

## Ranking: Public transport too expensive in many European countries

**[City], May 4, 2023** - [New analysis](#) by Greenpeace Central and Eastern Europe has ranked public transport affordability and simplicity in 30 European countries and their capitals, and shows that it is too expensive in many places. Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece and Norway scored worst in the ranking of national transport tickets, while Dublin, London, Paris and Amsterdam ranked worst for the capitals.[1] The analysis comes days after Germany and Hungary's new low-cost nationwide travel cards came into effect on 1 May.

Greenpeace is calling on national and local governments to introduce affordable '[climate tickets](#)' for public transport, and for the European Commission to facilitate this – with a view to introducing a Europe-wide climate ticket in the future. German transport minister Volker Wissing last month [expressed](#) support for a pan-European public transport ticket similar to the new Deutschlandticket.

### **Herwig Schuster, transport expert for Greenpeace's Mobility for All campaign, said:**

*"Affordable public transport is a necessity, but many governments treat it like a luxury good. Millions of people rely on buses, trams and trains to get to work and school, to meet their families and friends, to participate in society in a sustainable way. Governments must introduce simple and affordable 'climate tickets' for public transport, to cut people's bills and to reduce the oil use driving our planet towards climate disaster."*

### **Public transport shouldn't be a luxury good**

The new Greenpeace analysis reveals that in some countries such as Belgium and the Netherlands, offering a relatively simple ticketing system, the full price of a long-term nationwide ticket costs more than €7 a day. Dublin, London, Paris and Amsterdam are the most expensive cities for public transport with full price long-term tickets costing more than €2.25 per day. In these cities, like in most of the analysed cities, several groups can access discounts on public transport, but half of the capital cities analysed are offering no, or tiny, discounts for unemployed people, refugees or asylum seekers.

Public transport tickets in the EU are taxed at an average of 11% VAT, which is still higher than many other basic services and necessities. Seven EU countries currently tax public transport as much as jewellery or luxury watches. [2]

At the same time, the VAT on cross-border airline tickets in the EU is at 0% and kerosene for aeroplanes is also not taxed, which keeps the price of polluting transport low, while climate-friendly transport remains expensive.

### **Affordable public transport, an answer the cost-of-living and climate crises**

The study states that the [perfect climate ticket](#) does not exist in Europe yet. Apart from Luxembourg and Malta, which made domestic public transport free, only Austria, Germany and Hungary have introduced relatively affordable nationwide tickets, costing less than €3 per day. And despite the proven benefits of affordable and accessible public transport for the climate

and bringing down household bills, around two thirds of the countries don't have country-wide long-term travel passes at all.

Transport is the [second](#)-largest expense of European households, and the price is a key decision factor for people who can choose between cars and public transport. Introducing simple and affordable tickets valid on all means of urban public transports but also long distance trains or regional trains, is a matter of social justice, and is key to reducing our dependence on fossil fuels, improving the quality of our environment, and fighting climate change. It is also the quickest possible improvement; with a strong political will it could be done within weeks [3].

Greenpeace calls on national and local governments to implement or improve their climate tickets and to the European Commission to provide guidance and encouragement. The EU governments and the EU institutions should start working towards an EU-wide climate ticket available for all people to travel across borders. To fund these services, and to shift incentives away from the most polluting forms of travel, Greenpeace is calling on national governments and the EU to end the tax exemptions for international flights and for aviation fuel, and to further improve and expand their existing public transport networks.

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#### Notes

[1] Countries ranking: Luxembourg (#1), Malta (#2), Austria (#3), Germany (#4), Cyprus (#5), Spain (#6), Switzerland (#7), Hungary (#8), Netherlands (#9), Estonia (#10), Czech Republic (#11), Belgium (#12), Slovenia (#13), UK (#14), Ireland (#15), Denmark (#16), Portugal (#17), Sweden (#17), Poland (#19), Lithuania (#19), Finland (#21), France (#21), Italy (#21), Slovakia (#21), Romania (#25), Latvia (#26), Norway (#26), Greece (#28), Croatia (#28), Bulgaria (#30).

Capitals ranking: Tallinn (#1), Luxembourg (#1), Valletta (#1), Prague (#4), Bratislava (#5), Madrid (#6), Rome (#7), Vienna (#8), Athens (#9), Sofia (#10), Nicosia (#11), Warsaw (#12), Brussels (#13), Ljubljana (#14), Lisbon (#15), Budapest (#16), Riga (#17), Vilnius (#18), Bern (#19), Oslo (#20), Helsinki (#21), Zagreb (#22), Berlin (#23), Copenhagen (#24), Stockholm (#25), Bucharest (#26), Paris (#27), Amsterdam (#28), London (#29), Dublin (#30).

[2] In seven EU countries, the standard VAT rate (which is the highest in the country) is applied both to public transport and luxury goods. These countries are Romania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Slovakia, Ireland, Croatia and Hungary.

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