

More accessible public transport, safer streets and better-organized parking: new rules for urban mobility approved by Government



The Government has approved the [draft law on sustainable urban mobility in the Republic of Moldova](#), which introduces new rules for traffic management, public transport development, the organization of paid parking and the management of abandoned vehicles. The new provisions aim to make travel in cities safer and more efficient and to provide local authorities with clear tools for managing public space.

The need for such rules is also driven by the rapid increase in the number of cars. In less than two years, the Republic of Moldova's vehicle fleet has grown from approximately 1.2 million to more than 1.35 million vehicles. More than 387,000 vehicles are registered in the municipality of Chişinău, while the municipality of Bălţi has over 57,000.

The draft law also introduces new tools that local public authorities will be able to use to manage traffic and urban space:

Removal of abandoned vehicles – a vehicle left in the same place for at least six months and for which there is a reasonable presumption that the owner has relinquished ownership may be identified as abandoned. Once notified, the identified owner will have 15 days to remove it. If the vehicle is removed and is not claimed within 60 days of its removal, the local authority may ask the court to establish that it is abandoned property and transfer it into the ownership of the administrative-territorial unit.

Paid public parking – paid public parking will be organized as a local public service, while tariffs and operating rules will be established by local councils. Failure to pay for parking or improper use of parking spaces will constitute an offense. If the owner or user is not present, the vehicle's wheel may be clamped. If the release of the vehicle is not requested within the period established by local regulations, the automobile may be removed to a specially designated facility, but no earlier than 72 hours after the wheel has been clamped. The costs of wheel release, removal and storage will be borne by the vehicle's owner or user.

Money collected from paid parking will be used primarily to improve mobility at the local level – for the maintenance, modernization and expansion of parking facilities, the development of local road infrastructure, road safety measures, public transport subsidies and the implementation of intelligent transport systems. Local authorities may also establish subscriptions, discounts or exemptions for certain categories of users.

Low-Emission Zones – local authorities will be able to establish access rules for these zones, including vehicle emissions standards and/or access fees. Exceptions will apply, including for public transport, emergency services and people who live or work within the zone.

Under the draft law, the municipalities of Chişinău and Bălţi will develop **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans** (SUMPs), which will replace the mobility plans currently provided for by the Urban Planning and Construction Code. These plans will establish concrete measures for the development of public transport, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, parking management, road safety and the use of digital solutions for traffic management.

“People are waiting for this draft law, especially those who spend time in traffic jams. We have the legal framework for parking facilities to be built; what matters is that local public authorities take the initiative. Finally, we have the legal framework that will allow abandoned cars blocking routes to be removed. This regulatory framework, together with active involvement from municipal authorities, will help us free up our cities,” said Prime Minister Vasile Tofan.

Public transport and pedestrian safety will have priority in urban planning. When designing new areas or reorganizing existing ones, modes of travel will be prioritized in the following order: walking, cycling, public transport and private automobiles. New urban areas will also have to include, from the design stage, routes and lanes intended for public transport.

In Chişinău and Bălţi, public transport planning will aim to ensure that stops are located no more than 300 meters from educational, medical, elderly-care and community institutions, and that at least 60% of the population lives within 500 meters of a public transport route, with a service interval of no more than 20 minutes.

The measures included in the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans may be financed from the National Fund for Regional and Local Development and through European Union programs. The preparation of SUMPs will not generate additional costs for local authorities, as these plans will replace the mobility plans already required by urban planning legislation. At the same time, the costs of organizing paid parking and

procedures for removing vehicles may be covered by revenues from the respective services.

The draft law is part of the measures included in the National Program for the Accession of the Republic of Moldova to the European Union for 2025-2029 and in the Reform Agenda related to the Growth Plan for the Republic of Moldova 2025-2027. Its aim is to bring the planning and management of urban mobility closer to European standards and practices

