



TRANSPORT

Our plan to decarbonise our transport system and invest in reliable public transport and active travel.

Labour 



TRANSPORT

Our mission is to decarbonise our transport system, invest in reliable public transport and active travel, radically expand the uptake of cycling, and provide sustainable, fossil fuel free travel options to all communities.

Ireland's transport system relies heavily on motorised vehicles and fossil fuels, and it is responsible for nearly a fifth of national emissions. The vast bulk of freight is moved in Ireland by road, and our railways have suffered from underinvestment for decades.

Recent policy changes and investments in public transport and active travel infrastructure are a good start, but much more ambition is needed from the government and state agencies if we are to transition towards more healthy, active, and sustainable modes of transport and to cater for Ireland's growing population.

Building on existing funding allocations, Labour will invest at least €10 billion extra of capital investment over the next five years for public transport made up of €5 billion from voted expenditure, €2.5 billion from the Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund and €2.5 billion from the Apple windfall. MetroLink must be the flagship project for the next government.

OUR VISION FOR TRANSPORT

The following commitments are central to the Labour Party's vision for transport in Ireland:

- » Require the NTA and TII to advance LUAS designs for all 5 Irish cities with a view to completion of at least 15 new lines by 2040.
- » Commence a programme of investment in new rail infrastructure to implement the National Rail Strategy.
- » Prioritise active travel in all urban areas over private vehicle use with safe segregated cycleways and properly maintained footpaths and public lighting.
- » Continue to progressively reduce the cost of public transport, with the introduction of a six-month trial €9 climate ticket, provide free travel for children and young people under 26 over the next five years, and focus on improving the reliability of timetabled services. The additional funding to cover the cost of the climate ticket will come from the national exchequer not existing public transport or active travel budgets.
- » Investment in additional new road infrastructure shall be prioritised for road safety reasons rather than to increase capacity, with a ratio of up to 5:1 of expenditure in favour of public transport over roads in the next NDP period. Bypasses shall be approved subject to matching investments by local authorities to enhance the public realm and prioritise active travel in the bypassed towns and villages.

- » Ensure the replacement agency for the Road Safety Authority has the remit, governance, and structure so that road safety promotional campaigns focus on driver behaviour, the needs of vulnerable road users and review the operation of the Road Traffic Acts to ensure that the Garda Síochána and the courts have sufficient legal powers to enforce and penalise dangerous driving behaviours.

The Labour Party will also:

- » Prioritise the accelerated delivery of public transport projects by providing additional resources to An Coimisiún Pleanála, review how recent projects have performed, and ensure the Cycle Design Manual is regularly updated and adhered to as part of the introduction of mandatory accessibility standards.
- » Continue to support, and speed up the rollout of Bus Connects in all major cities.
- » Ensure all towns, villages and rural areas have effective and timely public transport links that are adequately promoted locally and integrated where possible with school transport services.
- » Increase funding for Public Service Obligation services to achieve improvements to existing routes, expand capacity and improve reliability.
- » Review current fare structures, while seeking to progressively reduce the cost of public transport services, and facilitate integrated, next-generation ticketing and universal adoption of the Leap card/phone app.
- » Introduce a Transport Charter to tackle abuse and anti-social behaviour directed at public transport workers and passengers.
- » Reverse the privatisation of public transport and ensure there is a requirement to recognise trade unions and engage in collective bargaining for any licensed service provider in the sector.
- » Properly resource visible road traffic policing that enforces parking restrictions, bus lanes and clearways, and protects cyclists and pedestrians,
- » Build out a national network of climate appropriate bus shelters along all national, rural, and urban bus routes, that will also function as local information points and have appropriate and secure bicycle parking where possible.
- » Develop a network of mobility hubs in all major towns with bus/ rail connectivity, EV charging, pay as you go bike and car hire to facilitate multi-modal journeys.
- » Recognise that the future delivery of public transport requires strong spatial planning under a National Planning Framework that has sustainability as its core principle and strategic delivery of transport-oriented development.



Labour will create a new Strategic Ports Infrastructure Fund to support offshore construction. We will also ensure that EirGrid and ESB Networks rapidly scale up the resilience of our transmission and invest in new planting of native species.

