipping, we need to benchmark current emissions in Ireland in order to implement the necessary actions that will comply fully with European and international directives.

From different perspectives the need for reliable information on the consumption and combustion of bunker fuel and resulting emissions of air pollutants and GHGs is essential. Firstly, ship owners need to know the amount of fuel bunkered and consumed because fuel cost forms a large fraction of ship operating costs (up to 50 %). Secondly, in order to understand the present-day and potential future

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<sup>52</sup> [DIRECTIVE 2012/33/EU OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL](#)

<sup>53</sup> [Addressing marine plastic litter from ships – action plan adopted 2013](#)

<sup>54</sup> [EU Proposal for a new directive on port reception facilities aims to tackle sea-based sources of marine litter](#)

environmental impact of ships, the amount, type and location of the release of air pollutants and GHGs into the atmosphere need to be quantified.

Thirdly, in order to propose environmental policies or to monitor progress or compliance with existing policies and legislation, the release of emissions from the sector over time periods (e.g. emissions inventories) or from individual ships (e.g. air emission limits, fuel quality requirements) needs to be known.

Acknowledging the principle to monitor and report on emissions, the EU and the IMO have introduced two similar albeit separate regimes to reduce GHG (greenhouse gases) emissions from ships:

- a. EU MRV – EU Monitoring, Reporting and Verification of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (data collection started 1 January 2018).<sup>55</sup>
- b. IMO DCS - IMO Data Collection System on fuel consumption (data collection started 1 January 2019).<sup>56</sup>

Both EU MRV and IMO DCS requirements are mandatory, and intend to be the first step in a process to collect and analyse emission data related to the shipping industry. Under the directives, the company (i.e. ship operator) is responsible for EU MRV compliance. Ship operators report to the EU, MRV as well as the Registry under which the respective flag is registered.

In response to the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD),<sup>57</sup> the EPA prepared the EPA Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme.<sup>58</sup> This framework, developed to address water and maritime pollution under the EU WFD directive, is also informed by national regulations. Despite the fact that the EPA drafted this framework back in 2006 with a proposed programme of 41 priority control measures under the joint auspices of the EPA and the Marine Institute, there has been no progress to date. As well as having limited capacity and expertise in monitoring and measuring pollution surface and marine pollutants, the resources and investment have not yet been allocated to the task. In other words, the Irish and EU legislation pertaining to the environmental health of rivers, lakes, groundwater and transitional (estuarine) and coastal waters are not being policed.

#### 8.2.1.1 Actions

- a. Resource the EPA with the same powers as the Data Protection Commission in order to monitor and enforce compliance with international and national shipping and water quality environmental regulations (Currently the DPC costs €20 million p.a. double that of EPA).
- b. Full implementation of the Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme (by the EPA and Marine Institute).<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> [REGULATION \(EU\) 2015/757 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL](#)

<sup>56</sup> [RESOLUTION MEPC.278\(70\) Amendments to MARPOL Annex VI](#)

<sup>57</sup> [Water Framework Directive](#)

<sup>58</sup> [Ireland Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme 2006](#)

<sup>59</sup> [Ireland Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme 2006](#)

c.	Shipping emissions GHG (NO <sub>2</sub> and sulphur) should be included in national climate targets. Include projections for shipping in Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections 2019-2040 as published by the EPA.
d.	Monitor Dumping at Sea licenses issued by the EPA and publish and ensure conditions are complied with.
e.	Publish the records of EU MRV – EU Monitoring, Reporting and Verification of CO <sub>2</sub> emissions (data collection started 1 January 2018) and IMO DCS - IMO Data Collection System on fuel consumption (data collection started 1 January 2019) where an Irish port is involved in the maritime journey.
f.	Introduce mandatory reporting to the EPA and by all shipping organisations involved in maritime transport activities.
g.	Enforcement of IMO regulations. All vessels visiting Irish ports should be compliant with IMO regulations to reduce sulphur oxides (SO <sub>x</sub> ) emissions. From 1 January 2020, the limit for sulphur in fuel oil used on board ships operating outside designated emission control areas was reduced to 0.50% m/m (mass by mass).
h.	Mandate all Irish ports to produce annual audited ‘Sustainability Reports’ as a statutory obligation.

