



Low-Emission Zones in Belgium

LeasePlan

What's next?

Content

1. What is a low-Emission Zone?	4
2. LEZ in Belgium	5
3. Exemptions	7
4. How does the monitoring work?	8
5. What if you don't have access?	9
6. Antwerp	10
7. Brussels	12
8. Ghent	14
9. The implications for your fleet	16



With the introduction of environmental zones, cities aim to improve air quality and thus the health of their residents and visitors. A **LEZ** and **ZEZ** are always demarcated with **special traffic signs**.

Admission requirements are applicable **7 days a week** and **24 hours a day**.



1. What is a low-Emission Zone?

A **Low-Emission Zone** (LEZ) is an environmental area within an urban setting where high-polluting motor vehicles are prohibited. The objective of an environmental zone is to protect the **local environment from harmful emissions** produced by the most polluting vehicles (old diesel and petrol cars). In addition to the LEZ, there is a second type of environmental zone, the Zero-Emission Zone (ZEV). Access to an environmental zone is determined by the **Euronorm** your vehicle complies with. You find this information on your vehicle's registration certificate (for new purchases) or Car-Pass (for second-hand purchases).

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Within **Europe**, environmental zones exist in the following countries: **Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom** and **Sweden**.

There are no universal European regulations, which means that rules, road signs and fines differ from country to country. It is therefore important to ensure that you are well informed and, if necessary, request vignettes in a timely manner.



2. LEZ in Belgium

Regulations regarding Low-Emission Zones in Belgium apply to **passenger vehicles, vans up to 3.5 tons, buses and coaches**. Trucks weighing 3.5 tons or more are not taken into account as mileage charges are already applied to these vehicles.

Flanders and Brussels

Antwerp was the first city in Belgium with a Low-Emission Zone. Since 1 February 2017, the city bans vehicles that emit too many pollutants. In the **Brussels region**, a LEZ has been in effect since 1 January 2018, with **Ghent** following this example in 2020. Mechelen and Willebroek also considered the introduction of a LEZ, but this plan was abandoned due to complexity.

From LEZ to LEZ

Plans in Antwerp and Ghent to tighten the rules for their LEZ by 1 January 2025 were postponed until 1 January 2026 by the Flemish government. With these new rules, the focus will shift from carbon to nitrogen emissions (NOx). As a result, diesel cars with Euronorm 5 and petrol cars with Euronorm 2 or lower will no longer be allowed to enter the LEZ. The plan's delay is a response to the energy crisis and inflation; it gives residents and visitors more time to adapt to the new standards. There will be no delay in Brussels, however, where the date of 1 January 2025 remains.

From 2035, only **zero-emission** vehicles and vans will be allowed to enter the **LEZ**. To achieve this, the admission conditions for vehicles running on fossil fuels will be systematically tightened from 2031. The Flemish Government determines the time schedule towards zero emissions, but the decision to introduce or maintain a LEZ lies with the local governments.



Wallonia

In Wallonia, the entire territory will become a LEZ from 1 January 2025. Vehicles with Euronorm 3 will no longer be allowed on the road if they travel more than 3,000 kilometres per year. More specifically, this concerns vehicles that were put into traffic until 1996. The ban is a decision of the Walloon government and applies to the entire region.

In subsequent years, the rules will be adjusted:

- January 2025: ban for cars with euronorm 3 or lower
- January 2026: ban for euronorm 4 cars
- January 2028: ban on diesel cars with euronorm 5
- January 2030: ban on diesel cars with euronorm 6

Furthermore, since 2020, Walloon municipalities can decide themselves whether they want to introduce Low-Emission Zones. So far, no Walloon municipality has introduced a LEZ.



3. Exemptions

The Flemish Government does provide the possibility of exemption from LEZ admission criteria. An exemption can be obtained for:

- **informal caregivers** of people in need of care, as long as they have an accreditation and either they themselves or the patients live in the LEZ
- **people with disabilities** who need to use an automatic gearbox because of their disability
- **parents of a disabled child** that lives with the other parent



4. How does the monitoring work?

In contrast to other countries that mainly use vignettes, enforcement of the LEZ in Antwerp, Brussels and Ghent is based on **license plate recognition**. The license plate is checked in the central database of the DIV (vehicle registration service), making it possible to identify the type of vehicle and the emissions involved. Fines will be issued for vehicles that enter the LEZ unlawfully.

