



# ELECTION 2024

*Priorities*

May 2024



## About us

Mobility Partnership Ireland (MPI) is a coalition of leading companies operating in the shared transport sector, that aspire to provide leadership and solutions to help Ireland's future mobility. Membership is comprised of commercial companies who provide bike hire, vehicle rental, taxi services, bus services and payment solution services.

It is MPI's vision that Ireland develops as a global leader in shared sustainable mobility by placing the needs of transport users at the heart of transport policy, enabling innovation, promoting public health, and supporting climate action.

## MPI Partners

*MPI comprises some of the country's most innovative transport and related services providers*

**Bleeper**



**MOBY**

**FREENOW**

**Aircoach**

**YUKO**  
TOYOTA Car Club

## MPI IN NUMBERS

**8**

leading companies



fostering  
balanced  
regional  
**development**



**4 million**  
annual users



**350+**

Employees

# INTRODUCTION

Currently, commercial operators are leading the way when it comes to delivering on multi-modal, shared mobility ambitions, while helping to develop new mobility technology across Ireland. Keen to assist with modal shift, the membership of Mobility Partnership Ireland (MPI) can play an important role in assisting the Department of Transport with the delivery of these transport options. However, in order to achieve this, a supportive policy framework must be put in place to enable and empower a shift in commuter as well as business, behaviour to a more viable and sustainable transport network.

International evidence suggests that ease of accessibility, with options to travel between locations to and from public transport interchanges, is a vital component of shared mobility infrastructure, which has cascading benefits to all stakeholders in the wider transport ecosystem.

The Department of Transport defines shared mobility as *“transportation services that are shared among users, such as public transport, micro-mobility and car-based modes like car sharing.”* As we enter a crucial time for Ireland’s transport ambitions, MPI is calling on all decision-makers to recognise shared mobility as a viable, accessible and sustainable mode of travel across Ireland, which can help to resolve policy challenges.

MPI is willing and able to offer a holistic view of shared mobility, given its members experiences in other markets. The organisation can also offer expert solutions and industry insights to help support the way the current transport network operates. Each shared mobility mode has unique characteristics that can have a range of positive impacts on travel behaviour, the environment, use of space and development of large urban centres and surrounding communities. Not only providing choice for commuters and people alike, but enabling balanced regional development.

Mobility Partnership Ireland’s Election Manifesto contains policy proposals that can play a key role in helping Ireland to reach its sustainability objectives, while connecting people and communities and fostering a shared economy, while maintaining Ireland’s economic growth.



# IRELAND HAS COMMITTED TO REDUCING ITS TRANSPORT EMISSIONS

In 2021, Ireland signed the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act, making it legally-binding, that Ireland would set out to achieve international and EU climate targets, including halving total emissions by 2030. According to the National Competitive and Productivity Council Scorecard 2023, Ireland is lagging behind other countries when it comes to environmental sustainability.

**Current mobility patterns in Ireland are incompatible with the country's commitment to halving emissions in the transport sector by 2030.**

With the right policies in place, private car dependency can be repositioned, so that sustainable modes of travel, such as walking, cycling and car sharing - are seen as a more attractive option. This will provide a more even playing field for sustainable, shared modes of transport that offer alternatives to the private car.

To date, policy efforts in Ireland have mostly focused on electrification and fuel efficiency improvements in private vehicles. While these efforts go some way towards encouraging sustainable travel, it is not at the pace and scale required. More needs to be done to move the dial.

When it comes to numbers, bay to bay car-sharing services greatly reduce private car ownership. Each shared vehicle on the fleet can take, on average 22 private cars off the road. Furthermore, a standard bus can accommodate seventy passengers and take up to forty cars off the road.

MPI's vision for Ireland's transport system is to have enhanced numbers of people cycling, walking, car sharing, ride-hailing – not as a last resort or for lack of a private car, but because shared mobility is the safer, more efficient, and more accessible option.

## SOLUTION?

Collectively, MPI which offers bike hire, car rental, taxis, bus and ease of payment services is playing a key role in helping Ireland to embrace the sharing economy.

By providing convenient and affordable options, shared mobility can reduce the number of private vehicles on Irish roads that collectively, emit carbon emissions, contribute to traffic congestion and are impacting on quality-of-life.

For those dwelling in outlying rural areas, shared mobility that is not fixed to a prescribed route - car rental and taxi services - provides a flexible alternative to the private car.

# TRANSPORT DRIVES BUSINESS

While transport is the backbone of trade, industry, and commerce, it is common knowledge that there is a critical connectivity problem throughout Ireland when it comes to climate-friendly ways to commute to work as well as travel for business purposes.

Accelerating economic growth, while also simultaneously working towards lowering our collective carbon footprint from business and the transport that is associated with business needs, is an undeniable challenge.