## 8.2.2 Implement mitigating actions against damaging emissions to climate, human health and biodiversity caused by shipping activities

8.2.2.1 <u>Actions</u>	
d.	Investigate Government grants for measures that help reduce loads of phosphorus and nitrogen to address the eutrophication of our Irish ports and coast and investigate financial support for projects that would achieve fast results, e.g. oxygenation of seabeds, reduction of sprat stocks. (This already may be addressed in agriculture policy.)
e.	Implement public financial support to extend port reception facilities for waste and grey water from on board toilets from merchant ships visiting Irish ports.
f.	Make discarding of waste, fuel, and sewage directly into the ocean unlawful in Irish Territorial waters.
g.	Lobby European Parliament to extend the EU wide Emissions Trading System to the maritime sector.
h.	Work with Green Party MEPs to remove fossil-fuel subsidies.
i.	Introduce ship speed restrictions to reduce underwater noise pollution
j.	Introduce a pilot programme to incentivise better noise reduction standards in ship design, e.g. by offering discounts on harbour dues.

### 8.2.3 Engender a culture of social and corporate responsibility for commercial and shipping and cruise sectors

The Green Party believes that any efforts to address the pollution caused by commercial shipping and cruise activities will necessitate raising awareness among industry players as well as passengers

8.2.3.1 <u>Actions</u>
k. Increase cooperation between the state and industry to maintain and strengthen positive developments through regulatory simplification, reduced administrative costs, support to new entrepreneurs in the form of training and investments in recruitment to the maritime and marine industry so that resources of the sea and coastal areas are used in a more sustainable way so as to ensure that the ecosystems are maintained and restored while allowing industries that are linked to the sea to develop, grow and contribute to strengthening Ireland's competitiveness.
l. Design and implement Environmental Planning, Education and Guidance campaign aimed at all stakeholders involved in Maritime Transport including (a) government and regulatory agencies; (2) transport, tourism, port and shipping organisations; and (3) the general public.
m. Foster a culture of environmental corporate governance among maritime industry stakeholders to influence a transformation to a greener and more sustainable shipping industry and to encourage an acceleration change from Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO).
n. Strengthen regional cooperation on environmental maritime issues with establishment of UK/Ireland Maritime Committee to agree an MOU for Irish Sea Maritime Activities.