CYCLING

The Labour Party supports strong policy measures and investment to promote cycling and e-cycling that will dramatically increase the use of bicycles and rebuild a cycling culture in Ireland. To do this we must ensure people have easy access to bicycles, that they have safe infrastructure that all ages can use, that they have role models and public promoters, and a system that protects, encourages, and supports.

Labour will provide dedicated funding of at least 10% of the transport budget for cycling and ensure the delivery of high quality, integrated cycleways. Similarly, 10% will be committed for pedestrian infrastructure, and these infrastructure works should be coordinated when developing cycleways. We will:

- » Provide for an independent review of the quality and design of cycling infrastructure delivered over the last five years to identify how to deliver new infrastructure as quickly as possible, best practice designs, and examples of poor delivery.
- » Introduce a Cyclist bill of rights and legislate for the application of the Cycle Design Manual and for all bikes to be sold with permanently installed dynamo operated lights.
- » Ensure the NTA Cycle Design Manual is regularly updated and adhered to by placing it on a statutory footing.
- » Provide for contra-flow cycling on one-way streets and allow cyclists turn left when traffic lights are red with right of way for pedestrians walking on a green man.
- » Remove any remaining charges for carrying bicycles on any licensed bus or train service.
- » Ensure An Garda Síochána prioritise road traffic enforcement to protect cyclists and pedestrians, introduce a video upload portal for reporting dangerous driving, and update cyclist safety on all classes of the driving test.
- » Introduce a national bike register, develop new anti-theft measures and a dedicated Garda unit to deter theft.

Cycling Budget Package

Labour will deliver a cycling package in our first Budget that would:

- » Reduce VAT on bicycles, e-bikes and safety equipment, and pursue zero rating at an EU level.
- » Introduce a cargo/e-bike grant through a car scrappage scheme.
- » Develop an enhanced Bike to Work scheme with a cycle to school option.
- » Introduce a bike grant scheme for those without employment income as part of a Bike for Life scheme.
- » Provide seed funding for Community Cargo Bike clubs.

Expanding City Bike Schemes

Labour will provide new capital funding for the expansion of the TFI City Bikes scheme in existing locations and in particular across the four Dublin local authorities and develop a unified national network. As part of this expansion, we will ensure:

- » The rollout of publicly provided rental bikes in towns across the country, starting with 10 pilot locations.
- » In each new town chosen, the locations of bikes should link key transport hubs like bus and train stations with other local destinations such as shopping centres, industrial estates, libraries, colleges, venues, and tourist attractions.
- » Introduce e-bikes as part of the national bike hire network.

We will regulate the increase in private dockless share bikes and e-bikes and consider proposals to integrate multiple operators under one portal and with the Leap card.

Labour will develop a new policy framework for personal electric vehicles like e-scooters, including access to a subsidy scheme like Bike to Work, review the public transport ban and how best to integrate these in planned active travel infrastructure.

Infrastructure and Promotion

- » Ensure safe routes to school with safe footpaths and segregated cycle lanes provided in the vicinity of every school, college and crèche or other educational facility. Ensure public buildings also provide storage areas for children's scooters.
- » Accelerate Cycle Connects and the implementation of metropolitan and town cycle networks.
- » Upgrade bicycle storage facilities at all public transport hubs and other major destinations to ensure secure, supervised, and covered areas are provided as close to entrances as possible.



- » Provide additional resources to the National Cycling Office, and local authorities for the delivery of cycling infrastructure.
- » Resource a national communications campaign promoting cycling, and supporting local cycling clubs, along with a mentoring and advice scheme.
- » Fully integrate Cycle Right in the national school curriculum to ensure that every school offers cycling training.
- » Deliver the 30km/hr speed limit in urban centres and residential areas, and ensure it is enforced.
- » Continue to invest in Greenways and rural cycle networks, while ensuring the upgrading of any primary and secondary road routes include segregated cycleways.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT PROJECTS

The development of the Dublin Metrolink is Ireland's flagship public transport project, and essential to addressing gridlock in our capital city, connecting our airport to the city centre, and unlocking future housing development in north county Dublin. Labour will prioritise the delivery of Metrolink and begin planning for new spurs. This will maintain expertise in Ireland and ensure the many false starts of Metro North are not repeated. Labour has a proven track record for the delivery of public transport initiatives such as the City Bikes Scheme, the DART, and Luas Cross City, and we will support continued investment in rail and LUAS projects including the following:

