

# Let's make public transport more reliable

FEBRUARY 2023

 Malta Public Transport



# Who we are

- CMC Group is a Spanish Group of Companies founded by largest transport company in Spain
- Extensive experience in the transport sector being its core business
- Group operates more than 27,000 vehicles (buses, coaches, trains, and light rail) in Malta, UK, Spain, Portugal, France, Germany, Switzerland, US, Canada, China, Morocco, Bahrain, and Cyprus
- Main companies now include largest shareholding in National Express Plc, ALSA in Spain, and ALSA in China
- Our philosophy is to adapt our international experience and successes to the local context in Malta



# Our main objective

**TO INCREASE MODAL SHARE FOR RESIDENTS  
WHICH FORM 70% OF CURRENT PASSENGERS**

- The main outcome of our research is that people want shorter journey times, higher frequencies, and a reliable and punctual service



**SHORTER  
JOURNEY TIMES**



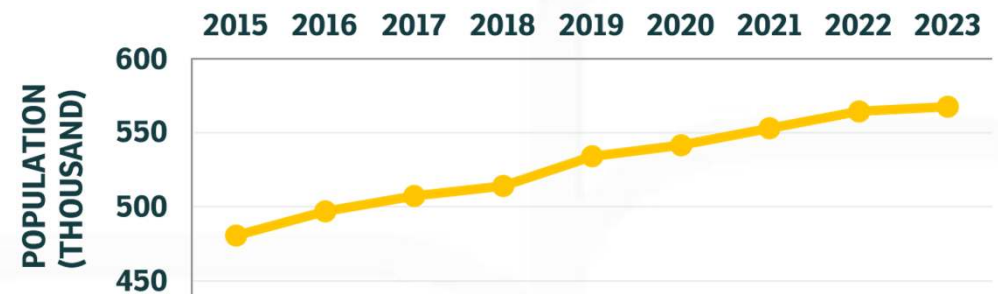
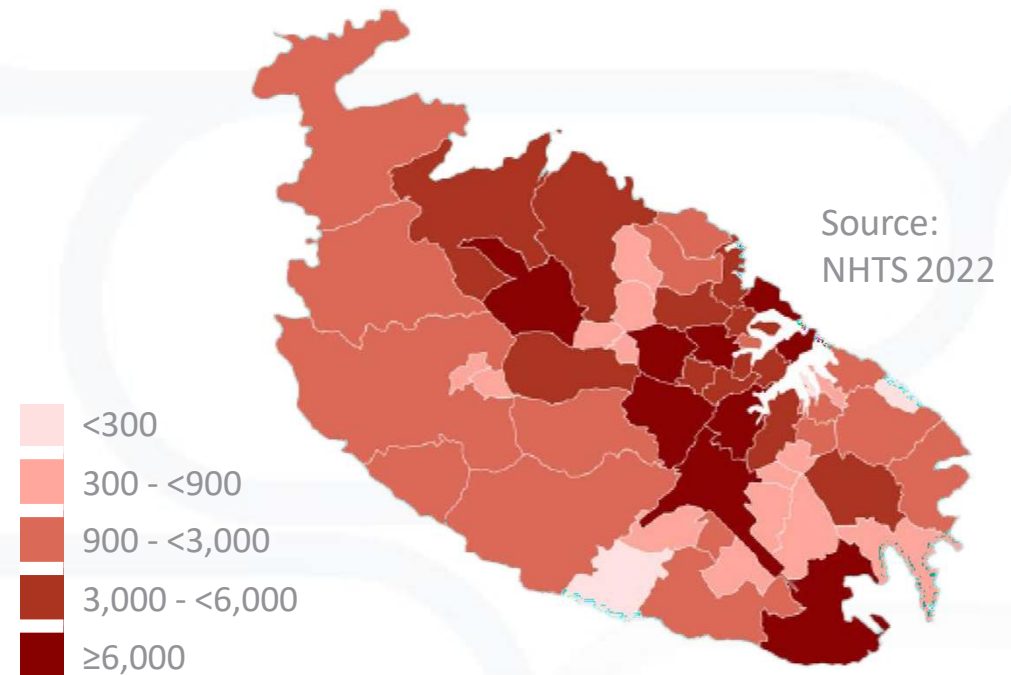
**HIGHER  
FREQUENCIES**