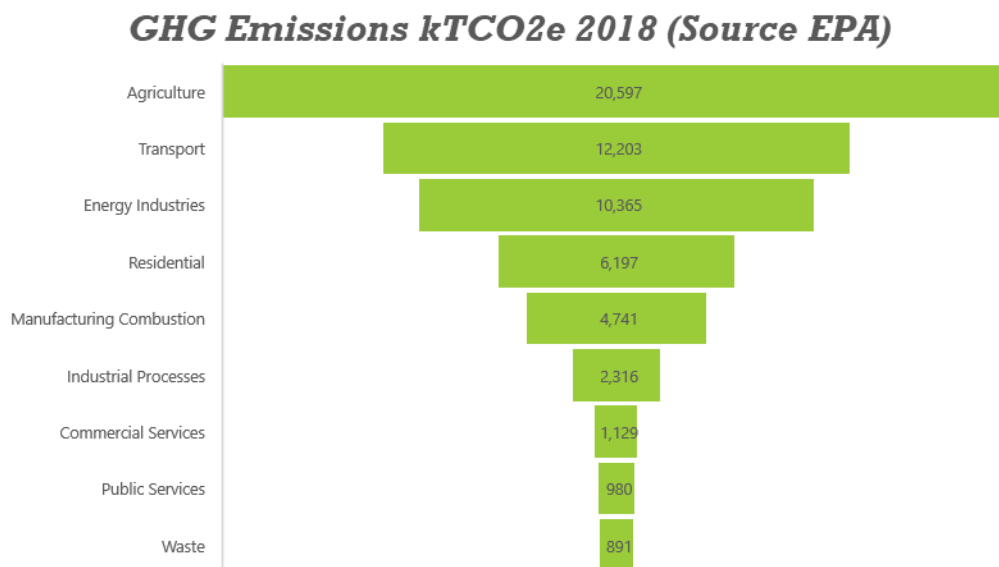


## 9 Appendix

### 9.1 Appendix: Road Transport Climate Change Impact

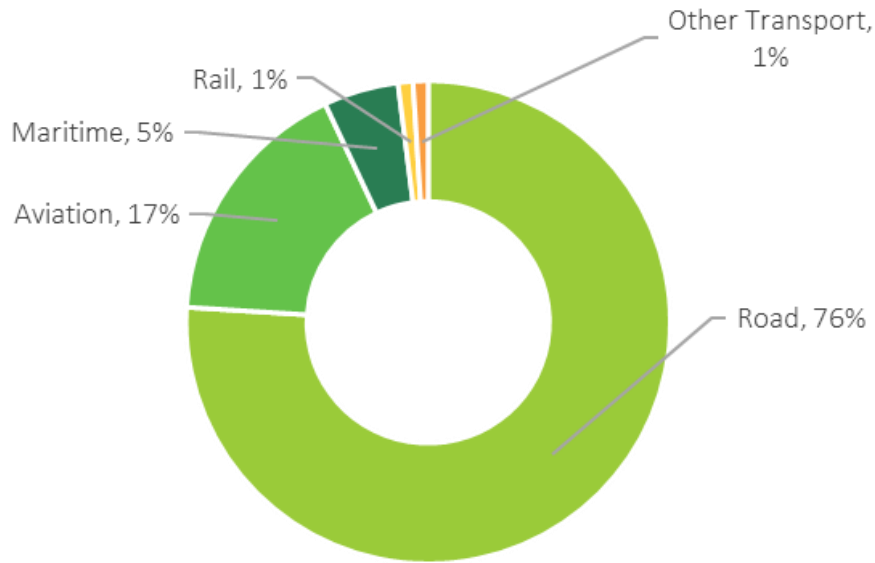
#### 9.1.1 Transport and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Transport represents the second largest source of Greenhouse Gas Emissions on a national level. It is by far the largest non-biogenic source of emissions in Ireland.



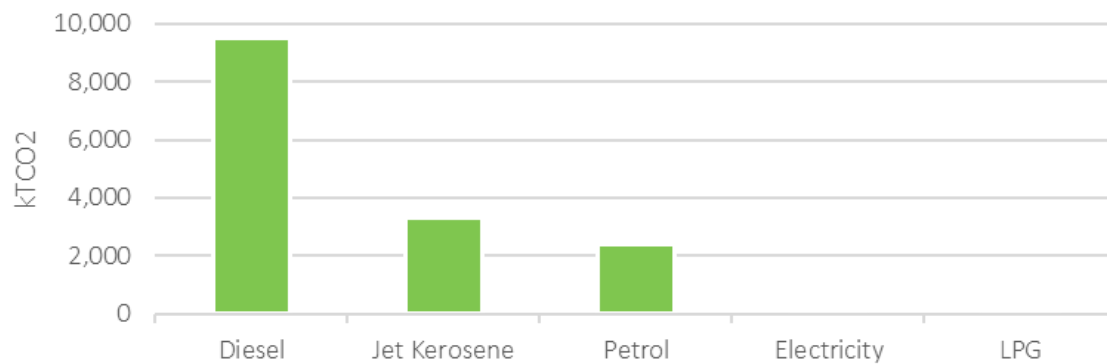
As a total portion of transport emissions, Road Transport accounts for 76% on average.

