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EDITOR LETTER

As autumn arrives, the challenges for Ireland's taxi drivers continue to mount. This edition of Tacsai is your essential guide to navigating the road ahead.

We lead by putting a sharp Focus on Driving Costs, from fuel to insurance, and examine the market shock of Zego's departure—a move that leaves many searching for cover.

With regulations tightening, our guide to Driving Fines and Penalty Points in 2025 is crucial for protecting your licence. We also look forward with Fuel Watch 2025, comparing the real costs of traditional and alternative fuels.

Your safety remains paramount, and we offer key advice on Passenger Safety and Driver Protection. We also investigate The Hidden Cost of Roadworks on your time and earnings.

But this trade is defined by its people. We share Stories from Ireland's Drivers, celebrating the human spirit behind the wheel, and glimpse the future in What Cars Will Look Like in 2030.

This magazine is packed with insights to support your work. Thank you for your vital role in our communities.

Stay safe,

The Taxi Magazine Team

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DRIVING FINES AND PENALTY POINTS

What Every Taxi Driver Should Avoid in 2025

DRIVING FINES AND PENALTY POINTS: WHAT EVERY TAXI DRIVER SHOULD AVOID IN 2025		
OFFENCE	PENALTY POINTS	FINE
 Bus Lane/ Clearway Violation	3	€60
 Holding a Mobile Phone	3	€80
 Speeding	3	€200
 Illegal Parking	1	40

points and an €80 fine. Even quickly checking a booking app at the lights can land you in trouble. A proper hands-free setup is essential.

- **Speeding & Average Speed Cameras:**

More speed cameras are being rolled out on the M50 and key national routes, with average-speed checks catching drivers who slow down only at fixed camera points.

- **Failure to Stop for Passengers:**

Stopping illegally to collect or set down a fare — for example, in yellow boxes, pedestrian crossings, or no-stop zones — can attract fines. Gardai in city centres are watching closely.

- **Taxi-Specific Checks:**

Garda roadside checks now frequently include verification of SPSV licences, insurance, and tax discs. Missing or outdated paperwork can lead to fines and penalty points.

Recent Law Changes (2025)

- **Increased Fines for Speeding:** As of January 2025, speeding fines rose from €160 to €200 for standard offences.

- **E-Scooter & Cycle Lane Priority:** New legislation prioritises scooters and cyclists in shared spaces — taxi drivers found encroaching risk fines.

- **Drink-Driving Thresholds:** Enforcement remains strict, with lower limits for professional drivers. Even one pint could put you over.

Protecting Your Licence

- Always double-check bus lane signs and city diversions before starting a shift.

- Invest in a reliable dash-mounted phone holder and hands-free kit.

- Keep SPSV licence, insurance, and NCT certs in the car and up to date.

- Take note of Garda checkpoints — they are increasingly targeting commercial vehicles.

Final Word

Penalty points may seem like small slips, but for taxi drivers, they add up quickly. A single careless mistake can cost not just money, but months off the road. As one Cork driver put it:

“The fares are tough enough to get these days — the last thing you need is a ban hanging over your head.”

For Ireland's taxi drivers, keeping a clean licence isn't just about pride — it's a livelihood issue. Too many penalty points or a serious fine can put you off the road, and with ever-stricter enforcement across Irish cities, even experienced drivers need to stay alert.

The Current Rules

As of 2025, a driver who accumulates 12 penalty points within three years faces a six-month driving ban. For taxi drivers and others with a “novice” or “learner” licence, the threshold is even lower at seven points.

While most drivers know the basics, some offences are creeping up more often due to increased Garda and camera enforcement.

Common Pitfalls for Taxi Drivers

- **Bus Lanes & Clearways:**

Many taxi drivers depend on bus lanes for efficiency, but rules differ by time and location. Some are 24/7, others peak-hours only. A misread sign can mean a fine and penalty points.

“It's a nightmare around College Green — one wrong turn and you're down €60,” says Mick, a Dublin taxi veteran.

- **Mobile Phone Use:**

Holding a phone while driving carries three penalty



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The Growing Dangers Facing the Taxi Industry

Tony Roe, Chairman of the National Transport Assembly Committee and spokesperson for the taxi sector, has raised serious concerns about the escalating dangers faced by taxi drivers in Ireland.

Tony Roe, Chairman of the National Transport Assembly Committee (NTAC) and its spokesperson on taxis, has issued a stark warning about the escalating dangers faced by taxi drivers, labelling the current situation as “a complete disaster” and “lunacy.”

Roe highlighted a surge in assaults on drivers, which he directly attributes to a specific regulatory requirement: the display of the driver’s name inside the vehicle. He argues this policy makes drivers uniquely vulnerable to targeted attacks, fare dodgers, and reprisals.

“We are sick and tired of campaigning... we want the name removed and replaced with a non-individual number displayed on the exterior of the car,” Roe stated. ***“After all, we don’t see bus drivers or train operators with their names on display. Taxi drivers are being uniquely exposed.”***

This exposure, he claims, allows malicious passengers to easily identify and locate drivers. Roe cited harrowing examples, including a driver whose house was destroyed and car

set on fire, and noted that many assaults go unreported because they have become so common. He expressed frustration that official statistics on attacks are not readily available, saying it allows the problem to be overlooked.

