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**AN BILLE UM THRÁCHT AR BHÓITHRE (LEASÚ)  
(TRIALACHA SCÚTAR LEICTREACH), 2021  
ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) (ELECTRIC SCOOTER  
TRIALS) BILL 2021**

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**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

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**Background**

eScooters are becoming a popular mode of micro-mobility transport. They are growing in popularity but are currently illegal on Irish roads. In other jurisdictions, such as the UK, the Government provided for a pilot shared scheme of eScooters, to be operated by municipal authorities.

**Intent of the Bill**

While not explicitly stated, the underlying intent of the Bill is against the blanket introduction of regulations governing the use of eScooters in Ireland, but, rather, favours the introduction of a municipally-regulated and controlled shared/hiring scheme, either publicly or privately operated, that ensures universal standards, regulations, speed governance and other safety measures outlined below.

Such an approach as outlined in the Bill would demonstrate a responsible approach to the formal introduction of eScooter technology to Ireland.

The Bill, while not explicitly stated, envisages, that if such a scheme, as proposed, was introduced by government, the necessary public confidence and interest in eScooters as an exciting method of micro-transport, could be engendered, leading to an evolving acceptance of their place in commuter mobility in our towns and cities, whilst guaranteeing a universal level of health and safety features.

**Shared/Hire Schemes versus Privately Owned eScooters**

Privately-owned eScooters have the following drawbacks when compared to shared or publicly-run schemes, where the user hires the eScooter for a period of time:

- There is no Standard of build or safety features that applies to a privately-purchased scooter;
- The scooter speed cannot be remotely governed by technology;
- GPS technology cannot be used to geo-fence the scooter, thereby limiting the locations in which it can be used (such as pedestrian areas, footpaths, and so on). A public scheme could be designed to ensure that a number of features can be included.
- A shared scheme would oblige the user to wear a helmet at all times;
- A private scheme would ensure a robust standard of eScooter for public use that would meet health and safety standards.

- A public scheme could also add additional requirements for eScooter use; such as the Driver Theory Test or to have participated in an online demonstration or live demonstration, prior to use. In other jurisdictions, it has been discovered that over half of users of eScooters, are using them for the first time.

The legislation for a Shared or publicly-backed hired scheme for eScooters, would prevent the challenges that other jurisdictions faced with eScooters, resulting in them being banned in some locations.

It could ensure that if, eventually, eScooters were to become widely publicly available for individual personal purchase and use, that the public would have by then developed an awareness of eScooters.

The authorities would have, through the introduction of a pilot shared-scheme, developed an awareness of the advantages and challenges posed by eScooters being introduced as a convenient method of micro-mobility that could enhance the commuter experience in Ireland, for short trips, and how eScooters could become a component part of a Smart Transport strategy.

*John Lahart TD*

*Márta, 2021.*