Low Emission Zone in Kraków – a practical guide

2026-01-29

Starting January 1, 2026, Kraków will implement a low emission zone, introducing new rules for entering parts of the city. It will cover approximately 60 percent of Kraków's area. The change will not affect the daily lives of residents and visitors in most cases, but it's worth having verified information about what will actually be required and from whom.

Concise information

Check your vehicle – most cars already meet the requirements

The first thing you should do is check if your vehicle meets emission standards. Many cars – even 8 out of 10 – may already meet the LEZ requirements. And as long as they have Polish registration, the owners don't have to do anything.

Petrol cars (including LPG) will be allowed to enter the zone freely if they meet the Euro 4 standard or were manufactured in 2005 or later. This means that petrol cars up to 21 years old will be accepted when the zone is introduced.

Diesel cars must meet slightly more stringent requirements. For passenger cars up to 3.5 tons, it is Euro 6 or manufactured in 2014 or newer, meaning diesel engines up to 12 years old will be accepted. If you have a larger diesel truck, it must meet Euro VI or be manufactured in 2012 or later.

If your car meets the above emission standards or year requirements and is registered in Poland, it will be automatically added to the LEZ system. You will be able to enter the zone without any restrictions.

LEZ IT system – since December 2025

On sct.zdmk.krakow.pl, you can check if your vehicle meets the requirements, register your vehicle in the system if necessary, register your entry to a medical facility, and pay entry fees.

If you prefer in-person contact or have difficulty using electronic systems, you can handle these matters at service points, with the help of officials.

Exemptions for Kraków residents

People with their residence registered in Kraków and paying taxes in Kraków have received an indefinite exemption for vehicles they owned before June 26, 2025 - regardless of their age. Kraków residents will be required to register their vehicles in the system - of course, only if their cars don't meet the required standards.

Magiczny Kraków

Important for people who registered their residence in Kraków in 2025

If you registered your residence in Kraków during 2025 (e.g. in September) and at the same time submitted a ZAP-3 declaration to the tax office about changing the place of settling taxes to Kraków, you can also apply for the vehicle exemption “per resident” already in the first year of the zone's operation.

Submitting a ZAP-3 form indicates that your taxes for the previous year will be settled at the appropriate tax office in Kraków. This means that even if you registered and filed your ZAP-3 form during the year, since January 1, 2026, you can submit documents confirming your 2025 tax settlement in Kraków and apply for an exemption. You have two options:

- Since 1 January 2026 - you can apply for exemption if you obtain a certificate from the tax office about settling tax in Kraków for the indicated period (2025), indicating Kraków as your place of residence.
- Since February 15, 2026 – you submit the application when you have a submitted PIT for 2025, which confirms the settlement of taxes in Kraków and indicates your residence in the capital of the Malopolska Region.

If you're a student, unemployed, or otherwise income-deprived, you can also apply for an exemption. In this case, you submit a PIT-37 tax return showing zero income (the so-called “zero PIT”). This document also confirms your tax settlement in Kraków and entitles you to a vehicle exemption.

Exemptions for people from outside Kraków

Even if you are not a resident of Kraków, you are entitled to exemptions in certain situations:

- People with disabilities - if you have an EU disabled parking card, you can register one vehicle at a time, which will be exempt from fees and will be able to enter the zone without restrictions. The card must be valid, and a copy of the card with the expiry date and the name of the authorized person must be presented when registering the vehicle.
- Patients using specialist medical services – if you regularly use specialist medical services at Kraków healthcare facilities financed from public funds (e.g., rehabilitation, dialysis, chemotherapy, radiotherapy), you can also obtain an exemption. In this case, before entering the zone, you must register your appointment in the LEZ system and confirm it on-site at the facility.
- Owners of historic vehicles – if you have a historic vehicle entered on the list of historic monuments by the provincial conservator, you can also apply for an exemption.
- Special vehicles - owners of special vehicles, such as campers or food trucks, may enter the zone after registering the vehicle in the system. They will be exempted based on data from the Central Vehicle Register (entry in the registration certificate).

Fees for people from outside Kraków – three-year transition period

For people from outside Krakow who own vehicles that do not meet the LEZ requirements and are not entitled to the exemption, a three-year transitional period (2026–2028) has been introduced, during

which it will be possible to enter the zone after paying the appropriate fee.

The fee system has been designed to be

1. Daily fee – in 2026, if you pay the fee for two hours in a row, it will be equivalent to allowing your car to drive on the LEZ until the end of that day. In 2027, such a daily fee will be PLN 15 (fee for 6 hours in a row);
2. Monthly subscription – for people who commute to work regularly:
    - 2026: PLN 100 per month,
    - 2027: PLN 250 per month,
    - 2028: PLN 500 per month.

After 31 December 2028, the option of entry charges will cease to apply and only vehicles meeting emission standards will be allowed to enter the zone from outside (if they are not subject to the previously mentioned exemptions, e.g. for special vehicles, etc.).

Vehicles registered abroad

If your vehicle is registered abroad, even if it meets all the required standards, you must register it in the LEZ system yourself. When registering, you will need to provide a copy of the vehicle's registration certificate, provide the make, model, and year of manufacture, and indicate the emissions standard.

Entry control and renewal of authorizations

Entry into the zone will be controlled primarily automatically by cameras that read vehicle license plates and compare them with the LEZ system database. Therefore, it's crucial to ensure your vehicle is registered correctly in the system before your first entry.

If your vehicle is authorized to drive in the LEZ based on a resident exemption, remember that you will need to renew your authorization at least once a year, presenting current documents confirming that you meet the exemption requirements (including registration, at least temporarily, and paying taxes). For those registering a vehicle using a disabled person's parking card, you must renew your registration after the card expires.

If you need further clarification or individual support, please contact the Kraków Contact Center by email or phone: **+ 48 12 616 55 55**.