

Low Emission Zones Germany

Since March 2007, German cities have the possibility to introduce a low emission zone (LEZ) i.e. an area where only passenger cars and lorries meeting specific emission standards are allowed to drive and where polluting vehicles are forbidden.

HGVs, buses and coaches are divided into four emission categories. For foreign vehicles, the category is determined on the basis of the initial registration year or the Euro standard indicated in the vehicle documents. Overview of emissions groups for vehicles:

European emission standard	Emissions group	First registration truck	Sticker
		DIESEL ENGINES	
Euro I or less	1	before 1 October 1996	none
Euro II or I with retrofit	2	from 1 October 1996 to 30 September 2001	red
Euro III or II with retrofit	3	from 1 October 2001 to 30 September 2006	yellow
Euro IV or III with retrofit	4	from 1 October 2006	green
		PETROL ENGINES	
Euro I or less (vehicle which do not meet group 4 criteria)	1	before 1 January 1993	none
Euro 1 and higher or Annex XXIII to Road Traffic Registration Regulations (StVZO) or equivalent or 52nd Ordinance on derogations to the StVZO or equivalent	4	from 1 January 1993	green

The beginning and end of low emission zones are indicated by a special “Umwelt Zone” road sign.

Stickers cost between € 5 and € 10 and are valid throughout the country for an unlimited period. They may be purchased from local licensing authorities or exhaust emission testing centres (TÜVs, Dekra) and authorised garages.

The map of German cities implementing this regulation is available here:

http://gis.uba.de/website/umweltzonen/index_engl.html

Berlin

A low emission zone has been introduced in central Berlin. From 1 January 2010, only vehicles of category 4 (green colour sticker) may enter the zone.

In addition, the Berlin Senate decided for a **Euro VI low emission zone in 8 streets of the city**. The Euro VI low emission zone (also known as “Diesel Fahrverbot”, or diesel ban) started for the first street on 22 November 2019, the other 7 streets are likely by 30 November 2019. Note that no sticker is needed for the Euro VI low emission zone or “diesel Fahrverbot”.

Cologne

In addition to its LEZ regulation, the city updated its Clean Air Plan. From August 22nd 2019, all trucks of more than 7.5t MPW are banned to transit the inner city of Cologne. The ban impacts all trucks with no regard to their emission class.

Only delivery traffic will continue to be permitted into this zone.

Hamburg

From 31 May 2018, only diesel cars and lorries with Euro VI standarts are allowed to circulate between Julius-Leber-Straße and Holstenstraße on Max-Brauer-Allee (580m). Only diesel lorries meeting the Euro 6 standard are allowed to circulate between Neuem Pferdemarkt and Kaltenkircher Platz on Stresemannstrasse (1.600m).

Sources: German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, 2019
urbanaccessregulations.eu, 2019