

# Foreword

As part of its net-zero goal, Ireland has committed to halve transport-related carbon emissions by 2030 compared to 2018 (excluding international aviation and maritime). Meeting net-zero targets implies economy-wide systemic change, specifically requiring transformative changes in the transport sector, as highlighted by the latest IPCC report. In line with this, the OECD and the Irish Climate Change Advisory Council collaborated to identify ways to trigger deep systemic change in the Irish surface passenger transport sector.

The OECD's innovative approach brings systems thinking to the core of climate action and helps identify policies with the highest potential to bring about the needed transformation. This systemic approach emphasises that a transport system that fosters – and often imposes – growing car use will be unlikely to lead to increasing well-being and reducing GHG emissions at the scale and pace needed. Car dependency hinders the possibility of efficiently managing public space to foster quality access via more sustainable and healthy transport modes. It also limits the effectiveness of improved technologies such as more fuel efficient and electric vehicles as increased car use offsets vehicle efficiency gains. Furthermore, if vehicle fleets continue to grow this will hinder achieving high shares of fuel efficient and electric vehicles on the road. From a life-cycle perspective, too, simply electrifying a growing number of motorised vehicles results in higher emissions linked to production and disposal of vehicles, and the carbon-intensity of electricity production.

Thinking in systems shows that car-dependent systems are not a given. With the right policies car-dependent systems can be redesigned so that the most environmentally friendly modes, such as walking, cycling, micro-mobility and shared modes (including public transport) would be the most attractive and therefore the most used. Prioritising policies with a high transformative potential to redesign the Irish transport system, such as wide-scale road space reallocation, can trigger large-scale behavioural change to achieve what was previously considered unreachable. As shown in this study, which had a specific focus on different types of territories (Dublin, Cork, Kildare, Sligo), moving away from car dependency is possible and desirable across different contexts, although the pace and scope of the change might differ.

This OECD study shows that Ireland has ambitious stakeholders ready for joined-up thinking and for action to address the current car-dependent system and meet its climate and well-being objectives. During exchanges with the OECD, a number of stakeholders acknowledged that achieving such goals requires reducing both private car journeys and the need for long trips, while in the meantime ensuring equitable and safe access to places and opportunities for all. Ireland has already paved the way for this process through proposing policies to reallocate road space, mainstream on-demand shared services, and build awareness to address car-centric mindsets. This provides fertile ground to upscale such policies, drawing on the recommendations in this report.

There is an enormous amount of untapped potential for systems innovation in Ireland. These opportunities will not only improve well-being, but also result in lower energy and materials consumption, and fewer emissions. At the OECD, we welcome Ireland's efforts to harness such opportunities and transition towards better transport systems for better lives.



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