

PROJECT CHARTER

Digital Ticketing & Contactless Payment System for a Rural Bus Route in Ireland

Project Manager:

Project Sponsor: Rural Transport Initiative Ireland

Date: August 17, 2025

Project Duration: August 2025 - December 2025

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Background

Rural bus routes in Ireland currently face significant challenges with traditional cash-based ticketing systems, including revenue leakage, inefficient boarding processes, and lack of passenger data analytics. The Cork-Killarney rural route (Route 40), operated by Bus Éireann, serves approximately 15 villages with 850 daily passengers and represents an ideal pilot location for digital transformation.

Project Justification

- **Financial Impact:** Current cash handling results in approximately 12% revenue loss through fare evasion and human error
- **Operational Efficiency:** Manual ticketing causes average boarding delays of 45 seconds per passenger
- **Regulatory Compliance:** National Transport Authority's Digital Ireland Strategy 2024-2030 mandates contactless payment adoption

- **Customer Experience:** 73% of rural passengers (TFI Customer Survey 2024) expressed preference for contactless payment options

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Primary Objective

Implement a comprehensive digital ticketing and contactless payment system on the Cork-Killarney rural bus route (Route 40) to improve operational efficiency, enhance passenger experience, and increase revenue collection by December 31, 2025.

Specific Objectives

1. **Revenue Enhancement:** Reduce revenue leakage by 8% through elimination of cash handling errors and fare evasion
2. **Operational Efficiency:** Decrease average boarding time from 45 seconds to 15 seconds per passenger
3. **Technology Integration:** Deploy integrated ticketing system compatible with existing Leap Card infrastructure
4. **Data Analytics:** Establish passenger journey analytics system for route optimization
5. **Staff Training:** Train 24 bus drivers and 8 supervisory staff on new digital systems
6. **Customer Adoption:** Achieve 60% contactless payment adoption rate among regular passengers

PROJECT SCOPE

In Scope

- **Hardware Installation:** Contactless payment terminals, ticket validators, and onboard Wi-Fi systems across 8 buses
- **Software Development:** Mobile ticketing application with real-time journey planning and payment processing
- **System Integration:** Interoperability with existing Leap Card system and Bus Éireann fleet management system
- **Infrastructural Setup:** Payment processing backend system and passenger data analytics platform
- **Training Program:** Operation and troubleshooting training to all members of staff
- **Pilot Testing:** 6-week pilot period with collection of passenger feedback and system adjustments
- **Rollout assistance:** First 3-month period of operation technical assistance

Out of Scope

- Exploring other routes other than Route 40
- Comprehensive bus fleet overhaul or replacement
- Interconnection with railway transport systems
- Development of promotional schemes or loyalty campaigns
- International payment schemes acceptance above EU standards

Key Deliverables

Technical Infrastructure: Complete contactless payment system running on 8 buses

Mobile App: iOS and Android compatible ticketing app with travel planning capabilities

Training Material: Comprehensive training materials for supervisory workers and drivers

System Documentation: User manuals, technical reports, and maintenance guides

Analytics Dashboard: Real-time passenger data and revenue reporting system

Pilot Report: Detailed summary of pilot phase findings with recommendations for improvement

PROJECT CONSTRAINTS

Time Constraints

- **Fixed Deadline:** System must be operational by December 31, 2025, to align with NTA Digital Strategy timeline
- **Seasonal Considerations:** Implementation must avoid peak tourist season (July-August) disruptions
- **Testing Window:** Limited to 6-week pilot period due to operational requirements

Budget Constraints

- **Capital Budget:** €450,000 allocated for hardware, software development, and implementation
- **Operational Budget:** €75,000 for training, support, and first-year maintenance
- **Contingency:** 10% budget reserve for unforeseen technical challenges

Resource Constraints

- **Technical Expertise:** Limited availability of rural transport IT specialists in Cork region
- **Bus Availability:** System installation must occur during scheduled maintenance windows
- **Stakeholder Coordination:** Multiple agencies (Bus Éireann, NTA, Local Authorities) require alignment

Regulatory Constraints

- **Data Protection:** Full GDPR compliance required for passenger data collection and processing

- **Payment Standards:** Must comply with PCI DSS standards for payment card processing
- **Transport Regulations:** Integration must maintain existing fare structure and concession schemes

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Primary Stakeholders

- **Bus Éireann Operations Team:** Daily system operation and maintenance
- **Rural Passengers:** Primary system users requiring minimal disruption during transition
- **National Transport Authority:** Regulatory oversight and strategic alignment
- **Cork County Council:** Local authority support and infrastructure coordination

Secondary Stakeholders

- **Technology Vendors:** Hardware and software suppliers requiring ongoing support contracts
- **Driver Union Representatives:** Staff consultation for training and operational changes
- **Tourism Ireland:** Coordination for visitor-friendly payment options
- **Local Business Community:** Integration with local transportation needs and economic development

PROJECT ASSUMPTIONS

- Bus Éireann will provide necessary operational support and bus availability for installation
- Existing 4G network coverage along Route 40 is sufficient for real-time payment processing
- Passenger adoption rate will follow national trends observed in urban implementations

- Components will be supplied by technology providers based on requirements specified and timelines.
- Approval from the regulator will be made within normal timescales for processing.
- Staff will be trained within specified timescales with no disruption to the service arising

SUCCESS CRITERIA

Technical Success Criteria

- 99.5% system uptime during operational hours
- Payment transaction processing time under 3 seconds
- Zero critical security vulnerabilities in payment processing system
- Successful integration with existing Leap Card infrastructure

Operational Success Criteria

- Reduction in boarding time by 60% (from 45 to 15 seconds per passenger)
- 95% staff proficiency in system operation within 4 weeks of training completion
- Customer complaint rate below 2% during first 3 months of operation
- Achievement of 60% contactless payment adoption rate by December 2025

Financial Success Criteria

- 8% reduction in revenue leakage compared to baseline cash system
- Project delivery within approved budget parameters (€525,000 total)
- Positive return on investment projected within 18 months of implementation

PROJECT TIMELINE OVERVIEW

Phase 1 (August 2025): Project initiation, stakeholder alignment, and vendor selection

Phase 2 (September 2025): System design, procurement, and staff recruitment

Phase 3 (October 2025): Hardware installation and software development

Phase 4 (November 2025): System testing, staff training, and pilot implementation

Phase 5 (December 2025): Full rollout, optimization, and project closure

Project Charter Approval:

Project Manager: _____ Date: _____

Project Sponsor: _____ Date: _____

Bus Éireann Representative: _____ Date: _____

NTA Representative: _____ Date: _____