

## **TRANSPORT SITUATION IN IRELAND IN 2007**

### **1. Traffic trends**

#### **The Recent Past**

GDP: increase of 25% from 2003 – 2006.

Population: From 2002 – 2006 8.24% or 322,000 more people.

Labour force: 308,000 more people from 2002 – 2006

Port and road freight trends: 19% increase in tonnage over the 2002 – 2006 period from 45 to 53 million

Freight fastest growing transport sector in terms of fuel consumption: 24% of TFC in 2005

#### **Travel to Work – Mode Share**

2006 Census shows continuation in general direction of previous years. Exception is increase in mode share of rail travel to work – direct comparison 2002-2006

In total around 280,000 extra trips in 2006.

Car/van/lorry: 225,000 extra trips per day since 2002. A 22% increase from 2002.

Rail: 22,000 extra trips each day.

Walking: 21,000 extra trips each day.

Working from home: 8,000 extra.

Bus: 7,600 extra trips each day.

Cycling: 2,000 extra trips.

Car Passenger: 3,500 less.

Car trips account for almost all the increase in trips – there is a very small increase in other modes. Cycling is in decline despite growth in workforce.

#### **Summary of current trends:**

- Growth in population and numbers employed has huge impact on travel demand and commuting trends
- Main population growth outside our cities
- Influence of population distribution – average commuting distances doubled since 1991

- Modal share continuing in ‘wrong’ direction – car satisfying increased demand
- Commute times levelled off – shift to earlier starts
- 400,000 work/school/college/ trips by car are less than 4.5km
- LUAS/Train very successful in attracting passengers
- Non commuting travel accounts for majority of trips and km’s that are travelled.

## **2. Obstacles to the development of transport**

Ireland traditionally had a low investment in its roads infrastructure principally due to a continuing lack of available funds for investment in the period up to the 1990s. In the last 10/15 years the Irish economy has grown very quickly and the demand this has placed on all public utilities led to serious concern that such lack of investment would hamper the sustainability of this economic growth.

*The Irish Government committed itself to address this situation with a series of strategic initiatives including a National Development Plan that was completed in 2006, and a recent initiative known as ‘Transport 21’, which provides for a total Exchequer investment of over €16 billion in roads infrastructure over the period 2006-2015. A total of almost €1.7 billion (approx) will be expended in 2007.*

*The Government is committed to maintaining investment in transport infrastructure at a high level and to fully implementing the ambitious national road upgrade programme provided for in ‘Transport 21’.*

## **3. Best practices in transport and infrastructure legislation**

Initially, the provision of a high quality dual carriageway/motorway standard network is the focus in the period to the end of 2010. This network is designed to provide fast, safe routes linking the principal towns and cities of Ireland directly with the capital, Dublin, to assist in regional development and market access.

Known as the Major Interurban Routes (MIUs) – these routes are:

- M1 Dublin to the Border with Northern Ireland,
- N4/6 Dublin/Galway,
- N7 Dublin/Limerick,
- N8 Dublin/Cork &
- N9 Dublin Waterford.

In 2007 traffic congestion was relieved on two of these routes with the opening of a further section of the M8 between Cashel and Cahir, and the completion of the M1 route from Dublin to the border with Northern Ireland, which included a bypass of Dundalk, one of the principal towns along its route.

Significant progress continues to be made on the delivery of these roads and at the time of writing all are on time and on budget for delivery by the end of 2010.

In 2007 the Government introduced primary legislation covering a number of transport areas including strengthening the position of the National Roads Authority,

the agency charged with the delivery of the national roads programme. The legislation also provided additional safeguards against building development along the routes of the new MIUs to protect them from early obsolescence.

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