### ***Emissions by Mode***



In 2018 diesel usage accounted for the majority share GHG emissions in transport fuels used in Ireland:

### ***2018 kTCO2 by Fuel***



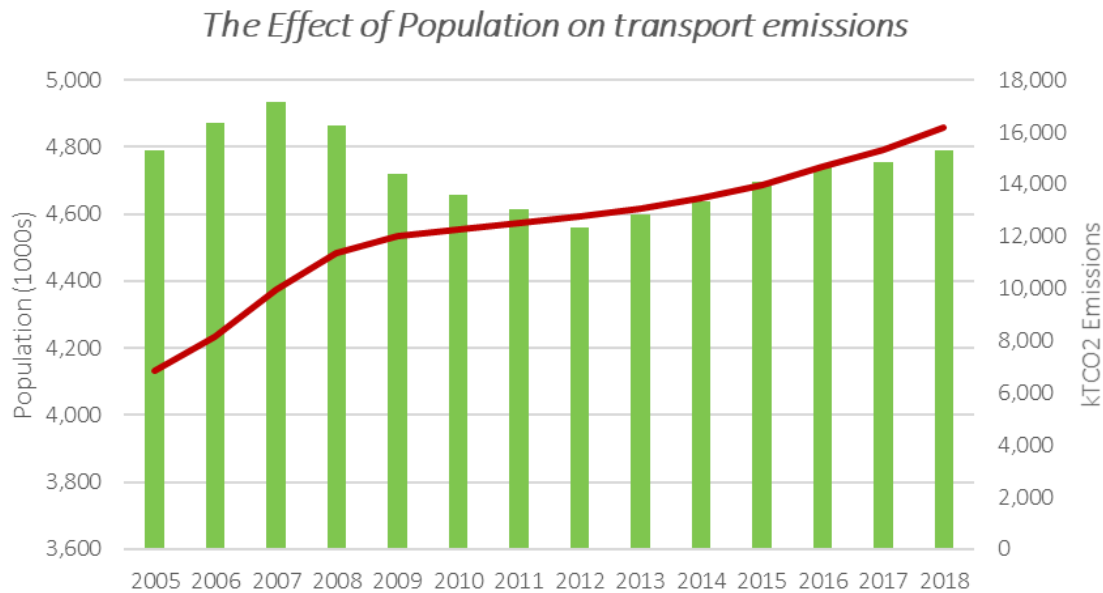
	2018 kTCO2
Diesel	9496
Jet Kerosene	3294
Petrol	2,406
Electricity	23
LPG	5

Diesel in Ireland is consumed primarily by:

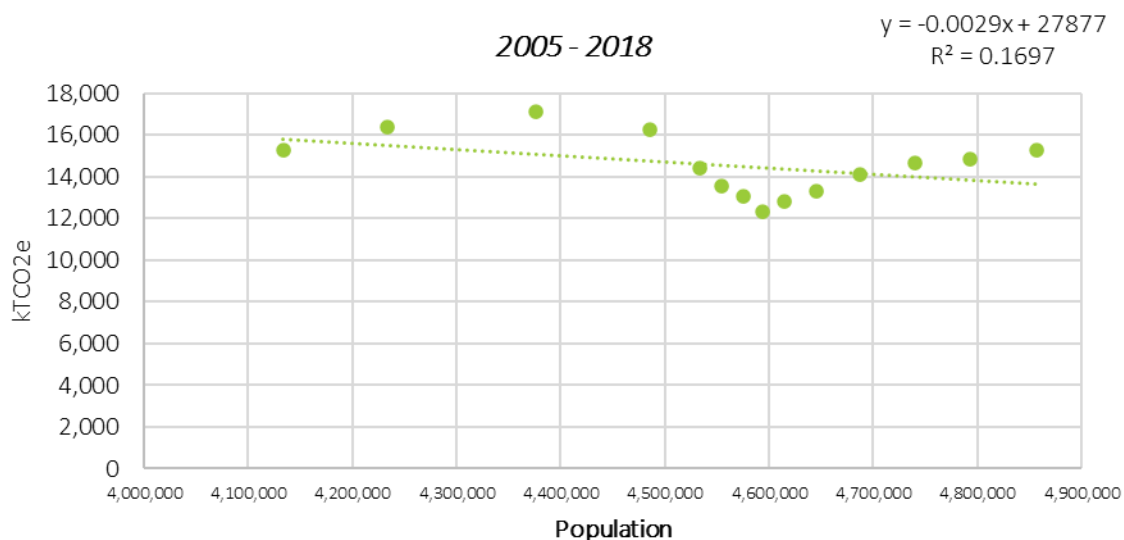
- II. Cars
- III. Commercial Vehicles
- IV. Heavy Goods Vehicles
- V. Work Vehicles