**RELIABLE &  
PUNCTUAL SERVICE**

# Why we're doing this

- Mobility needs and expectations have changed over the last decade
- The population has grown and changed
- Employment shifted locations, new business districts and industrial zones are emerging
- Time is more important than ever
- Public transport is a vital weapon against climate change





# Why we're doing this

- Public transport is the cleanest and most sustainable option
- Bus Modal Share is currently estimated at 9% (source: *Onest Survey Nov 22*) compared with 8% in the previous year
- 240,000 unique residents used the bus at least once in 2022
- A solution is required in the next four years
- Current mass transport solutions that are being studied cannot realistically be implemented in this time frame
- Various targets set by government including a recent one in the Sustainable Development Strategy to reduce modal split of car use by 41% by 2030 when compared to 1990, may be very ambitious



# Why we're doing this

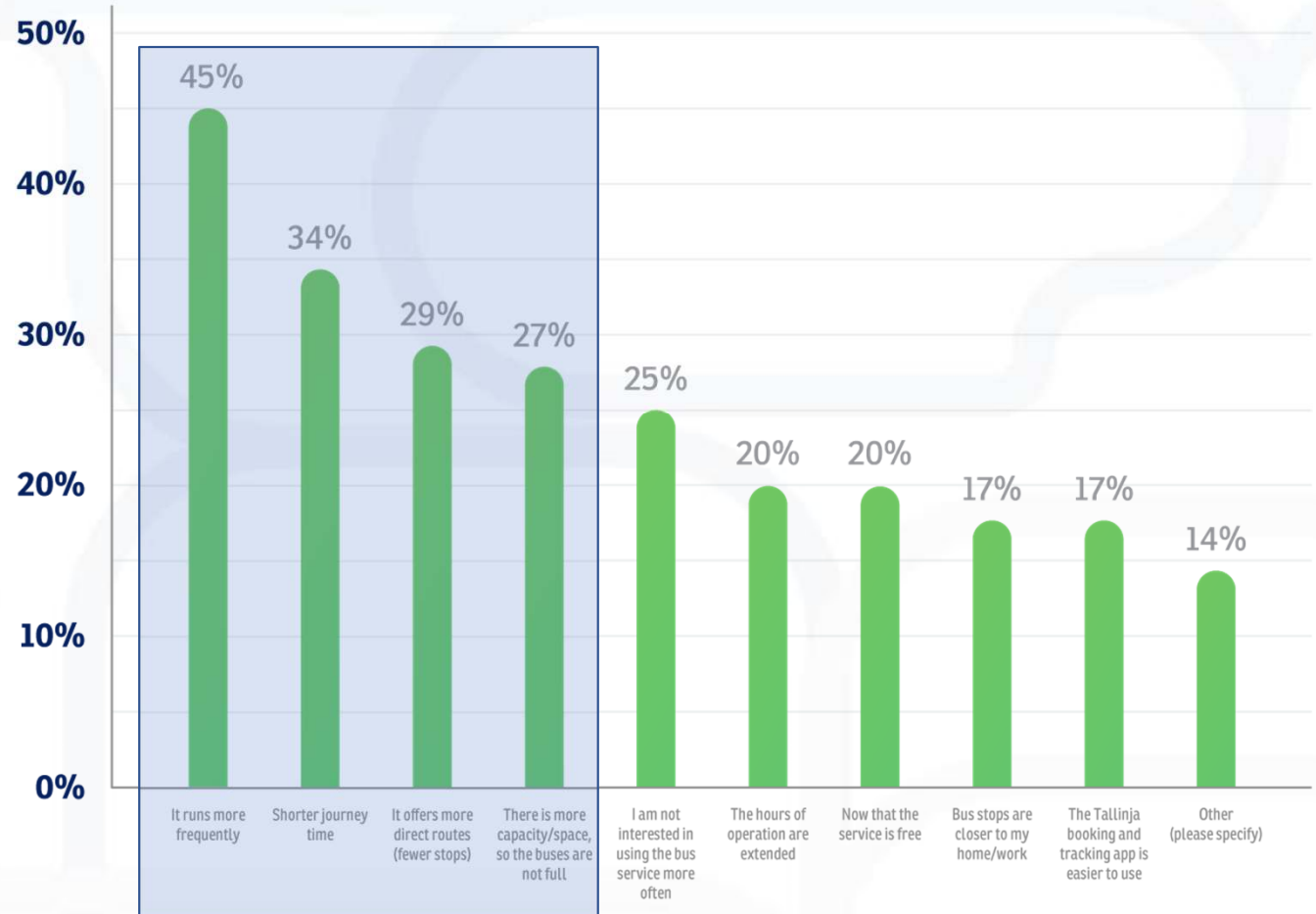
- The country requires that less people use their private cars, and more people shift to more sustainable mass modes of transport, so that we can reduce congestion and emissions
- This can only be achieved with a new policy that puts public transport as the backbone of mobility in Malta



