

Low Emission Zones (LEZs) and Zero Emission Zones (ZEZs)

What are Low Emission Zones (LEZs)? These are areas which limit the use of vehicles with higher emissions (i.e. those that pollute the most). In some cases low emission zones prohibit such vehicles and in others they must pay a charge.

Which vehicles have low emissions? Hybrid vehicles have low emissions and vehicles which are propelled by electric power only have no emissions at all. The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) provides a search tool where you can find out what level of emissions your car produces and also offers a list of low emission vehicles. Please click [here](#) for more information.

What are Zero-emission zones (ZEZs)? These are areas where only zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) are allowed. Such vehicles include; fully electric cars (i.e. vehicle propelled by electric power only), bicycles, [E-Bikes](#) and fully electric public transport vehicles, e.g. trams, electric buses etc.

Can a hybrid vehicle be used in a zero emission zone? No. hybrid vehicles use fuel as well as electric power and therefore produce emissions/fumes.

Where are the Low Emission Zones? There are Low Emission Zones (LEZs) in many European countries. For further information please go to: www.urbanaccessregulations.eu

Are there Low Emission Zones in Ireland? No. However Dublin City does restrict access for Heavy Commercial Vehicles (HCVs) with five or more axles. Such vehicles are banned from 7.00am to 7.00pm every day from a designated area in the city centre. A limited permit scheme allows delivery vehicles to enter the city centre on specific routes and only with a valid, paid permit. For further details on obtaining a permit from Dublin City Council, please click [here](#)

Is there plans to introduce Low Emission Zones in Ireland? The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE) is responsible for any decisions relating to introduction of low or no emission zones in Ireland. Please visit www.dccae.gov.ie for more information.

Do I need a permit to drive a vehicle in a low emission zone in Europe? Generally, Yes. However this depends on the Euro classification (level of emissions produced) of your vehicle. So for example, if your vehicle produces very low emissions (e.g. hybrid car) you may not need any permit to travel through a LEZ. However if you are driving a van or heavy commercial vehicle, the emissions will most likely will be higher and therefore you will need to apply for a permit.

The permit is a sticker which is placed on your windscreen. You will have to present the vehicle registration certificate and pay a fee (approximately 5 to 10 Euros). The fee is a one-off charge and the sticker remains valid in any City in that country as long as it remains fixed in the vehicle. You cannot transfer it to another vehicle. The level of emissions produced by your vehicle will also determine the type/colour of the sticker granted to you. For example; if your vehicle has higher emissions it may only be allowed to travel through certain coloured zones.

Where can I get a permit or sticker to drive my HCV in one of these European cities? You must apply to the country through whose low emission zone you intend travelling. For example if you are travelling through Paris you must apply to the French Authorities. In some cases you can apply in advance online and they will post out the sticker. Please click [here](#) for more information on where to apply for various countries.



Examples of Low & No Emissions Zone signs in Europe

Where or how do I find out what emissions standard my vehicle is? Currently the Emissions standards (Euro Classification) range from Euro 1 to Euro 6. For many vehicles this category can be found on the registration certificate. Alternatively you can refer to the table below by vehicle type and age (date of first registration).

In addition, many countries that have LEZs in place have online facilities where you can enter Information on you vehicle type/model to assess whether you need a permit to travel through their low emission zones. Please click [here](#) for more information.



Vehicle Type	Euro 1	Euro 2	Euro 3	Euro 4	Euro 5	Euro 6	Euro 6 RDE*
Passenger cars	July 1992	Jan-96	Jan 2000	Jan-05	Sep-09	Sep-14	Sep-17
Light commercial vehicles (N1-I) ≤1305kg	Oct 1994	Jan-98	Jan-00	Jan-05	Sep-10	Sep-14	Sep-17
Light commercial vehicles (all others)	Oct-94	Jan-98	Jan-01	Jan-06	Sep-10	Sep-15	Sep-17
Trucks and buses	1992	1995	1999	2005	2008	2013	Sep-17
Motorcycles	2000	2004	2007	2016	2020		
Mopeds	2000	2002		2017	2020		

* RDE is 'Real world Driving Emissions', which is a test brought in to ensure that vehicle emissions are reduced in the real world, not just in the test lab.