“The Minister for Transport isn’t doing his case any good by not acting,” Roe said. ***“Public service workers must be protected and not exposed in this fashion. The rules are being broken, and they’re allowing drivers to be taken advantage of, mainly at night. It’s a very dangerous, volatile job.”***

Roe also pointed to a decline in standards since the day-to-day oversight of the industry moved from the Garda Carriage Office to the Transport Authority, praising the former for its visible, uniformed presence which served as a strong deterrent.

The NTAC is urging all drivers who have been assaulted to contact Victim Support and to lobby the Minister for Transport directly, demanding immediate action to remove identifying names from taxis and improve safety protocols before more drivers are seriously harmed or leave the industry altogether.

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The Martina Roe Lay Counselling Society

– Supporting Transport Workers in Crisis

Beyond his work in the taxi sector, Tony Roe is also heavily involved in mental health support through the Martino Road Lay Counselling Society.

Formerly known as the Taxi Drivers' Lay Counselling Association, the group provides free, volunteer-led support for those in the transport industry who are struggling with bereavement, depression, or isolation.

The society runs weekly meetings and events — from music nights to organised trips — with the goal of bringing people together and breaking cycles of loneliness. Roe describes how many older men in the industry, particularly retired or part-time drivers, find themselves isolated and vulnerable:

“We’ve had men in their 60s and 70s ringing us in desperation. Some of them may not speak to another soul from one end of the day to the next. Driving a taxi can be a lifeline — it gets them out of the house and meeting people.”

The group also addresses the tragic prevalence of suicide among transport workers. Roe notes that both the taxi and bus industries have seen high rates of suicide over the years, often linked to isolation, financial strain, or unaddressed grief.

The society's motto reflects its proactive spirit: *“Don’t moan about it, let’s do something about it.”*

Unlike state-funded counselling, which can cost €70 per session even after subsidies, the Martino Road Lay Counselling Society operates entirely free of charge. All its members are volunteers, most of them taxi drivers who have faced similar struggles themselves. They also make home visits to those who are particularly isolated or unwell.

The society recently organised a subsidised group trip to Spain, which sold out quickly thanks to its affordability and the strong sense of community it fostered. Roe says these events are vital in encouraging people to reconnect and regain confidence:

“We don’t want people slipping into silence or isolation. We’re here to give them a chance to talk, to share, to live. Everyone in the transport industry is welcome.”

The Martino Road Lay Counselling Society continues to grow, fuelled by volunteers determined to prevent tragedies and build a community of support where it's needed most.

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Driving Costs in Focus - Fuel, Insurance, and Licences Are Squeezing Taxi Drivers

Operating your taxi today is far more than simply turning the key and hitting the road. From fluctuating fuel bills to rising insurance premiums, licence fees, and ongoing vehicle upkeep — the sums add up. Below is a detailed look at what's eating into drivers' margins, and ideas for staying ahead.

1. Fuel: The Most Visible Cost

- **Volatile prices:** The price of diesel or petrol continues to jump, influenced by global events, supply issues, and local taxes. Every price rise adds immediately to your daily expense.

- **Fuel type matters:** Diesel often offers more mileage per litre, but recent tax and environmental policies make diesel costs less favourable. Hybrid or electric vehicles (EVs) are seen by many as the better long-term bet—but they require higher up-front investment and access to charging infrastructure.

- **Fuel efficiency counts:** Choosing the right car, maintaining tyres, avoiding excessive idling, and smooth driving all help reduce fuel consumption.

2. Insurance: A Growing Pressure

- **Premiums rising:** Insurance for commercial/taxi cover has gone up several times in recent years. Claims, repair costs, regulation changes, and risk perceptions all feed into that.

- **Specialist brokers:** Insurance for taxis is different from private-use vehicles. Using a broker who understands the taxi trade (with its high mileage, night work, etc.) can help find the best deal.

- **Telematics and safe driving:** Installing devices that monitor driving behaviour can sometimes reduce premiums—but careful research is needed to ensure you're not penalised unfairly.

3. Licences, Regulation, and Compliance Costs

- **Driver's licence / SPSV licence fees:** To legally operate, you must hold a valid SPSV (Small Public Service Vehicle) licence or equivalent. Renewal, any test or medical fees, and compliance (e.g. tax status, background checks) all cost money and time.

- **Vehicle licensing, registration, and taxes:** VRT (Vehicle Registration Tax), tolls, road tax, and other levies all add up. For EVs, some reliefs or exemptions may exist—but these sometimes have strings attached.

- **Testing and maintenance:** The taxi must pass safety inspections, remain roadworthy, clean and properly equipped, which adds to upkeep costs.

4. Other Operating Costs That Bite

- **Depreciation:** Every mile you drive drops a bit of value from your car. The more you drive (especially with high mileage or under tough conditions), the faster that depreciation comes.

- **Repairs and servicing:** Parts, labour, tyres, brakes — costs can balloon, especially when dealing with older vehicles. EVs may reduce some of this (fewer moving parts, no engine oil, etc.), but introduce new costs (battery, charging equipment).

- **Taxes and overheads:** Income tax, VAT (if applicable), insurance of premises (if you have one), phone/data for apps or dispatch services, etc.