# Why we're doing this

- People want to spend less time to get from one place to another
- Research carried out over the past two years include:
  - Survey with a nationally representative sample of 1,300 respondents in April 2021, repeated in November 2022
  - Survey with users and non users of public transport with a sample of 1,000 respondents in April 2022
  - 12 regional focus groups with 76 participants in July 2022
  - Online surveys with over 2,000 respondents every 6 months

## FACTORS THAT WOULD MAKE PEOPLE USE THE BUS MORE OFTEN



Source: Onest 2022

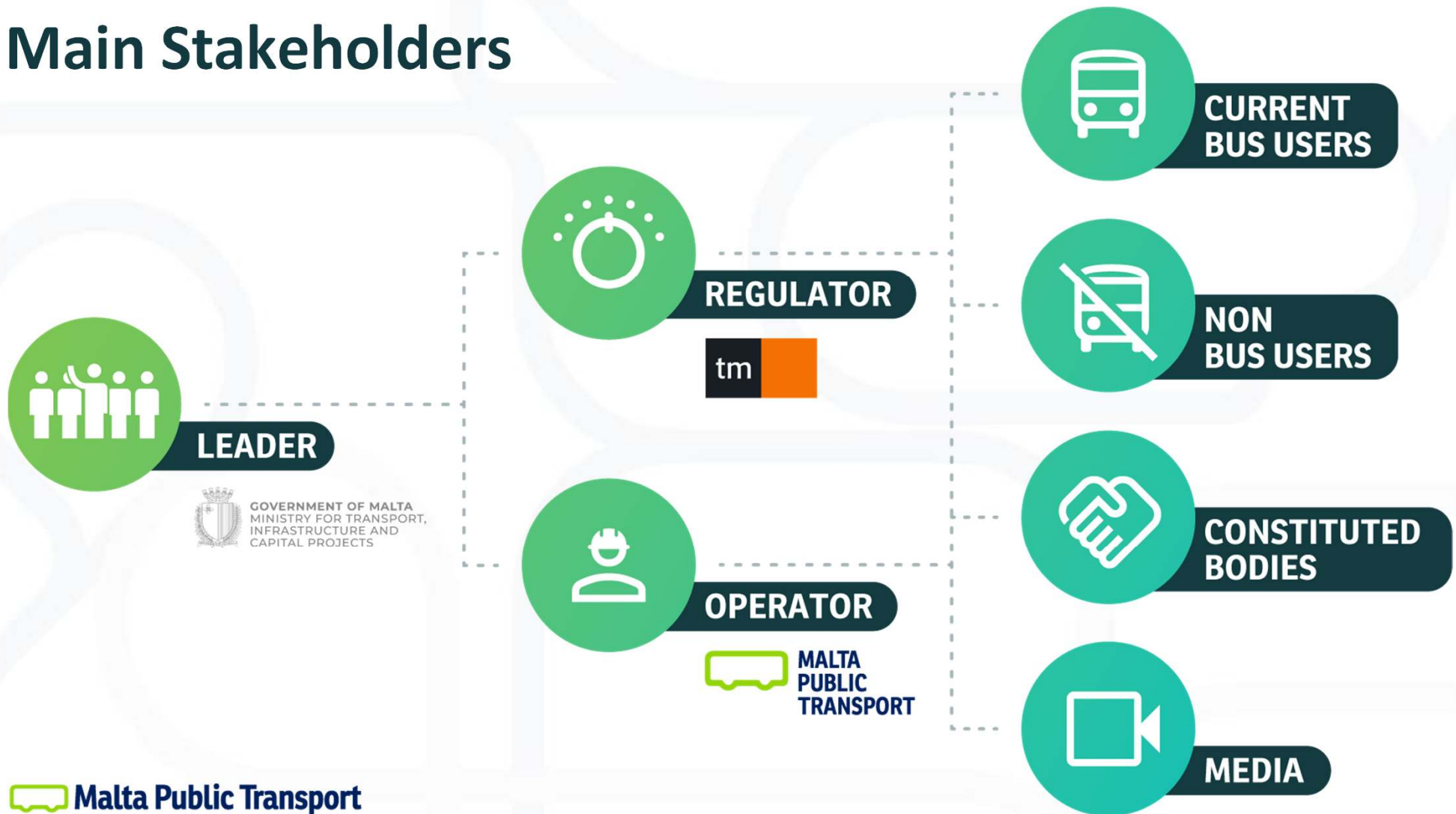
# Why we're doing this

- The pandemic has reversed some of the positive results gained from previous years' measures in terms of public transport usage
- However we are seeing a positive trend of recovery with an expected full recovery in 2023
- 59% of bus users own or have access to a private car but choose to use the bus
- 18% of the population used the bus daily, 9% used the bus weekly and 25% used it occasionally during 2022





# Main Stakeholders



# Proposed strategy



1 Research driven  
(*extensive research  
already available*)



2 Prioritisation of  
measures and changes  
to route network based  
on highest impact



3 Followed by consultation with  
various stakeholders including  
existing and non-bus users



4 Implementation in  
phases, especially bus  
priority measures

A GREAT

## Communication plan

IS KEY TO THE SUCCESS  
OF THIS STRATEGY



# Considerations

1. Buses do not cause traffic – cars do
2. Free public transport increases usage, but will not necessarily result in a modal shift
3. Even if we double the fleet and increase frequency, the journey time is too long for people to consider public transport
4. An improvement in the management of peak traffic times can help, however it will not necessarily achieve the desired results
5. Major road infrastructure improvements have mostly positively impacted private cars since buses routes typically use secondary roads
6. Minibuses can only work in exceptional situations, but they are not the real solution to transport over 200,000 people per day
7. More than 33,000 trips are disrupted by diversions in a month
