

Dáil Question

No: 73

To ask the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport his department's progress in implementing the national cycle policy framework, his department's progress towards meeting the smarter travel targets; and the reason for the lack of investment in the capital investment plan..

- Eamon Ryan.

For ORAL answer on Wednesday, 10th May, 2017.

Ref No: 22108/17

Answered by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport
Shane Ross

REPLY

The National Cycle Policy Framework (NCPF) and "Smarter Travel - a Sustainable Transport Future" were published in 2009 and included a range of objectives and actions to be achieved and implemented over the period to 2020. The targets contained in the both policy statements were ambitious and were predicated on substantial investment under the Transport 21 investment plan at the time, which given the economic crisis that ensued could not be delivered in full.

Implementation of the various actions in the NCPF falls to a wide range of public bodies including local authorities, transport agencies, my Department and other Government Departments. The Framework has been integrated into the Development Plans of the majority of local authorities so as to ensure that objectives and policies that support and promote cycling are taken into account in current and future planning. Also, the National Transport Authority (NTA) published the GDA Cycle Network Plan covering the seven local authority areas in the GDA in 2013.

The success of the NCPF and Smarter Travel policy can be seen in the significant increase in the numbers of people cycling as shown in the Canal Cordan Count for 2016. This showed that over 12,000 people cycled into Dublin's centre in November last year in the morning peak - almost the same number as used the LUAS during the morning peak commuting hours. It should be noted that this figure did not include the numbers using Dublin Bikes between the canals.

Smarter Travel's overarching goals remain the cornerstone of my Department's transport policy. This is recognised and reflected in the Programme for Partnership Government where we commit to ensuring that the €3.6bn investment in the public transport system provided for in the Capital Plan will uphold the principles of Smarter Travel. My Department has prioritised investments that specifically encourage cycling and walking in accordance with Smarter Travel Policy with the intention of getting people to change their modes of transport in favour of sustainable travel. While €100m of my Department's capital allocation is earmarked specifically for *Smarter Travel* initiatives, this does not reflect the totality of funding for cycling and walking

measures. In addition to the *Smarter Travel* funding, significant funding is also allocated for walking and cycling measures via the Sustainable Transport Measures Grants (STMG) Programme in the GDA and the Regional Cities Programme. In 2017, €355m is being invested in public transport and sustainable transport infrastructure. Of this figure over 10% (more than €37m) will be allocated to Smarter Travel and Sustainable Transport measures.

My Department will undertake a review of both the NCPF and Smarter Travel policy statements this year. These reviews will examine the extent to which each of the actions set out in the policy statements has been implemented and will help to determine what the focus of future investment in sustainable travel should be.