5. Can Switching to EVs or Hybrids Help?

Switching to a hybrid or fully electric taxi comes up often—here are pros and cons:

Pros

- Lower running (fuel/electricity) cost per km
- Reduced maintenance and fewer mechanical parts to fail
- Possible grants, tax reliefs, or VRT exemptions for EVs
- Lower emissions = better public image, possibly regulatory favours / lower fees in low-emission zones

Cons / Challenges

- Up-front purchase cost of EVs or hybrids is higher
- Charging infrastructure may be lacking in some areas
- Resale value uncertain; battery degradation over time
- Need to plan charging well; operational downtime if charging isn't available

6. Strategies to Keep Costs Down

- **Regular maintenance:** Even simple things like keeping tyres at correct pressure, servicing on schedule, using the right lubricants, avoiding harsh driving, etc.

- **Route and shift planning:** Avoid long empty miles, plan for features that reduce idle time (e.g. off-peak charging, waiting in optimal locations), make use of technology (GPS, apps) to reduce overhead.

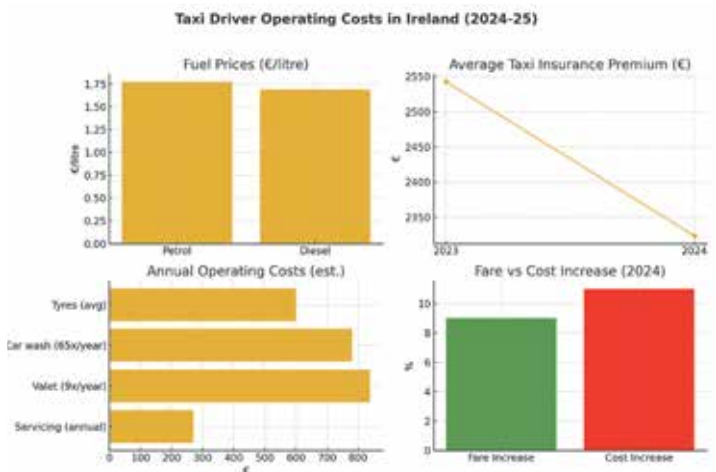
- **Shop around for insurance and services:** Compare brokers, multi-vehicle deals, or union/association offers. Negotiate where possible.

- **Keep records:** Accurate logs of fuel use, repairs, income — these help with budgeting, tax claims, and justifying decisions (like switching to EVs).

7. The Bottom Line for 2025

- Many taxi drivers report that total operating costs have increased by at least 8-12% in the past couple of years, considering fuel, insurance, parts, licences combined.

- Without matching fare increases, this squeezes profit margins.
- Keeping up to date with government policy (grants, reliefs, regulatory changes) could make a significant difference.





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FUEL WATCH 2025: PETROL, DIESEL, OR ALTERNATIVE FUELS FOR TAXI DRIVERS?

FUEL COMPARISON FOR TAXI DRIVERS			
			
PETROL	DIESEL	HYBRID	ELECTRIC
Cost per km €0,18	Cost per km €0,16	Cost per km €0,14	Cost per km €0,08
Pros • Lower upfront cost • Good availability	Pros • Long range • Better economy	Cons • Higher fuel costs • Emissions penalties	Future outlook • Declining
Pros • Higher fuel prices • Higher emissions	Cons • Higher purchase cost • Depends on petrol	Cons • High upfront cost • Charging downtime	Future outlook • Encouraged
Declining	Declining	Practical	Encouraged

For Irish taxi drivers, fuel isn't just a cost — it's one of the biggest factors in daily earnings. With petrol and diesel prices rising and new alternatives being pushed by government policy, many drivers are asking: which fuel option makes the most sense in 2025?

Petrol vs Diesel: The Old Debate

Diesel has long been the taxi driver's friend. It offers better mileage and stronger torque for city driving. But with higher carbon taxes and emissions penalties, running costs are creeping up.

- Diesel Prices: Averaging €1.82 per litre in 2025, with more hikes expected as carbon taxes increase.

- Petrol Prices: Slightly higher at the pumps (around €1.85 per litre), but fewer cars now use petrol for taxi fleets.

"I'd still pick diesel for range and economy," says Brian, a Limerick taxi driver. "But between NCT emissions tests and tax, it feels like the government is pushing us out."

Hybrids: A Popular Middle Ground

Hybrid cars, especially Toyota models like the Prius and

Corolla, dominate taxi ranks in Dublin and Cork. They combine a small petrol engine with electric assistance, lowering fuel bills without the range anxiety of a full EV.

- Pros: Lower emissions, smoother city driving, better for short hops.

- Cons: Higher upfront costs, batteries can be pricey to replace, still rely on petrol.

Full EV Taxis: Are We Ready Yet?

More grants are available for taxi drivers switching to full electric vehicles (EVs), with the SEAI offering up to €10,000 in supports. But infrastructure remains the sticking point.

- Range: Newer EVs can cover 300–400km, but long shifts mean recharging mid-day.

- Charging: Fast chargers are improving but queues and downtime remain a problem, especially in city centres.

- Running Costs: Electricity is far cheaper per km than fuel — if you can charge at home or off-peak.

"I'd love to go full electric," says Sandra, a Dublin airport driver. "But waiting in line for a charger when you should be picking up fares just doesn't work."

Alternative Fuels: CNG and Hydrogen

- Compressed Natural Gas (CNG): A handful of Irish taxis have trialled CNG, but the refuelling network is tiny — just a few public stations nationwide.

- Hydrogen: Still years away. While pilot projects exist, hydrogen taxis in Ireland are rare, with no commercial fuelling stations open yet.

What's Next?