8. For public transport to be reliable, it requires an overall review of the infrastructure, and not just buses or drivers







# Achieving a change in culture

- A change in people's attitude and behaviour will require a change in government's approach toward regulating transport by giving bus passengers priority
- Enforcing parking regulations, with higher fines for anyone impacting flow of traffic, including local councils and other stakeholders
- Reviewing bus stop layout for quicker entry and exit of bus, and safer boarding and alighting for passengers



# Sharing the road

WE NEED TO BE SMARTER WITH HOW WE ALLOCATE OUR LIMITED SPACE

More cycle lanes	More cycling	Less traffic	
More space for pedestrians	More walking	Less traffic	
More bus lanes for bus passengers	More bus users	Less traffic	
More car lanes	More car users	More traffic	



# What have we done?

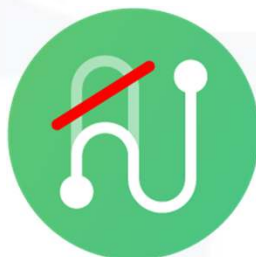
- Carried out focus groups, surveys and data analysis to identify travel patterns
- Reviewed the current route network
- Identified inefficient routes that result in long journeys
- Identified routes that try to cover too many areas and need to be split
- Capitalised on the metro concept to introduce more bus stations as interchanges with high frequency rapid connections



Our proposed  
solution to make  
public transport  
**more reliable** and  
**more attractive**



# Main category of measures



1. ROUTE NETWORK



2. HIGHER FREQUENCY



3. BUS PRIORITY MEASURES



4. BETTER PASSENGER INFORMATION



5. BETTER PASSENGER FACILITIES

# Proposed changes

- Creation of **new bus stations** complementing the existing ones
- Amalgamating multiple routes into **high frequency rapid routes** serving the same bus corridors and every 4 min to 10min
- Creation of **new connections**
- Changes to existing routes connecting towns, villages and other key locations to these stations, with **increased frequencies**
- Introducing quick and reliable interchanges that will **shorten overall journey time**
  - 33% of passengers already interchange
  - Research shows that 76% of population are willing to interchange if they arrive quicker
  - Bus Stations (like metro concept) encourage active travel with more walking and cycling