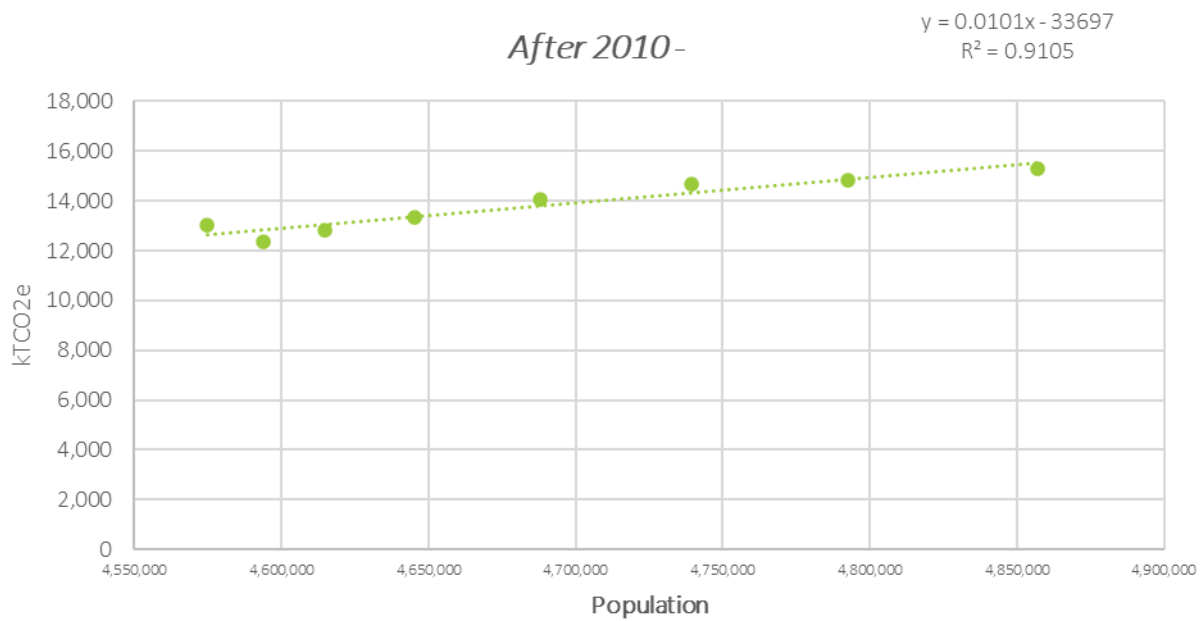
### 9.1.2 Population and Transport Emissions

Population has a significant impact on transport emissions – more people means more cars, buses, trains, heavy goods vehicles and airplanes. The analysis below demonstrates the effect population growth on transport emissions, assuming we continue on our current path.