The government's Climate Action Plan targets one-third of the taxi fleet to be electric by 2030. Incentives are improving, but for now, hybrids remain the most practical choice for many drivers. Diesel is still dominant, but its days may be numbered.

The Bottom Line for Taxi Drivers

- Best for long shifts and rural driving: Diesel (still king of the range).

- Best for city driving and short hops: Hybrid.

- Best for early adopters with home charging: EV.

- Future watch: CNG and hydrogen could play a role, but not yet.

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Frank Keane

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CORK, IRELAND – About Ireland Taxi Tours is proud to announce that we've been officially shortlisted for the Hospitality / Tourism Company of the Year at the Ireland's Climate Change Leadership Awards (ICCLA) 2025.

This prestigious nomination recognises excellence, innovation, and lasting impact in the journey toward a greener, more sustainable Ireland — and we're honoured to stand alongside a community of changemakers in Irish tourism and hospitality.

"We're thrilled to be recognised for our efforts to combine authentic Irish experiences with environmentally conscious practices," said Bob McAuliffe, Owner of About Ireland Taxi Tours. *"To be shortlisted for this award is a tribute to our team's passion and commitment to doing tourism the right way — responsibly, locally, and personally."*

We extend our congratulations to all the incredible finalists who made it through this year's rigorous judging process. Your initiatives are truly leading the way for climate action in Ireland.

Leading the Way in Responsible Tourism

From electric and hybrid vehicle adoption to supporting local producers and off-the-beaten-track destinations, sustainability is at the heart of everything we do. We're committed to offering world-class travel experiences that leave a positive footprint on Ireland's people, places, and planet.

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Keith, a much-loved guide and team cornerstone, brings heart, humour, and heritage to every road he travels.

Whether you've explored the cliffs, castles, and countryside with us — or worked with our team behind the scenes — we'd love to hear your story. Drop your memories or photos in the comments and celebrate this special moment with us!

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THE HIDDEN COST OF ROADWORKS

How Dublin's Changing Roads Affect Taxi Drivers



For most Dublin taxi drivers, navigating the city's streets is second nature. But in recent years, constant roadworks, diversions, and new transport projects have turned even the most familiar routes into daily challenges. What might seem like a minor inconvenience to the average commuter can cost taxi drivers real time, money, and stress.

Endless Cones and Diversions

From Liffey Cycle Route works to the BusConnects corridors, Dublin has been in near-permanent construction mode. While the long-term goals are improved public transport and safer cycling, the short-term impact has been congestion and confusion.

"Between College Green, Nassau Street, and Dame Street, it feels like the city changes every week," says Tony, a Dublin taxi driver with 25 years on the road. "You spend more time checking diversions than actually driving."

The Financial Impact on Taxi Drivers

- **Longer Trips, Same Fares:** Fixed fares to Dublin Airport or hospitals don't account for extra delays caused by diversions.

- **Lost Jobs:** Passengers cancel if a driver takes too long to reach them due to road closures.

- **Extra Fuel Burned:** Stop-start traffic and detours mean higher running costs.

A recent drivers' survey suggested that some taxi operators are losing €40–€60 per week purely from delays linked to city-centre works.

Passengers Feel It Too

It's not just drivers who suffer. Frustrated passengers, already paying high fares in peak traffic, often take it out on drivers. Some even avoid taxis altogether, opting for Luas or bus lanes that bypass the chaos.

Road Layout Confusion

Perhaps the most stressful part for drivers is inconsistent signage. Many diversions are posted late, changed overnight, or poorly marked. For a driver on a busy Saturday night, one wrong turn can mean a fine, a delay, or even an angry passenger.

What Drivers Want

- **Better Communication:** Advance notice of works through apps or driver alerts, not just street signage.

- **Taxi Access Consideration:** In some areas, allowing taxis to bypass works (like buses) could ease pressure.

- **Clearer Signage:** Simple, visible instructions reduce wrong turns and penalties.

The Long View

Most drivers acknowledge that better infrastructure will eventually help taxis too. Quicker buses and more cycle lanes may reduce car traffic, making the city more accessible. But in the meantime, taxi drivers are bearing much of the cost.

"We're not against improvements," says Mary, who works night shifts around Temple Bar. "But while the city changes, we're the ones stuck explaining to passengers why the fare is higher, and the trip takes twice as long."



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The ever-changing Irish SPSV Insurance Market

A News Update from TaxiFair Insurance

Ze-Gone

The SPSV insurance market continues to be a focal point of discussion as we approach the last quarter of 2025. Most recently, Zego, often described as an 'insurtech unicorn', announced that they are leaving the Irish market, leaving thousands of customers seeking a new insurer in an already small market.

Solvency

Zego's exit, based on their own PR and recently published accounts, does not appear to be related to solvency issues. So, if you are currently with Zego and have a claim (or are already dealing with a claim), there should be no concerns over their ability to handle, or pay, those claims—which is reassuring.

The dilemma

If you have several months left on your Zego policy, should you stick with them until cover expires, or seek a new insurer now? While Zego appear able to pay claims, if you have a clean record but then experience a claim in the remaining months of your policy, what happens at renewal? Will you still be able to get a quote from another provider with a claim on your record? That will largely depend on whether a claim is open or settled, how much was paid, etc. All theoretical unknowns, of course. Ultimately, if you can't get cover elsewhere, you will fall into the Declined Cases Agreement with Insurance Ireland. While this guarantees you will get a quotation, it generally comes with higher premiums and less cover. So, there is definitely an argument that if you can move insurer now, you should strongly consider it.

