



# Metrobus in Coimbra: A New Mobility

## Background

- Coimbra, a historical city in Portugal, has struggled for a long time with urban mobility challenges, including traffic congestion, pollution, and inadequate public transportation infrastructure. As a city with a significant student population, a growing elderly demographic, and a thriving tourism industry, the need for efficient, sustainable, and accessible transportation has become increasingly urgent. Traditional car dependency is unsustainable, particularly in a city with narrow streets and hilly terrain that often creates bottlenecks and increased carbon emissions.
- To address these issues, the Metro Mondego System, commonly referred to as Metrobus, was introduced as part of a comprehensive mobility solution. This innovative project replaces the outdated railway system with a modern Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network designed to enhance accessibility and reduce environmental impact. Launched in 2024, the Metrobus leverages electric vehicles operating on exclusive lanes, prioritising speed, reliability, and environmental sustainability.
- This project is backed by the European Union, national funds, and local government contributions, reflecting a shared commitment to transitioning to greener transportation solutions. The Metrobus aims to integrate public transportation services across Coimbra, Lousã, and Miranda do Corvo, creating a seamless network that connects urban and suburban areas efficiently. Key stakeholders in this initiative include the Metro Mondego Company, the Portuguese Environment Agency, and local municipalities.

- The Metrobus embodies a shift in urban mobility strategies by reducing reliance on private vehicles, cutting down on emissions, and providing a reliable, inclusive mode of transport for all residents. The system has been designed with accessibility in mind, ensuring that individuals with reduced mobility can use the service comfortably.
- This project aligns with Portugal's National Strategy for Sustainable Development and global climate targets, particularly in reducing urban carbon footprints. By offering an efficient and sustainable alternative to car travel, Metrobus is poised to revolutionise transportation in Coimbra and its surrounding areas, setting an example for other mid-sized cities grappling with similar mobility challenges.

## Key Activities

- Replacement of the outdated railway system with a modern Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network.
- Deployment of electric buses operating on exclusive lanes to ensure speed, reliability, and minimal environmental impact.
- Integration of the Metrobus with existing public transportation systems, creating seamless connections between Coimbra, Lousã, and Miranda do Corvo.
- Construction and upgrading of infrastructure, including dedicated bus lanes, stations, and accessibility features for individuals with reduced mobility.
- Engagement with local communities through information campaigns to encourage public transportation adoption.

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## Impact

- Reduction of carbon emissions and promotion of environmentally friendly mobility solutions.
- Creation of a reliable and efficient public transport system serving both urban and suburban areas.
- Enhanced mobility for students, elderly citizens, and tourists, reducing dependency on private cars.
- Improvement in traffic flow by removing bottlenecks caused by car congestion.
- Increased public awareness and adoption of sustainable transportation options.

## Challenges & Solutions

**Challenge:** Resistance from residents accustomed to private car usage.

**Solution:** Extensive public engagement campaigns showcasing the benefits of Metrobus, including environmental and economic advantages.

**Challenge:** Implementation delays due to infrastructure upgrades and regulatory approvals.

**Solution:** Phased rollout of the system to ensure continuous progress and minimise disruptions.

**Challenge:** Ensuring accessibility for all users.

**Solution:** Incorporation of accessibility features, such as low-floor buses, ramps, and tactile pavements at all stations.



## Tips for Similar Projects

- Fast delivery and reduced constraints: Ensure the project is implemented swiftly with minimal disruption to residents' daily lives. A quick and smooth rollout can significantly improve public perception and acceptance of the investment.
- Invest in public awareness campaigns to promote the benefits of public transportation, especially in car-dependent communities.
- Ensure universal accessibility to make public transport inclusive for all demographic groups.
- Plan for intermodal connections to integrate various transportation modes into a cohesive system.
- Engage with local stakeholders early in the planning process to ensure community buy-in and address concerns.

## Identified Limitations/Weaknesses

- Initial implementation phases may face delays due to the complexity of integrating new infrastructure into urban settings.
- High upfront costs for infrastructure upgrades and electric buses may be challenging for smaller cities to replicate without external funding.
- Adoption may be slow if public perception of the system's reliability and convenience does not meet expectations.

**Resources/Links:** Project [Website](#)

## Partners