According to the latest Central Statistics Office (CSO) data (2022) on travel patterns for work, commuting by private vehicle was still the most popular method of transport, with 59% driving. More than half of those who drove their private car to work had a commute of less than 30 minutes (55%).

Investing in shared mobility and public transport infrastructure are key measures which can help Ireland stay competitive but encourage enterprise to adopt sustainable practices.

When shared mobility is integrated into a high-functioning commuting ecosystem, it makes the workforce more flexible and, thus, has the strongest potential indirect impact on the economy. In addition, shared mobility can improve economic accessibility for those in areas with limited public transport options, such as access to employment opportunities.

According to research commissioned by the Government in 2023, almost 9 out of 10 private car drivers are willing to leave their private car at home in favour of walking, cycling and shared or public transport for short journeys of less than 2km, which for urban dwellers, could be their commute to and from work.

## SOLUTION?

Since travel demand is likely to increase alongside an improving economy and growing population, current travel patterns such as dependency on private car will result in higher emissions from Ireland's transport sector unless we offer alternatives with shared modes of transport.

Members of MPI are committed to working with the Department of Transport and public transport agencies to provide commuters and businesses with the complete journey or first and last mile, filling the gaps in existing transport networks and providing an alternative to private car dependency.

By ensuring Ireland's transport sector excels in terms of quality and performance, as a country we can position ourselves as a strategic, efficient and profitable place to do business.

# IRELAND MUST CONNECT PEOPLE TO CITIES AND PROVIDE AFFORDABLE TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS TO COMMUTERS

**Public transport infrastructure remains underdeveloped, coupled with a dearth of housing and spiralling rents, this is pushing people further and further away from city centres.**

The latest Daft.ie report highlights that the average rents in cities Dublin, Cork and Galway continue to rise, which illustrates the urgent need to provide affordable transport solutions to commuters, who are forced to live further away from their workplace.

MPI is of the view that Mobility Hubs will encourage a modal shift and serve as an access point between multiple diverse mobility services. In the Government's recently published draft policy paper "Moving Together," this objective has been reiterated. Mobility Hubs are highly visible, safe and accessible spaces where public, shared and active travel modes are co-located.

To effectively encourage rural dwellers to reduce private car use, mobility hubs can be strategically utilised as nodal points for accessing all mobility options and services, and providing last-mile solutions to connect rural dwellers to their final destinations. This may include LocalLink services and micro-mobility options, such as bike-sharing stations, or walking paths that will serve to provide seamless connectivity to rural communities.

In the context of a fractured transport system, factors that attract commuters to use Hubs include, rising fuel costs and overall cost of living; shared mobility allowances; strategic location; reliability of supply and ease of switching between various transport modes.

## SOLUTION?

If the Government is serious about the shifting commuters to take more sustainable modes of transport, and reducing daily private car journeys by 25% by 2030, then they must prioritise investment in connectivity between the cities and counties to get people out of private cars.

In order to encourage a modal shift, shared mobility should be positioned as helping to address the cost of living and providing critical connectivity between communities.

A powerful incentive to encourage the uptake of shared mobility services is the introduction of a shared mobility allowance. This could be positioned as both a cost-of-living measure as well as an environmental protection measure, reducing the number of private car journeys.

# MPI POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



## Apply a minimal VAT rate on hire of e-bikes

MPI is seeking a reduction of the VAT rate from 13.5% to 9% rate which would send a clear signal of support from Government for active travel as well as contributing to Ireland's climate action targets. The net impact will be reduced emissions, less congestion, affordable travel and the population leading healthy lives.



## Simplify the reduced VAT rate on vehicle rental

Currently a standard VAT rate of 23% applies when a person uses a shared vehicle for more than 5 weeks within one year. Otherwise, a reduced rate of 13.% applies

MPI recommends changing the VAT rule on short-term vehicle, so the reduced VAT rate applies to car sharing period of 35 days consecutively (instead of cumulatively) within 12 months. A standard rate would apply for vehicle hires of more than 35 days.

This will incentivise frequent use by customers and reduce the bureaucratic burden of a two-tier VAT system on car hire operators and Revenue. Due to the rising cost of living and motor insurance in Ireland, it is more economical to hire a car for a needs-be basis, than commit to the expense of private car ownership.



## Waiving toll charges for shared mobility during off-peak hours

Toll charges should be waived during non-peak hours which will incentivise shared sustainable transport behaviour, sending a clear message from Government to commuters that it supports those who choose shared modes of transport. A study should be conducted by TII to examine whether waiving toll charges on shared mobility would act as an incentive, building a case for the policy in question.