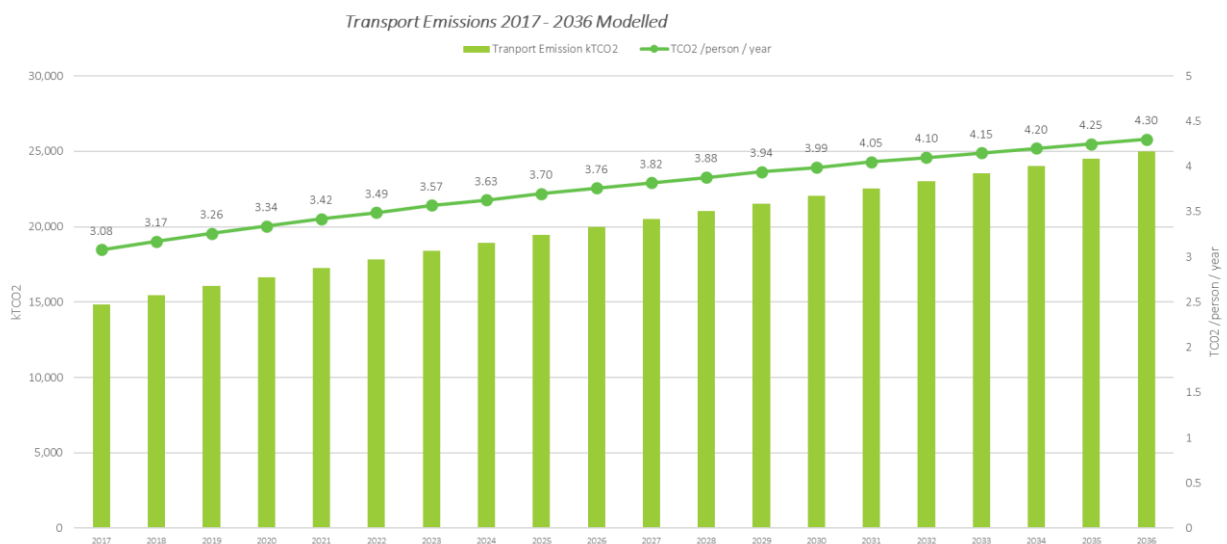


Regression analysis is a tool used to describe the relationships between a set of independent variables and the dependent variable. Regression analysis produces a regression equation where the coefficient represent the relationship between an independent variable and the dependent variable. Below can be seen analysis from 2005 – 2018 demonstrating that when looking at this period there does not appear to be an explanation of the variability in transport emissions from population. However, when looking from 2010 onwards the correlation between the two is remarkable.





Using the linear equation developed in the analysis above and using data from the CSO population modelling we can now project how transport emissions will look in Ireland if we continue on our current path. Based on the below by 2030 our emissions from transport will far exceed 20,000 Ktco2e. It is essential that our policy today enables us to decouple from this path so that we can achieve the necessary reductions required in our transport emissions to have a meaningful impact on our efforts to slow climate change.



## Abbreviations

BIK	Benefit in Kind
CNG	Compressed Natural Gas
CO <sub>2</sub>	Carbon Dioxide
CO <sub>2</sub> e	Carbon Dioxide equivalent
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EV	Electric Vehicle
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
HSR	High Speed Rail
IMO	International Maritime Organisation
LPG	Liquified Petroleum Gas
NO <sub>x</sub>	Nitrogen oxides
NTA	National Transport Authority
PSO	Public Service Obligation
RTP	Rural Transport Programme
Sox	Sulfur oxides

# Document Control

## Version:

Version	Project Phase	Date Released	Contributor(s)	Description
1.3	A	18/11/20		sent to SC before final meeting
1.4	A	20/11/20		sent to M for her editing
1.5		21/11/20		Further editing
1.5m		22/11/20	MnC	revisions to Planning; editing buses
1.6		22/11/20	JW	Incorporated 1.5m; further edits; protected
1.7		25/11/20	JW	Protection removed
1.8		05/01/21	JM: JW	JoAnne proof read changes incorporated; further formatting and editing by JW. Substantive queries by JW in comments. Track changes from earlier versions removed.
1.9		19/01/2021	CG JW	Editing of rail section by CG and then JW
1.10		21/01/2021	BG	Editing of aviation and shipping by BG
2.0		29/01/2021	JW	Incorporates edits by MnC (Principles, Planning), revisions from 1.10 (BG)
2.1		01/02/2021	JW	Some formatting revisions, comments (JW, JMM) deleted
2.2		02/04/2021	JW	Includes amendments passed at Policy Council 20/02/2021. Includes edits on 1.8 from MnC. All comments etc. deleted. For filing by party HQ.
FINAL		02/04/2021		As version 2.2 with this document control page deleted; dated on front February 2021 ie date when passed by Policy Council.

## Approval:

Approved by	Position in Party	Date Approved

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