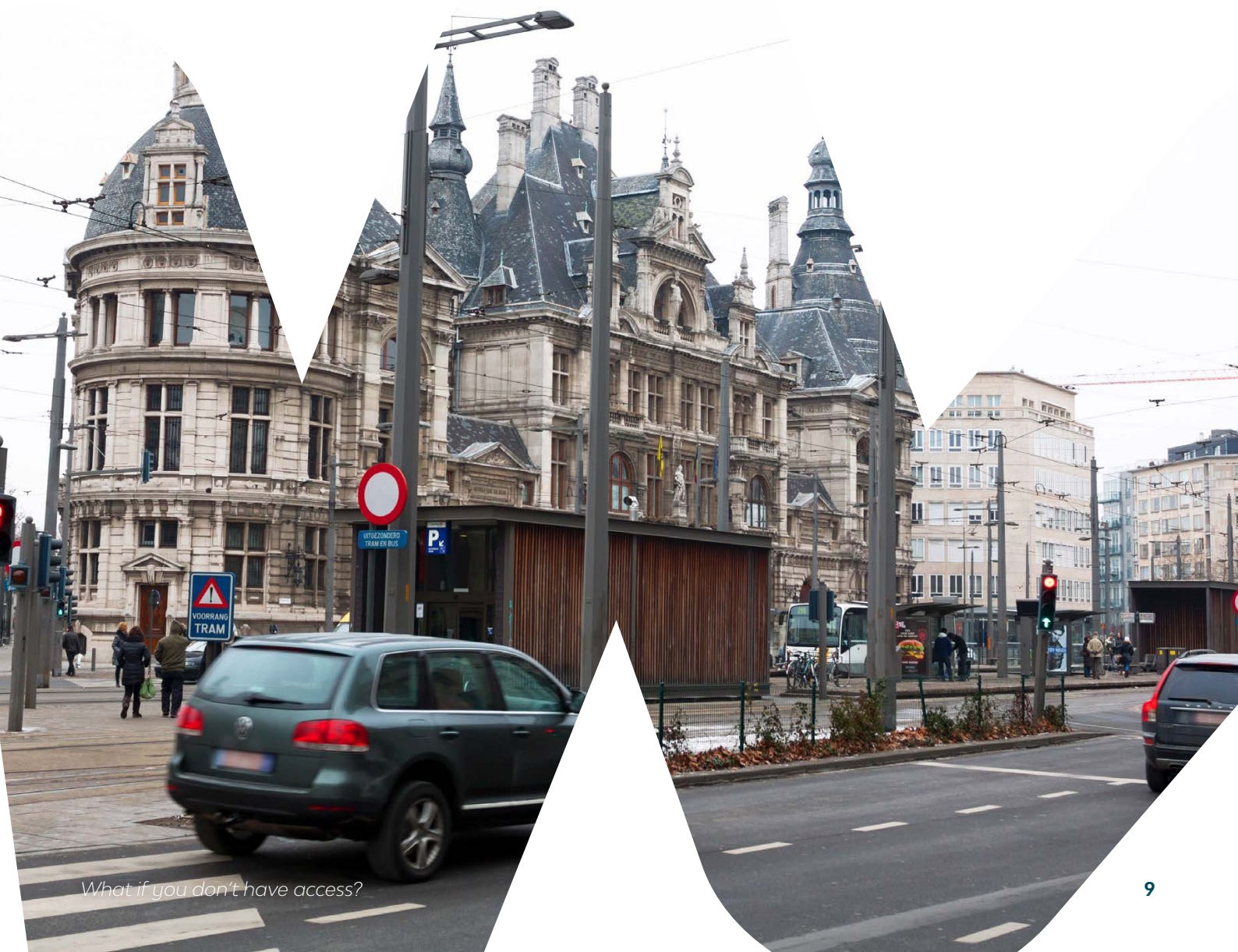
For **foreign license plates**, this check is obviously not an option. Foreign visitors must therefore register their vehicle on the website of the city they plan to visit. Note: a registration in the Brussels Region is only valid in Brussels. However, a registration in Ghent also applies to Antwerp since the registration is valid in the entire Flemish Region. The Antwerp LEZ provides an exception for Dutch registration plates: if the vehicle meets the admission criteria of the Low-Emission Zone, registration is not necessary. Dutch vehicles are automatically registered based on the information in the vehicle database of the RDW, the national road traffic department in the Netherlands.