# Routes and frequencies

## PROPOSALS BASED ON THE FOLLOWING AIMS



No reduction in service in any area



Significant increase in frequency and trips



Not more than one additional interchange to get from one place to another



Overall journey times, including any interchange and waiting time, will reduce



# Priority measures



Bus Lanes, Bus Gates,  
Technology



Bus Station  
Entry & exit



Phased  
Approach



Multiple  
Options

THE ABOVE IS BASED ON THE FOLLOWING AIMS:



Highest impact  
on journey time



Considerations to the  
impact on general traffic



A better service  
for all passengers

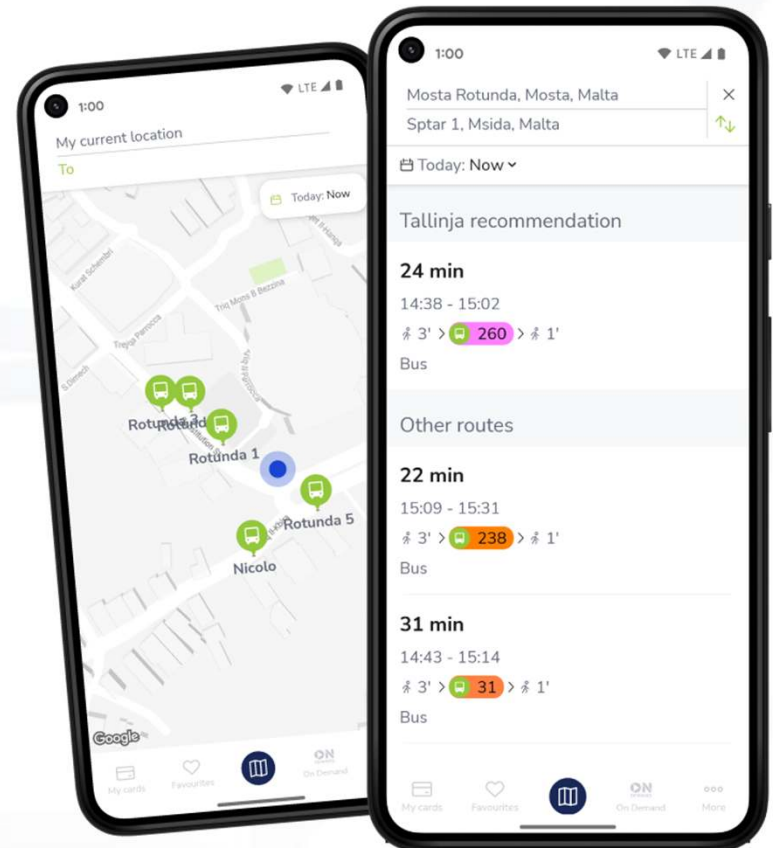
# Better passenger facilities

- New and modern bus stations with **improved facilities** for passengers
- Platform level boarding (no step) for **faster and safer** boarding and alighting
- Pre-ticketing area before boarding for **faster** boarding and alighting



# Better passenger information

- More **valuable real-time information** with moving bus on map
- Customised **service notifications**
- Better **planning and inter-modality options including ferries** and other travel options
- Rate my journey so that we can improve **overall customer experience**
- More **support required from stakeholders** due to roadworks, diversions, and lack of enforcement



# This is what will make public transport more reliable

1. Investment in **additional buses** and **resources**
2. Investment in **improved facilities** and **bus priority** measures
3. Frequency of services will increase by approximately 25% with **many areas doubling in frequency**
4. New **rapid bus connections** will offer seamless interchange and **high frequency of up to 4 minutes**
5. Buses are more **readily available** for passengers wanting to travel
6. Overall **journey length will be reduced** by 25% to 35% (including waiting time and interchange)

## Everyone will benefit!

1. Students commuting to and from University, Junior College and MCAST
2. Residents as more localities will be better linked to the main Bus Stations with a reduced dependency on Valletta offering more travel options
3. Mater Dei Employees and Visitors
4. Commercial Outlets, Industrial Areas, Hotels and Other Businesses will attract more economic activity

**People will spend less time commuting offering opportunity to improve productivity and quality of life**

# We need your support

1. We need to accept that increasing buses and drivers on its own **will not solve the problem**
2. We need to make **smarter use of the limited space** available and invest in bus lanes and bus priorities
3. This is **only possible with your help as key stakeholders** to communicate and present a consistent message to the general public and the business community

A GREAT  
**communication plan**  
IS KEY TO THE SUCCESS  
OF THIS STRATEGY



# Thank you