Exciting developments

While Zego's exit from the market is a shame —competition benefits everyone —at TaxiFair we have been working on bringing a new entrant to the market for over 12 months. This new entrant will launch in October. The timing is certainly more luck than judgement, as no one foresaw Zego's sudden exit, but it is welcome news at a time when many customers need a new insurer.

The product

The new product is underwritten by Accelerant Insurance and will be arranged and administered by Ornella Underwriting, based in Wexford.

For context, Accelerant Insurance holds an AM Best financial strength rating of A- ("Excellent"), reflecting the group's robust financial position. They are widely renowned as a forward-thinking, technology-led specialty insurer—a perfect fit for the Irish SPSV market. Accelerant Insurance

are part of Accelerant Holdings, which listed on the New York Stock Exchange in July, this year.

Accelerant writes policies via local partners, which is where Ornella Underwriting come in. Based in Wexford, Ornella Underwriting bring the local underwriting expertise, systems, and administration to bring the product to life. At TaxiFair, we will be working with Ornella daily to meet the needs of Irish SPSV operators and drivers.

Cover

The new product will offer more choice for customers, as well as comprehensive coverage including the important essentials: unlimited windscreen cover (if using an approved repairer), breakdown, radio, roof sign and meter cover, plus fire brigade charges (essential if driving an EV). It will also be the only product in the Irish market to include Public Liability cover as standard, at no extra cost—a great development for those with Bus Éireann contracts.

Importantly, it will provide competitive pricing for newer entrants into the SPSV market, which we are seeing more and more of in 2025.

Choice

TaxiFair entered the Irish SPSV market 10 years ago with a mission to bring much-needed competition. This new offering builds on that commitment. As we continue to grow, our focus remains on helping customers go to work—if we can't enable you, we have no position in the market. Going forward, with three insurer partners, we are better positioned to help more drivers than ever before.

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Dear Sir/Madam,

We write to you today on behalf of Kamal S Gill and myself as Directors of Hola Taxi Limited. We write on behalf of our drivers and the wider taxi community across Ireland to express our deep concern about the current state of the taxi industry, which we believe is experiencing severe market saturation that is negatively impacting drivers, the sustainability of our businesses, and the overall health of the transport sector.

Our primary request is that the NTA immediately institute a temporary pause on the issuance of new Small Public Service Vehicle (SPSV) driver and vehicle licences. This will allow for a comprehensive review of the market capacity and the development of a long-term strategy for a stable and viable industry.

The core of our concern is that the number of active taxis and taxi drivers has now significantly surpassed pre-COVID-19 levels. This oversupply is creating a critical situation, as demonstrated by the comparative data below:

Market Saturation: Comparative Data (National)

Market Saturation: Comparative Data (National)			
Country	Population (approx.)	Number of Licensed Taxis	Taxis per 1,000 people
Ireland	5.1 million	27,500+	5.4
United Kingdom	67 million	238,300	3.5
France	67 million	59,400	0.88
Germany	83 million	61,000	0.73
Spain	47 million	65,700	1.4
EU Average	-	-	2.5

Source: Data compiled from National Transport Authority (NTA), European Transport Safety Council, and national ministry reports (2022-2023).

This data unequivocally shows that Ireland's taxi-to-population ratio is among the highest in Europe. However, this national problem is intensely concentrated in the capital.

The Crisis in Dublin:

The saturation is particularly acute in the Dublin region, which holds an estimated 18,000 taxi licenses—resulting in a staggering ratio of nearly 13 taxis per 1,000 residents. This far exceeds the density in other European capitals such as London (2.2), Berlin (2.1), or Madrid (4.6), and highlights the intense pressure on drivers operating in the capital.

The consequences of this oversupply are severe and are exacerbated by several key issues:

1. Infrastructure Pressure: The physical space for taxis to operate is shrinking. Dedicated taxi rank spaces are continually being diminished or removed from major transport hubs, including Connolly Station and College Green. This creates intense pressure, illegal parking, and dangerous conflicts between drivers desperate for a fare and other road users.

2. Licensing and Testing Standards: The current system allows an EU national to apply for an SPSV licence without requiring any prior driving experience on Irish roads. While we support the right to work, we strongly believe that demonstrating familiarity with Irish road conditions, signage,



and geography is a matter of public safety and service quality. Furthermore, while some suggest leveraging map technology to make the Area Knowledge test easier, we caution that different navigation apps may not choose the most appropriate, efficient, or safe routes, which is not in the best interest of the public.

3. Imbalanced Geographic Distribution: The oversupply is concentrated in major urban centres like Dublin, while many regional towns experience an under-supply, especially during night-time hours. The current system that allows the easy transfer of vehicles from county to county exacerbates this problem, flooding the capital with vehicles from other regions and depleting local supply elsewhere.

4. Erosion of Industry Standards: The sheer desperation for work is directly leading to a breakdown of industry rules and respect among drivers. We are witnessing a sharp increase in anti-social behaviour at ranks, including queue jumping, illegally poaching pre-booked jobs, and operating illegally in regulated zones like Zone 18 at Dublin Airport.

We therefore strongly urge you to consider the following recommendations:

- Immediately pause the issuance of new SPSV driver and vehicle licences to conduct a detailed review of market equilibrium.

- Re-evaluate licensing requirements to mandate a minimum period of driving experience in Ireland before applying for an SPSV licence.