- » Ensure that the purchase of new and replacement train, tram and bus stock is well planned for, and accounts for demographic growth and new housing and commercial developments.
- » Fund the extension of DART Coastal North to Drogheda and DART+ West to Maynooth.
- » Continue funding for the remainder of the current DART+ programme and support the extension of the DART to Sallins and Naas on the DART+ South-West line, Wicklow Town on the DART+ Coastal South line, and Kilcock on the DART+ West line.
- » Conduct a feasibility study for MetroLink in the southwest of Dublin city and bring forward the design and planning for the DART underground tunnel.
- » Commit funding for the development of the 4km LUAS extension to Finglas.
- » Fasttrack design work for the Lucan and Poolbeg LUAS lines and identify a route for the Green Line extension to Bray.

- » Progress the design work ongoing for the Cork light rail system with a view to starting construction before 2030, and improvements to commuter rail in Cork, Limerick, Galway, and Waterford.
- » Pursue the completion of the Navan rail line by beginning planning and design work with the aim of opening services in the early 2030's.
- » Develop a long-term plan to implement the All-island Strategic Rail Review with an initial focus on the Atlantic rail corridor from Rosslare to Ballina.
- » Explore options for expanding rail capacity on the northern line either with quad-tracking or a new alignment with the M1 motorway.

Modal Integration

- » Fast track the introduction of mobility hubs with park and ride facilities starting with the major cities, with an initial focus on arterial routes.
- » Ensure bike storage facilities at transport hubs are improved, and that it is as easy as possible to use, and free to bring bikes onto trains and ferries.
- » Pilot new measures to support carpooling and mixed workplace starting times.
- » Ensure that train and bus services to ports are aligned to ferry arrival and departure times.
- » Improve rail and bus connectivity to our ports including Rosslare, Shannon Foynes, Dublin, and Cork ports.
- » Promote the increased use of rail freight particularly into our ports, and with key distributors like bulk food and household goods, construction materials and other heavy freight.

IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY

Labour will ensure our system of public transport is accessible to all and modernised. We will work to improve rural and urban connectivity and provide greater access to services that operate at the times when they are needed. We will:

- » Expand the Dublin Bus Travel Assistance Scheme nationally to support people learning to travel independently.
- » Ensure all public transport services are wheelchair accessible with a multi-annual capital investment plan to address shortcomings in train and bus stations and introduce mandatory accessibility design standards for transport infrastructure.
- » Review the stringent regulations governing the Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers tax relief scheme and introduce a new Transport Support Scheme.



- » Maintain the free travel scheme, and ensure it is available on all licensed bus services.
- » Ensure our cities have increased night-time public transport services that support people working unsociable hours to get to and from their workplace.
- » Support increased pedestrianisation of urban centres to create living streets, more compact urban growth to promote increased active travel, and regular car free days. This would include a mandatory target for local authorities to achieve pedestrianisation of a certain proportion of urban centre streets for towns with a population of over 10,000.

School Transport, Rural Transport and Taxis

Labour will ensure safe routes to school, expand rural transport, and explore new ways to connect communities. We will:

- » Prioritise the connection of all education centres, from creches up to colleges to local housing, with safe footpaths and cycle lanes.
- » Reform the School Transport system, have the Department of Transport take over responsibility for the operation of the scheme with a plan to electrify the fleet and ensure every child that needs a place can access one, for free.
- » Integrate the reformed school transport system with Local Link and rural bus services to achieve new local connectivity using existing infrastructure.
- » Evaluate the pilot Local Hackney Scheme and rollout to more locations to ensure rural communities have access to a taxi/private hire transport service.
- » Review the commissioning of taxis by public agencies, such as the school transport system and use by the HSE, to make sure that commissioning processes are open and competitive and support an accessible fleet through a larger weighting in contract tenders.

Ticket and LEAP Card reform

- » Introduce next generation ticketing with a new LEAP system that allows for contactless payment using debit/credit and virtual cards on smart devices.
- » Review TaxSaver tickets system to make it more flexible to reflect modern work practices.

