

Guideline **LOCAL BANS OF HIGH EMITTERS**

Version: November 2015



The most recent prominent example of a city that banned polluting vehicles is Paris, which in March 2014 imposed a car ban after air pollution levels reached record heights. This was a rather drastic measure in an unusual situation. Yet, local bans could be implemented on a permanent basis in order to control air pollution at hot spots or particularly sensitive areas.

Municipalities can enact local bans for certain emitters. The area of a zone can range from only parts of a street to whole city areas, or can even be bigger. Bans prohibit certain types of vehicles, be it Heavy-Goods-Vehicles (HGVs) or simply all motorised vehicles, from entering a certain area. You might think about pedestrian zones, like typical shopping areas in so many European cities. But why not set a traffic ban in front of schools in the morning in order to protect those schools from massive congestion in the morning hours. Or take

Low Emission Zones (LEZ), where certain cars or HGVs are banned from a zone based on their emission levels. There are many examples of local traffic bans for different purposes, including, but not limited to, air quality.

Low Emission Zones

The most prominent example of local bans on high emitters are Low Emission Zones (LEZs). Local LEZs can be an effective way of reducing particulate matter (PM10) and soot emissions. An



Paris

In the example of the Paris car ban, only cars with a certain number plate were allowed to enter the city area on Monday 17 March 2014. There were a few exemptions and public transport was made free of charge throughout the time of the ban. The city had to take this emergency measure because of extraordinarily high PM10 concentrations.

increasing number of cities are implementing LEZs, either for all vehicles or for Heavy-Goods-Vehicles (HGVs) only. Vehicles are classified based on their EURO standards. When these standards are sufficiently high and strictly enforced, they are able to change the fleet composition in a city and reduce the exhaust emissions of road transport.

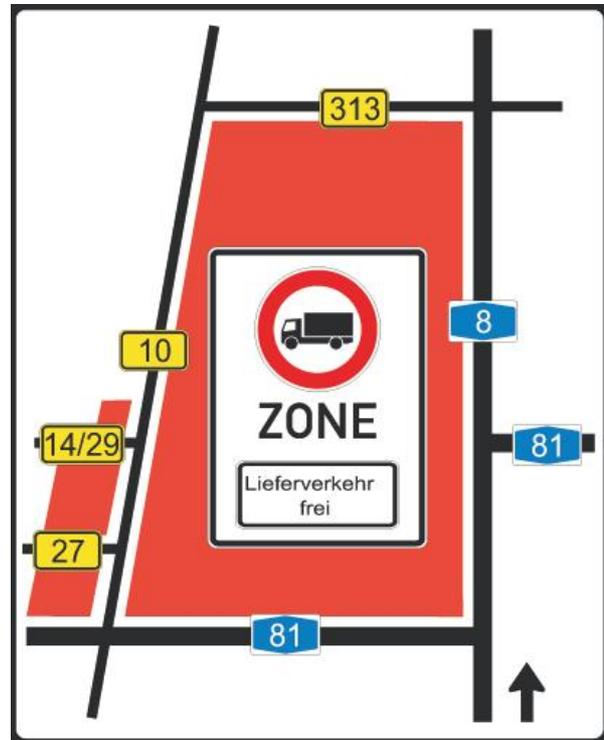
Prohibiting HGV through-traffic

The example of the German city of Stuttgart shows that a city can introduce a ban on HGV through traffic to tackle congestion and air quality issues.

These so-called “transit bans” can solve congestion, air quality and noise problems in urban areas. Interested cities interested have to be sure of the problem they want to solve. The city of

Stuttgart

Because of persistently high emission levels, in addition to its LEZ, the city of Stuttgart in 2010 also prohibited HGV-transit. Since then, HGVs above 3.5t are not allowed to cross the inner city area. Deliveries into the inner city are still allowed, but only if the vehicle complies with the requirements of the LEZ. HGVs that only need to drive through the city have to use a dedicated route. This also only applies to vehicles that fulfil the requirements of the LEZ.



Stuttgart is a good example. It had problems caused by high levels of through-traffic which they solved by imposing a transit ban.

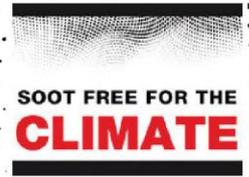
Pedestrian Zones

Pedestrian zones are not an air quality measure at heart, as many of them were installed for different reasons: urban planning, better quality of life and creating tourist-friendly city centres, for example. There are also residential districts that ban cars and create pedestrian zones for the inhabitants.

These can be total traffic bans, not necessarily just on high emitters but on motorised traffic in general.

Localised Bans in Sensitive Areas

Schools, for example, usually experience congestion at specific times - when they start and when they end. Congestion, air quality and safety considerations might prompt municipalities or



Air pollution & Health

In 2010, more than 400,000 people died prematurely in the EU due to air pollution. That makes air pollution the main environmental cause of shortened lives in the EU. The resulting health problems cost society an estimated €330-940 billion per year. Over 90% of the urban population in the EU is exposed to concentrations higher than the limit values recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Among the most important pollutants are black carbon (BC), which is a part of particulate matter (PM), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) and ozone (O₃).

districts to ban cars from affected streets during these hours. The Scottish municipality of

Haddington has installed temporary pedestrian zones in front of a school campus. No cars are allowed, with only a few exceptions.

Many schools experience such problems, and localised traffic bans could be the solution.

Final Words

Traffic bans have several different applications and purposes., they are not just a last resort. Their utility is well demonstrated by the above examples. The most effective bans are not only temporary, but are an integrated structural measure to influence traffic flow and congestion, and thereby air pollution levels. They are however only one important tool amongst many.



CONTACT

Municipalities interested please contact us for further information:



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ABOUT US

Clean Air is a project by nine European environmental organisations that fight for clean air in European cities. Despite the existing legislative framework and the citizens' right to clean air, continuing violations of air pollution limits remain a problem in many cities. Air pollution threatens health, environment and climate. It's time to take action!

www.cleanair-europe.org

Started in 2009, the associated campaign "Sootfree for the Climate" aims to reduce diesel soot emissions, which accelerate climate change and pose a threat to public health. To this day twelve European NGOs have joined the campaign.

www.sootfreeclimate.org

a project by



project coordination

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