

IRELAND NEEDS TO MOVE UP A GEAR, SAYS MEP

With European Mobility Week less than three months away, Ireland is behind the curve in embracing car-sharing culture, and MEP Brian Hayes claims that local authorities here can do more to provide alternative modes of transport.

The European Union has identified bike and car sharing as the focus of this year's European Mobility Week (16-22 September) and is encouraging local authorities to launch and promote permanent measures.

It has led to calls by Irish MEP Brian Hayes for all local authorities in Ireland to engage with car sharing service providers to make available space for additional cars.

"Car sharing is becoming increasingly popular across Europe, and allows people to hire cars for as little as an hour, using a booking system to reserve the vehicle and in-car technology to unlock the car and drive.

"It is ideal for people who only need occasional access to vehicle and don't want to own one. Fuel, tax, insurance and maintenance are all included."

He said that with just 215 shared cars currently operating in Dublin and Cork, Ireland is lagging behind other small European countries in terms of provision and take-up of this service.

"Switzerland, for example, has a fleet over 3,000 cars, while Italy, Spain, Germany and France also have much higher numbers of car sharing users. Car sharing reduces car dependency, congestion, noise and air pollution, and frees up land traditionally used for parking spaces. Each shared car replaces approximately 15 private cars, as well as increasing use of public transport."

LIMITED AVAILABILITY

Highlighting Go Car as one company that has been providing car sharing in Ireland since 2008, Brian Hayes said it has over 10,000 people registered, "but with cars in just two of the major cities in Ireland, penetration of the market is limited."



For further information visit GoCar.ie/Locations or email info@gocar.ie

"Culturally, there is still a leap to be made with regard to the concept, but with greater numbers of European citizens living and working in Dublin, their habits around car use can and should influence ours. The benefits to car sharing are numerous, for commuters, the environment and the state. Sharing gets you further."

GoCar plans to double its fleet of shared cars in 2017, bringing the total number of shared vehicles to 300 by the end of 2017, with plans to expand in a number of regional locations as local authorities allow.

Users can book cars online or via the app for as little as an hour, then unlock with their phone or GoCard; the keys are in the car, with fuel, insurance and city parking all included.

Rates start from €8 per hour, with 50km of driving included on each trip. Since it was launched in 2008, over 10,000 drivers have signed up to GoCar, and it now offers over 200 vehicles across 160 locations.