## Reduce all bus passenger fares by 20%

Replacing car journeys with public transport by bus can help reduce CO2 emissions by up to 42%, depending on the model of bus and passenger numbers. With pressures facing commercial operators from unfair competition, labour shortages and significant cost increases in areas such as fuel, insurance, labour costs and engineering costs, it is incumbent that commercial bus operators are supported. Commercial bus operators require a 'level playing field' to compete with public transport operators. The disparity between the cost of public transport operators and commercial operators currently sits at about 20% under the Fare Reduction Scheme, and is an unfair imposition on service users during a cost-of-living crisis.



## Introduce a tax-free Shared Mobility Allowance

Having an integrated payment application for all modes of transport - vehicle rental , bus, rail, taxi, bike hire, is a crucial piece of infrastructure for promoting public transport and sustainability. Digital connectivity and the ability to plan, book and pay for a multi-modal journey in one application is a key part of a cost-effective future mobility system. MPI is advocating for the introduction of a tax-free shared mobility allowance that would encourage a multimodal shift among commuters. Like the bike to work scheme, employees would be able to choose services from approved suppliers – bike hire, taxi, bus etc. - all of which incentivise moving away from travelling by private car.

# SHARED MOBILITY POLICIES: A EUROPEAN COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS



## France

In France, a **sustainable mobility allowance** is made available to employees through their employers. It can be used for public transport (public rental bikes and rental cars) and private transport (bicycles and taxis).



## Austria

Austria operates a **system of reduced fares for commercial bus operators**. They are included in the nation-wide *Klimaticket* system which means they can offer a €3 euro day ticket nationally on bus and rail services.



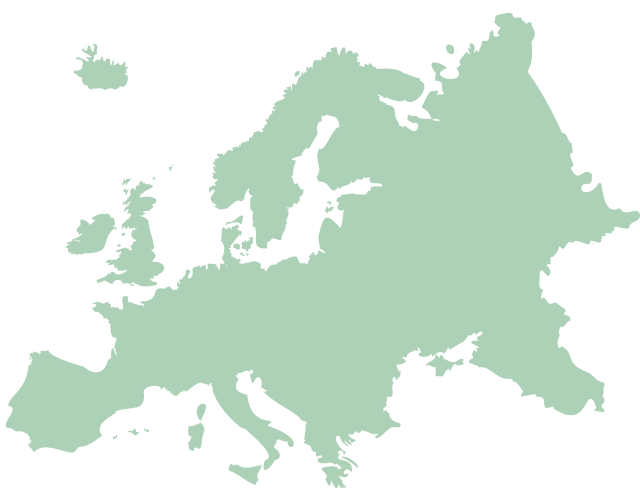
## Portugal

In Portugal, a **reduced VAT rate of 6%** is applied to the **purchase and repair of bicycles, including e-bikes**. This aligning of VAT with climate targets also incentivises micro-mobility providers to expand their fleet size and service more commuters.



## France

France operates a **simplified and uniform VAT rate** of 20% on car rental, regardless of duration of the rental. This avoids confusion for the operator and customer, that comes with a multi-VAT rate system. The standard rate, regardless of the rental duration encourages regular, more frequent car sharing.



## Norway

In Norway, **licensed public transport, impaired-vehicle drivers and emergency service vehicles are exempt from toll charges**.

Toll discounts between 50-100% are also applied to EVs and low emission passenger vehicles.



## CONCLUSION

**There is untapped potential to make Ireland's transport offering more sustainable and accessible.**

Focusing all of our energy on decarbonising transport through the modification of private vehicles towards electrification, is missing an opportunity to change consumer, and commuters patterns of behaviour. The case is clear; we need to learn to move differently, but to do this we need to learn from other countries and introduce policy-led initiatives.

In the Department of Transport's recently published Public Engagement on Climate Action and Sustainable Mobility Strategic Approach, it was acknowledged that policies are and must continue to be implemented that encourage and facilitate the public shift away from private car use and towards shared mobility.

While no single policy alone can transform Ireland's transport system, developing transport policies that are sensitive to the needs of diverse communities, and regions across Ireland can help to develop *demand and shift* to more sustainable modes of transport modes.

Mobility Partnership Ireland serves almost four million commuters in Ireland making it an important part of Ireland's transport system. MPI's defined policy recommendations have the potential to make Ireland a global leader in shared sustainable mobility, with the needs of commuters, enterprise and the environment served in a myriad of ways.





MOBILITY PARTNERSHIP IRELAND

# Election 2024 *Priorities*



[www.mpi.ie](http://www.mpi.ie)  
[info@mpi.ie](mailto:info@mpi.ie)

**Mobility Partnership Ireland**

30 Baggot Street Lower, Dublin 2, Ireland, D02 XT93