5. What if you don't have access?

In Antwerp and Ghent, you can enter the LEZ with a euronorm 4 diesel car as long as you buy a permit that allows you to enter the LEZ for 1 week, 1 month, 4 months or 1 year. Both cities charge separate rates.

Anyone driving a vehicle that does not meet the criteria and still needs to enter the LEZ can buy a **day pass** in Brussels, Ghent and Antwerp. The LEZ day pass is only valid in the zone for which you purchased it, not in other cities that have a Low-Emission Zone. For each vehicle, there is a limit of 8 day passes per year that can be purchased in every LEZ.



6. Antwerp



Where The entire inner city and part of Linkeroever

Which vehicles are allowed?

- Diesel cars with Euronorm 5 and 6
- Petrol cars and cars on LPG, CNG and LNG with at least Euronorm 2
- Plug-in hybrids with maximum emissions of 50g/km. For plug-in hybrids with higher emissions, access based on the Euronorm applies

LEZ day pass Drivers of cars denied access based on their Euronorm can purchase a day pass up to eight times a year. This day pass costs €35.

Fines Fines range from €150 for the first violation to €350 for the third violation within 12 months.

Access after payment For diesel cars with Euronorm 4, you can purchase temporary access for 1 week, 1 month, 4 months or 1 year. Rates vary according to the desired period.

Admission requirements 1/1/2020 - 31/12/2024 (extended to 31/12/2025)

Euronorm	Diesel	Benzine, LPG, CNG, LNG
Euro 6/VII	open access	open access
Euro 5/V*	open access	open access
Euro 4/IV	access after payment	open access
Euro 3/III	no access	open access
Euro 2/II	no access	open access
Euro 1/I	no access	no access
Older than Euro 1	no access	no access

* For trucks weighing over 3.5 tons, the designation EEV (Enhanced Environmentally friendly Vehicle) is sometimes used. This EEV is equivalent to Euronorm 5/V.



7. Brussels



Where The entire Brussels Capital Region, all 19 municipalities, with exception of the Brussels Ring Road and part of the E411.

Which vehicles are allowed? Brussels provides a calendar where you can see until when your vehicle is allowed.

LEZ day pass Drivers of vehicles denied access based on their Euronorm can purchase a day pass up to eight times a year. This day pass costs €35.

Fines Failure to comply with the LEZ access criteria results in a fine of €350.