- Review the Area Knowledge test to ensure it continues to prioritise the public interest by testing genuine, practical knowledge.

- Review the policy on inter-county transfers of vehicle licences to help redistribute SPSVs to areas of under-supply.

- Protect and expand taxi rank infrastructure at major transport hubs.

We are ready to engage further to provide firsthand accounts and work collaboratively towards a solution.

Yours faithfully,

Laurence Kelly & Kamal S Gill

Directors, Hola Taxi Ireland Limited

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New Fiat 600e will Electrify Your Emotions

By Declan Glynn



While the original Fiat 600 was launched in Europe in 1955 with a tiny 25bhp petrol engine, the all-new Fiat 600 shares nothing, but its name, with its iconic predecessor.

The stunning new Fiat 600 takes the best of the B and B-SUV worlds to offer a beautiful, joyful and pampered driving experience, marking the Italian brand's return to the highly-competitive B-segments. Available in both hybrid and fully-electric, the new Fiat 600 is an ideal car for Irish roads, and the perfect embodiment of the brand's values of celebrated Italian style and sustainability. It is the fully-electric Fiat 600 (badged 600e) that the editorial below refers to.

Latest Electrified Platform.

In 2021, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) and the French PSA Group merged to form Stellantis – one of the largest automakers in the world. As a result, the fully-electric 600e uses the latest Stellantis e-CMP2 platform, with its integrated battery design boosting rigidity in the process. Its 156hp electric motor sits transversely within the platform and it sends its power to the cars' front wheels in a composed and amenable fashion. The new 600 features a sharper and more assertive face than its Fiat 500 sibling, and it comes with a distinctive LED lighting identity. The elegant, yet dynamic, exterior look is enhanced by stylish wheels (from 16" to 18" in size), matt black wheel arches, and black trim elements around its lower edges to emphasise its robust nature. Additional exterior highlights include glossy black details, chrome accents and suitably-distinctive rear lights. The characterful exterior styling is replicated in the cabin where its smart interior

design is both visually impressive and pleasingly practical for up to 5 occupants. With all rear seats in their upright position, the boot has a capacity of 360-litres, but this can be expanded to 1,256-litres when the rear seats are folded down. The last time Fiat dealerships had the opportunity to have a 500 and 600 on display together in their showroom was in the early 1970's, so the arrival of the new 600 is a really big deal for the iconic Italian brand.

'Red' and 'La Prima' trim grades.

The lithium-ion batteries in the 600e come with a 54kWh capacity (51kWh usable) that provides a range of up to 408km on a WLTP combined driving cycle, and more than 600km on a city-only driving cycle. The 600e is equipped with a 100kW fast-charger system and it comes with a 11kW on-board charger and a Mode 3 cable for charging at home, or in public. The electric powertrain produces 156hp and 260Nm of instant torque, providing acceleration from 0-100km/h in just 9-seconds. Drivers can choose from three driving modes – Eco, Normal & Sport – which can be selected to match individual driving styles. With the 600e, buyers can choose between 'Red' and 'La Prima' trim grades, which are priced at €32,995 and €37,995 respectively (inclusive of SEAI Grant & VRT Rebate).

Level 2 Assisted Driving.

As with the 600 Hybrid, the 600e is packed with state-of-the-art safety and driver assistance features that make it ready for

Continues P.31

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everyday life. It offers level 2 assisted driving, bringing all the associated benefits to every journey. Features include Adaptive Cruise Control (ACC), Stop&Go function, Electric Parking Brake, Autonomous Emergency Braking, and Drowsy Driver Detection to monitor driver concentration levels. In order to enhance comfort and connectivity for all occupants, the new 600e 'Red' is available with key standard features such as; a red-painted dashboard fascia, electric windows x 4, auto air-conditioning, dusk and rain sensors, a 4-speaker sound system, a fully customisable 10.25-inch infotainment screen with wireless Apple CarPlay & Android Auto, a 7-inch digital driver information cluster, rear parking sensors, and a Red Version Kit that comes with a variety of exclusive internal and external styling, with logos located on the front and side of the car. Upgrading to 'La Prima' trim brings with it additional key features like a handsfree tailgate, Navigation, leather seat upholstery, Ivory painted dashboard fascia, 18" diamond-cut alloy wheels, chrome styling accents, rear privacy glass, 6 speaker sound system, driver seat with 8-way power adjustment and massage function, front, rear and side parking sensors, rear view camera with dynamic gridlines, wireless charging, traffic sign recognition, and urban blind spot monitor.

Car on Review.

My review car was a Fiat 600e 'Red', which was finished in Black metallic paintwork (a €695 option) with a red-painted '600'

badge on the nose of the car, and a red FIAT badge, along with a discreet blue-coloured 'e' moniker on the tailgate door. The FIAT smartphone app offers drivers a broad range of services so that they can stay connected to their car and bring their digital world on board. While the 600e does have its own rounded instrument cowl and upper dashboard design, pretty much everything from the air vents down is shared with the Jeep Avenger, including the very useful voluminous lidded centre console storage cubby. On the road is where the new 600e really comes into its own. The electric motor is impressively quiet, and the cabin is well insulated from road, wind and tyre noise. The centre console-mounted gear selector is of the push-button variety and is super-intuitive in its operation. Brake regeneration is easy to access on the selector panel, and engaging it means that energy usually lost through braking can be sent back to the battery for an enhanced driving range. The 600e is an easy and undemanding car to drive, and its manoeuvrability along congested city streets is so easy to get used to. With the Sport drive mode selected, the accelerator pedal response is sharpened, and all the motor's power is made available for an enhanced driving experience. There is a nicely-weighted feel to the steering and the car maintains good grip through sharp bends and tight corners. The suspension in the 600e is comfort-oriented, so that all occupants can benefit from a cossetting ride quality on every journey. When it comes to the time for charging the battery in the 600e, the quickest option is to connect via a 100kW DC public fast charger that can complete a 20-80% charge in as little as 27 minutes. However, a domestic wallbox charger is the option that many owners will opt for as they can achieve a full charge as they sleep and wake up to a fully charged battery in the morning. Excellent electric efficiency guarantees low running costs, and annual road tax is just €120.

