

# FAQs on eBikes, Pedelecs and Battery Scooters

RSA

**What is an eBike?** An electric bicycle, e-bike or booster bike is one with an electric motor. There are many types of e-bikes from those that only have a small motor to assist the rider's pedal-power e.g. pedelecs to more powerful e-bikes that do not need to be pedalled at all i.e. power on demand unless the rider wishes.

**What is an electric or battery powered scooter?** An electric scooter is a small platform with two or more wheels that is propelled by an electric motor. Besides the motor the rider can also propel the electric scooter forward by pushing off the ground.

**What is the law on eBikes, pedelecs or battery powered scooters?** Regardless of the type of bike, its speed or whether it requires a push start, the rules are as follows:

- If it can be powered by mechanical or electrical power alone (i.e. it can continue without you pedalling or scooting it) then it is considered to be a '*mechanically propelled vehicle*' (MPV).
- Under road traffic law if an MPV is used in a public place it is subject to all of the regulatory controls that apply to other vehicles i.e. it must be roadworthy, registered, taxed and insured.
- The driver of the vehicle must hold the appropriate driving licence and is obliged to wear a crash helmet.

**What is a '*mechanically propelled vehicle (MPV)*'?** Under the Road Traffic Act 1961 at Section 3(1) (a) and (b) it is defined as '*a vehicle intended or adapted for propulsion by mechanical means, including;*  
(a) *a bicycle or tricycle with an attachment for propelling it by mechanical power, whether or not the attachment is being used,*  
(b) *a vehicle the means of propulsion of which is electrical or partly electrical and partly mechanical, but not including a tramcar or other vehicle running on permanent rails.*'

**How do I know if my eBike is classed as an MPV?** Refer to the MPV definition above including the legal definition. If you are still unsure seek legal advice. We do not assess vehicles on a case by case basis to ascertain whether they are MPVs or not. It is the legal obligation of the vehicle owner to ensure that their vehicle complies with all of the regulations applicable to the category of vehicle concerned.

**How can I register my eBike?** You will need to contact [Revenue](#). In order to register an eBike or battery scooter it will need an EC cert of conformity (CoC) from the manufacturer.

**How can an eBike or scooter be registered if it does not have a CoC?** If the manufacturer cannot supply a COC this means your eBike or scooter can only be used on private property or purpose-built tracks.

**Do eBikes or scooters require roadworthiness test?** Currently no. However under road traffic law it is the owner and driver's responsibility to ensure their vehicle is kept in a roadworthy condition at all times when used in a public place. All parts and equipment must be in good working order. Failure to do so can result in prosecution.

**What category vehicle is pedelec, motor assisted bike or scooter?** [L1e to L7e](#) categories cover a wide range of two, three and four wheeled vehicle types.

**Do I need a licence for an eBike or battery scooter?** This depends on whether the vehicle is classified as an MPV as above. If it is an MPV contact our [Licensing Section](#) on 1890 41 61 41 or 096 25000.

**Is it compulsory to wear helmets, visors and goggles when riding motor cycles?** Yes. Both rider and pillion passengers must wear helmets while on a public road under [UNECE Regulation 22.05](#) and also [S.I. No. 360 of 1978](#).

### **Is it legal for children to ride eBikes or battery scooters on a public road?**

This depends on whether the bike or scooter in question is an MPV or not. It is illegal for persons under the age of 16 to ride an MPV in a public place. If the bike is not an MPV there is no law against children riding it in a public place. We strongly recommend that young children should always be supervised if riding in a public place.

### **Are engine or converter kits legal on push bikes and scooters?**

There is no law against them however it is important to note that the addition of the engine may result in your bike being treated as an MPV which means it will have to be roadworthy, registered, taxed, insured etc. In addition any conversion must be carried out to an appropriate standard so as not to render the vehicle unroadworthy, unsafe or likely to cause an incident.

### **Does an electric skateboard with design speed less than 40 km/h require tax, insurance etc.?**

Regardless of the type of vehicle if it can operate on mechanical or electrical power **alone** - even if you initially have to pedal, push or scoot it to get it going - then it is considered to be a mechanically propelled vehicle (MPV). Under Road Traffic law *if an MPV is used in a public place it is subject to all of the regulatory controls that apply to other vehicles i.e. it must be roadworthy, registered, taxed and insured. The driver of the vehicle must hold the appropriate driving licence and is obliged to wear a crash helmet.*

### **Is it legal to use eco-vehicles on cycle lanes on public roads e.g. bicycles, longboards or online skates?**

You will need to contact your local council or local authority where you intend to travel as some of them have introduced local byelaws prohibiting the use of eco-vehicles in some designated areas.

**Are electric kick scooters permitted for use in Ireland?** The RSA have carried out a review on the current practice and safety implications of electric personal mobility devices at the request of the Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport (DTTAS), Mr. Shane Ross and its recommendations can be seen [here](#).

**Are electric scooters and skateboards with a maximum design speed of 15-20 km/h classed as road vehicles?** If they can be powered by mechanical or electrical power **alone** i.e. can go without you pedalling or scooting it, then they are considered to be a mechanically propelled vehicle (MPV). See extract below;

**Irish Law (standards of vehicles for use on Irish roads) and Licensing Rules:**

The Road Traffic Act 1961 defines a '*mechanically propelled vehicle*' as:

*"means, subject to subsection (2) of this section, a vehicle intended or adapted for propulsion by mechanical means, including-*

*a bicycle or tricycle with an attachment for propelling it by mechanical power, whether or not the attachment is being used,*

*a vehicle the means of propulsion of which is electrical or partly electrical and partly mechanical,*

*but not including a tramcar or other vehicle running on permanent rails;"*

Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act 1961 specifies that a person shall not drive a mechanically propelled vehicle in a public place unless they are in possession of a driving licencing appropriate to that vehicle.