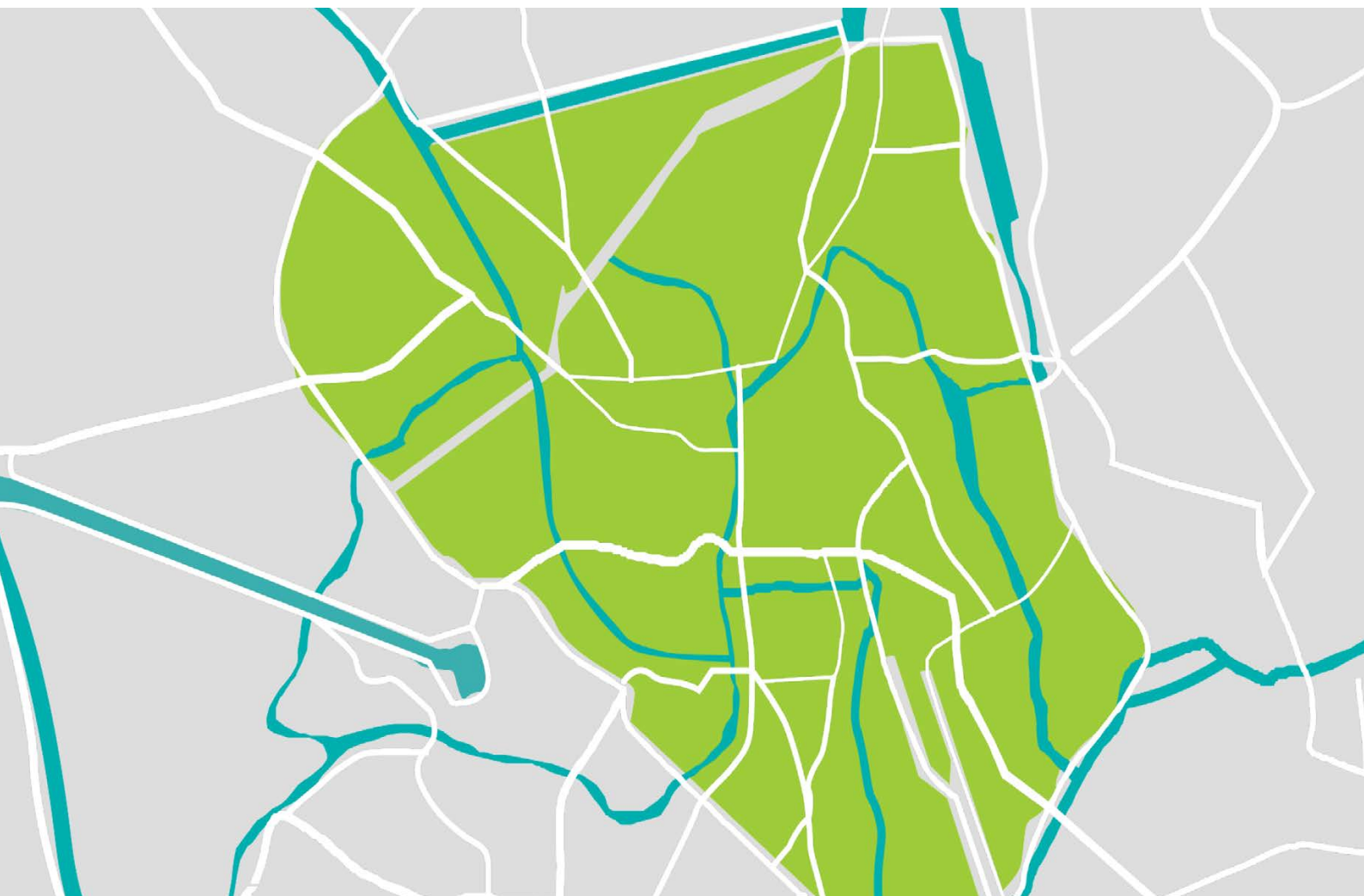
Admission requirements 1/1/2020 - 31/12/2024

Diesel, plug-inhybride	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Euro 6d	open access							no access
Euro 6d - Temp	open access					no access		
Euro 6 b,c	open access					no access		
Euro 5	open access	no access						
Euro 4 and below	no access							

Benzine, LPG, CNG	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Euro 6d	open access							
Euro 6d - Temp	open access							no access
Euro 6 b,c	open access							no access
Euro 5	open access							no access
Euro 4	open access							no access
Euro 3	open access					no access		
Euro 2	open access	no access						
Euro 1 and above	no access							



8. Ghent



Where Ghent city centre (= the area within the R4).

Which vehicles are allowed?

- Diesel trucks with Euronorm 5 and 6
- Petrol cars and cars on LPG, CNG and LNG with at least Euronorm 2

LEZ day pass Drivers of vehicles denied access based on their Euronorm can purchase a day pass up to eight times a year. This day pass costs €35.

Fines For entering the LEZ unlawfully, you risk a fine of €150.

Access after payment For diesel cars with Euronorm 4, you can purchase temporary access for 1 week, 1 month, 4 months or 1 year. Rates vary according to the desired period.

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9. The implications for your fleet

At first glance, company cars in Belgium will be little affected by the introduction of the LEZ.

Do your drivers still want to drive a vehicle into the city in the future? Then they should opt for an **electric vehicle**. With the introduction of new tax rules in July 2023, electric cars are certainly on the rise.

For more information, contact the [consultancy department](#) or your trusted LeasePlan account manager.