Conclusion & Price.

Having spent a week behind the wheel of my 600e 'Red' review car, I can confidently say that it is a comfortable car to sit in, it is very well equipped, it is easy to drive, and it offers all occupants good visibility throughout.

Visit www.fiat.ie for further information.



Passenger Safety and Driver Protection

Staying Safe Behind the Wheel

Every taxi driver has stories – the good fares, the chatty tourists, the quiet locals heading home. But there are also the late-night journeys, the difficult passengers, and the moments when safety feels uncertain. In today's Ireland, protecting both driver and passenger have never been more important.

The Changing Nature of the Job

Driving a taxi is about more than navigating traffic. Drivers often find themselves acting as peacekeepers, counsellors, and sometimes even first responders. With nightlife returning in force and passenger numbers rising, incidents of aggressive behaviour, fare evasion, or harassment remain a concern.

Technology as a Shield

Recent years have brought new tools that can make drivers feel more secure:

- In-car CCTV: More drivers are installing cameras to deter anti-social behaviour and protect themselves in disputes.
- Safety apps: Panic-button features linked to dispatchers or family members can provide peace of mind.
- Cashless payments: Reducing the need to carry cash lowers robbery risks and makes transactions smoother.

Handling Difficult Passengers

No driver can avoid tricky fares forever, but some strategies can help:

- Stay calm, stay professional – Raising your voice or

engaging in conflict can escalate the situation.

- Set boundaries – If a passenger becomes abusive or threatening, drivers have the right to refuse the fare.

- Trust your instincts – If something feels off, it probably is. Picking up at a busy, well-lit location can make all the difference.

Support and Reporting

Too often, incidents go unreported. But sharing experiences with the Gardaí or the National Transport Authority (NTA) can help build a clearer picture of risks drivers face. Unions and taxi associations also offer support, from legal advice to peer networks.

Protecting Passengers Too

Safety goes both ways. Many passengers—especially women travelling alone late at night – also worry about their security. A clean car, clear ID display, and polite professionalism help build trust and encourage repeat customers.

Looking Ahead

The taxi industry is at a crossroads: technology is improving, regulations are tightening, and public expectations are shifting. But one thing remains the same – drivers deserve to feel safe while earning their living. With the right mix of vigilance, tools, and community support, Irish taxi drivers can continue to do what they do best: keep the country moving, one fare at a time.

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See toyota.ie/models/prius-plugin for more information on the Toyota Prius Plug-In Hybrid.

†The range indicated was tested according to WLTP regulations. *Whichever comes first. Subject to annual/15,000km service within the Toyota Network. Image is for illustrative purposes only.



THE HUMAN SIDE OF THE TAXI TRADE

Stories from Ireland's Drivers

Every taxi driver has a story. Some are funny, some are heartwarming, and others remind us that life on the road can be unpredictable. Behind every fare collected is a person with a life, a story, and a moment in time shared between driver and passenger.

More Than Just a Lift

For many passengers, the taxi is not only a way to get from A to B. It's often a safe space, a place for a chat, or even a shoulder to lean on. Taxi drivers see it all – from nervous first dates and airport reunions to late-night confessions and unexpected moments of kindness.

The Laughs Along the Way

Drivers often say that the humour of Irish passengers keeps them going through the long shifts. One Dublin driver recalled picking up an American tourist who insisted he'd just seen "the castle where they filmed Game of Thrones" – only to be told it was a Lidl supermarket in Finglas. The tourist still insisted on taking a selfie.

Acts of Kindness

It's not all laughs. Sometimes, drivers are the quiet heroes of the night. There are countless stories of

drivers making sure lone passengers get home safely, waiting until they're in the door, or helping older customers with their shopping bags. These small acts rarely make the headlines but mean the world to the people they help.

A Window into Irish Life

Every shift is a cross-section of society. From office workers heading home late, to families catching flights, to festival-goers full of craic – the taxi offers drivers a unique front-row seat to Ireland's everyday life. In a single night, a driver might hear ten different languages, listen to every kind of music, and witness slices of joy, sorrow, and everything in between.

Pride in the Job

Despite rising costs and long hours, many drivers say it's the people that keep them going. One veteran in Galway put it simply: "You meet everyone in a taxi – and you never stop learning." That human connection, fleeting as it is, is what makes the taxi trade so much more than just transport.

Call-out box idea for the magazine:

We'd love to hear your stories! Share your funniest, most unusual, or most touching passenger encounters, and we'll feature the best in our next issue.

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Taxi Taxi!