ROAD TRANSPORT AND ELECTRIC VEHICLES

The previous target of nearly 1 million electric vehicles on Irish roads by 2030 has not been taken seriously by the outgoing Government so there is a need for targeted measures to support adoption. Labour will:

- » Provide grants and incentives linked to household income for the purchase of new electric vehicles.
- » Develop measures to increase the supply of second-hand electric vehicles from neighbouring markets like the UK, dis-incentivise the importation of second-hand fossil fuel cars, and regulate the advertising of fossil fuel cars.
- » Make the history of used cars available to purchasers through NCT and vehicle accident databases.
- » Develop a car scrappage scheme linked to the provision of e-bikes and cargo bikes.
- » Ensure local authorities and ESB Networks increase the provision of on-street electric chargers especially for communities without front gardens or off-street parking.
- » Review how freight systems can be electrified and introduce a plan to ensure all new vans are electric by 2030.

Labour will also:

- » Maintain and increase the road maintenance budget with a priority on road safety interventions alongside a new dedicated fund for maintaining active travel infrastructure.
- » Ensure that funds for road improvement projects are targeted first at tackling road safety improvements and junction tightening, followed by relieving towns and villages of congestion through bypasses, and then addressing regional connectivity. All new road projects should provide segregated cycleways and pathways and strive to achieve carbon neutrality.

Congestion and Car Bloat

- » Develop a model for a low emission zone congestion charge to incentivise public transport in Dublin when BusConnects is substantially delivered.
- » Tackle car and SUV bloat by introducing a weight surcharge to motor tax and VRT rates to encourage more appropriately sized cars in urban areas and incentivise car manufacturers to provide smaller, lighter vehicles.
- » Recognise workplace parking as a benefit in kind where it is assessed by the NTA that there are appropriate active or public transport facilities in place.



PUBLIC AND ROAD SAFETY

Labour will adopt a new approach to improve public transport and road safety for all users, and we will:

- » Address anti-social behaviour on trains, trams and buses with a dedicated public transport policing division within An Garda Síochána and staffed presence in DART and commuter stations to also support accessibility.
- » Replace the RSA with a new road safety body and a strategy focused on reversing the recent increase in road deaths and a focus on protecting pedestrians and cyclists. Testing and licensing will be the responsibility of a separate agency.
- » Review the Road Traffic Acts, introduce a consolidated Road Traffic Act with an anti-avoidance, road safety responsibility clause to stop the constant search by rule breakers and their legal representatives for loopholes in the law to avoid the consequences of their actions.
- » Introduce more average speed cameras for the detection and enforcement of speed limits and graduated speeding penalties.
- » Introduce cameras and automatic number recognition for the enforcement of bus lanes.

Driving Licences

- » Improve the Transferability of international driving licences.
- » Address the number of provisional driving licences in use and restrict renewal unless a full driving test has been completed.

INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIVITY

As an island, Labour recognises that Ireland needs strong air and sea connections to maintain our strong position in the global economy, but that the emissions from commercial aviation and sea travel must be reduced and accounted for.

Aviation

- » Transfer the Aircraft Noise Competent Authority from Fingal County Council to the Environmental Protection Agency and address the impact of noise on local residents from new flight paths since the opening of the North runway including better sound insulation.
- » Prioritise the sustainable development of regional airports, over further concentration in Dublin and reroute air traffic from Dublin airport to Shannon and Cork airports as a matter of priority.

- » Support the development of an indigenous sustainable aviation fuel sector.
- » Limit the use of private jets in Irish airspace for non-diplomatic purposes.
- » Ensure that the carbon cost of aviation is recognised on aviation fuel and flight prices through coordinated action at an EU level.

Maritime

- » Support investment in our ports and harbours to maintain and increase ferry links and aid the offshore wind sector with an €80m Strategic Ports Infrastructure Fund.
- » Engage with the British government on proposals for improving the service and user experience of Sailrail from Dublin to London such as price incentives, better timings for direct trains, onboard wifi and seat reservations, with improved public transport links to Dublin Port.



2 Whitefriars, Aungier Street, Dublin 2, Ireland. D02 A008
Tel: +353 1 6784700 Email: info@labour.ie
www.labour.ie