



# Sustainable Mobility: Towards a Healthier Future

*the electrification of the vehicle fleet being encouraged as an effective way towards improving air quality. A total of €5million in local grants and €15millionThe reduction of transport-related emissions is at the top of the local agenda, withfrom the EU recovery and resilience funds have been allocated for 2022 alone, tocleaner and sustainable alternatives; this building on the initiatives from previousupport the reduction of internal combustion engine vehicles and to encourageyears which were very well received, writes the team at Transport Malta.Photography Andrew Roberts (electric charging) and William Jones (Valletta).*

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In addition, already as of 12th October 2021, the grants for new electric cars and new plugin-hybrids have increased by €3,000. Over the years, these schemes have also been

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Still, when transitioning from the commonly accustomed-to internal combustion engine to an electric vehicle, there may be some concerns and doubts, and for this reason, Transport Malta has ensured that individuals who either wish to test drive an electric vehicle prior to purchasing same or, who would prefer not to own a private vehicle, have the possibility of opting for a car sharing solution where the fleet is fully electric. Through the present concession agreement in place, users can use an app to book and unlock a car and rent it for the period of time for which they need it. This shift away from private vehicle ownership and towards shared transport is also being witnessed in other European countries, especially amongst the younger generation. The local scenario is being studied, with the aim of highlighting and promoting the benefits with the various groups in our society, depending on their needs and differing lifestyles. Transport Malta believes that knowledge is key in achieving new transport systems and will continue reaching out to the public, listening, understanding, and developing systems that address transport needs whilst having the least negative impact on the environment.

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It is no mystery that urban areas are commonly characterised by traffic and congestion, leading to poor air quality and the occupation of precious land space. The range of transport alternatives is growing, with non-polluting options such as bicycles, pedelecs, and e-kickscooters penetrating the mobility scene. Over time, cycling has become increasingly popular, and it is anticipated that it will take a more prominent role as a safe alternative to the private car. Following the regularisation of micromobility, the Authority is presently working on a related Strategy and Guidelines document aimed at reflecting the growth in uptake which has been noted in recent years.

In addition, through the European Mobility Week initiative, which is spearheaded by the Commission, grants are provided on a yearly basis, following a competition for permanent sustainable mobility measures and small activities and events, to tackle urban transport challenges at local level by experimenting with practical and innovative solutions. During the past years, 20 different localities have benefitted from the various grants offered. Projects implemented include e-bike sharing initiatives, smart parking systems, transport on demand services, pedestrianisation of areas, the purchase of electric vehicles for the

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ivate companies, meanwhile, from the present NGOs, and micromobility substitutes. 2021 budget, €700,000 are Such financial incentives aim to reduce the being used for the burden of the initial costs of purchasing an promotion and purchase of electric vehicle therefore making them pedelecs and category L

for the installation of charging infrastructure, makes the shift toward a healthier mode of commuting even more achievable.

increasingly attractive, even pricewise, in vehicles such as mopeds, motorcycles with or comparison to ICE vehicles. This, coupled without sidecars, tricycles, and quadricycles. with the Government drive and commitment



provisions of community services, and the launching of mobile apps to promote sustainable mobility. Also, during the summer period, a series of workshops focusing on sustainable mobility, walking, cycling, road safety, electromobility, micromobility, and accessibility are delivered to SkolaSajf students.

Transport can also significantly contribute to achieving attractive cities. Major cities are designing neighbourhoods where residents can satisfy most of their daily needs within walking or cycling distance. Malta has a particular advantage in this regard, as the close proximity of urban cores allows for the access of a range of services and retail to be reached by alternatives other than the car. The scope here is to prioritise pedestrians, improve accessibility, and create spaces for the enjoyment of children and residents.

Residents are also becoming more aware of

Finally, now that school has commenced once again, it is imperative to utilise our roads in a safe and controlled manner for many purposes, including the accompanying of children to school. Readers are therefore encouraged to check for the least congested routes prior to their commute. To support this, Transport Malta shall be establishing a National Access Point Platform where traffic-related information will be stored in a more user-friendly manner.

As part of the Back-to-School campaign, pedestrians too are encouraged to play their part and follow traffic regulations, utilising pedestrian crossings in an appropriate way and avoiding shortcuts which could lead to unfortunate accidents.

Should it be necessary, one may always contact the free emergency towing service on

the need for having outdoor spaces for

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socialising and moving around safely. For this purpose, the sustainable mobility team within Transport Malta is looking into local challenges as a basis for the development of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) and Sustainable Urban Logistic Plans for Malta and Gozo.