A boy excitedly reports to his miserly father...
"Papa!" the boy exclaims. "Instead of buying a bus ticket, I ran home behind the bus and saved a dollar!"
The father immediately slaps the child. "Spendthrift!" he screams. "You could have run home behind a taxi and saved twenty!"

Taxi driver: "What I like most about my job is the independence. I'm my own boss. No one tells me what to do, I make my own decisions."
Me: "Take the next left."

Why would Mark Zuckerberg be a very good taxi driver?
You get in the car and he already knows your name and where you live

Man gets into a taxi at night
The man asks to the driver: "Aren't you afraid I might be a serial killer?"
The driver thinks about it and says: "Well chance of 2 serial killers being in a car is very small."

A naked woman rushed in a taxi. The taxi driver turned back and just stared at her.
The woman asked the taxi driver, "Why are you staring at me that way, haven't you ever seen a naked woman?"
The taxi driver replied, "No, I just wonder where you have my money."

Taxi driver: Son, don't eat chocolate cause it's not healthy!
Guy: My grandfather lived 108 years.
Taxi driver: Eating chocolate?
Guy: No, minding his own business.



Why did the taxi driver quit his job?
He was tired of people talking behind his back.

A man told his servant, "Call me a taxi, Larry"
The servant replied,
"Sure sir, You're a taxi."

David Beckham gets in a taxi at Dublin Airport and notices the driver keep looking in his rear view mirror at him. After about 5 minutes the driver says "Go on then give me a clue!?"

Beckham replies, "I had a glittering career with Man Utd, played over 100 times for England and married a spice girl, is that enough?"

Driver says "No mate, I meant where are you going?"

Sophie asks a taxi driver: "How much does it cost to take me to the airport?"

- 250 bucks

"What if we take my husband too?"

- Same 250 bucks.

Sophie turns to her Husband:

"Haven't I told you, you are actually worthless."

I got fired from my job as a taxi driver. Turns out my customers didn't like it when I tried to go the extra mile.



Local Knowledge Questions

1. Who was the taxi driver who was the first Irishman to play in the German Bundesliga?
2. What taxi driver wrote the book Tales in the Rearview Mirror?
3. What taxi driver recorded the song "Heartache Tonight"?
4. What politician (and taxi driver) was fined for having an expired taxi licence?
5. Name the taxi driver whose brother played in goal for Manchester United and Ireland.
6. Who was Ireland's oldest taxi driver (aged 93)?
7. What taxi driver, who worked Foster Place, is now a qualified solicitor?
8. What is the Taxi Drivers' Lay Counselling Association now called?
9. Name the two professional footballers (brothers from a well-known taxi family) who played for Manchester United and Luton Town.

THE TACSAÍ MAGAZINE BUMPER QUIZ

10. Name this controversial statue



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What Cars Will Probably Look Like in 2030

Here are the key changes that seem likely by 2030, especially in places like Europe and Ireland.

1. Electric First, Internal Combustion Last

- Most new cars sold in many European countries—including Ireland—will be electric or at least plug-in hybrid. There are strong policy pushes, emission targets, and consumer demand pushing this.

- Battery technology will continue improving better energy density, faster charging, lower cost. That means EVs will have longer ranges, shorter charging times, and ultimately be more affordable.

2. Smarter Interiors & Connectivity

- Cars will be more software-defined: more features updated over the air, more integration with phones, smart home devices, navigation that's aware of traffic and even other cars.

- Interiors will shift from mechanical to digital: large touchscreens or panels, potentially voice control or even gesture control. More personalization (seat settings, ambient lighting, sound profiles).

3. Autonomous and Driver-Assist Features

- A gradual increase in autonomous driving features. Not necessarily fully driverless everywhere, but more cars with semi-autonomous capabilities like lane-keeping, automatic braking, adaptive cruise control, blind-spot detection etc.

- In some settings (e.g. controlled zones, highways) we might see robo-taxis or shared autonomous shuttles. But full autonomy for all conditions is less certain by 2030 because of regulatory, infrastructure, and safety challenges.

4. Streamlined, Efficient & Sustainable Design

- Aerodynamics will matter more: smoother shapes, lower drag, fewer protrusions (flush door handles,

integrated lights etc.). With EVs you don't need big grilles for cooling, so front ends will get sleeker.

- Lightweight and sustainable materials: more use of recycled plastics, bio-based fabrics, lightweight metals or composites to reduce weight (and thus improve efficiency).

5. Shared Mobility, Vehicle as a Service

- Car ownership models may shift. More people might use subscription / pay-per-use / shared-vehicle services especially in cities. Fewer private cars, more shared fleet cars, possibly robo-taxis.

- Vehicle-to-grid (V2G) becomes more important: cars plugged in could feed electricity back to the grid during peaks. This helps with energy network stability.

6. Design & Aesthetic Shifts

- Interiors will become more comfortable, silent, luxe in many models. Because EVs are quieter, less vibration, so cars might feel more like living rooms or offices when stationary or in autonomous mode.

- Exterior styling will lean more minimal, futuristic. LED lighting, adaptive lighting, possibly panels that change colour or pattern. Novel trim, maybe doors or windows that open in smarter ways (less hinge, more sliding or sensor-based).

7. Regulation, Infrastructure & Practical Challenges

- Charging infrastructure will become more widespread and robust. Public charging, faster chargers, standardized plugs across the EU etc.

- Regulations will catch up: emissions rules, safety standards for autonomous features, laws around software updates, data privacy in cars. These will shape what features actually get used.



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