



# LEZ4all

Low Emission Zone for all

Making sustainable mobility policy socially inclusive by empowering professionals from the social, environmental and mobility sectors

## Feedback on the LEZ4All project

Over the last decade, Low Emission Zones (LEZ) have become an increasingly widely used policy instrument. They are intended to decrease traffic-related air pollution and as such improve urban liveability and reduce health risks in built environments.

In 2022, 320 LEZs were active across the EU according to a study of the Clean Cities Campaign. Between 2022 and 2025, Clean Cities Campaign has predicted a further 58% increase to over 500 LEZs within the EU, regulating access for polluting vehicles across many urban and peri-urban areas. All the project's areas (Brussels, Barcelona and Lyon) have introduced a LEZ in recent years. LEZs are not the only strategy to restrict car traffic: they fit within the broader spectrum of Urban Vehicle Access Regulations (UVARs) that are employed to alleviate negative impact related to high car use such as air pollution. Together with the multiplication of such policy instruments all across European cities, contestations and debates about negative effects have increased as well. Regarding the implementation of car-restrictive policies such as LEZ, local and national governments have tried to get round the initial regulations thanks to supporting measures, exemptions, progressive implementation of restrictions and/or communication campaigns to make sure everyone is 'on board' and reduce unintended negative social effects. However, civil society, citizen initiatives and many academics continue to challenge the presence of social justice in the ways these policy frameworks are currently implemented.

The 2-year project LEZ4All (Low Emission Zones for All) fitted into this context. **This project was co-funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ program, coordinated by Auxilia and included the University of Antwerp, Brussels Environment, and the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona as main partners.** The project aimed to contribute to more social equality in car-restrictive policies by better considering the conditions of every population group, especially those in the most vulnerable positions in terms of mobility (elderly, young people, disabled people, people in low incomes, etc.), in the definition and implementation of LEZ and other UVAR. The overall objective of the project was the improvement of the competences of professionals whose work is related to mobility poverty, social exclusion and/or sustainable mobility in UVAR or LEZ context, and a better cooperation between these professionals who are not used to work together.

**This document synthesizes all the work done by the project partners over the past two years and provide lessons learned and good practices tested by partners, that could be replicated by similar territories.** We hope that this document and the LEZ4All project will contribute to a more sustainable and inclusive mobility and will inspire European metropolis implementing mobility tools and policies.

### Partners



### Associated Partners



### Funder



Co-funded by  
the European Union

## WHAT IS « MOBILITY POVERTY » ?

People can experience limitations in their mobility and travel options because of a wide range of characteristics and circumstances, possibly in combinations that further increase limitations. Family composition, physical condition, skills, job status, ethnicity, gender but also place of residence, location of services and travel times might limit severely the availability of mobility option (e.g. the case of captive users of public transport, or car-dependent households). Considerable constraints on mobility can cause social exclusion: when a person experiences such limitation(s), they face barriers to full participation in society. This exclusion and the disproportionate challenges people might face to access basic services because of such constraints on their mobility is known as mobility poverty.

Over a two-year period, the project was organised into various stages:



Detailed reports have been produced for each stage of the project. These can be found on the project website ([www.auxilia-conseil.com/projets/lez4all-exploration-uk/](http://www.auxilia-conseil.com/projets/lez4all-exploration-uk/)) and are available in several languages.

## UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF LEZ PROFESSIONALS IN ADDRESSING THE SOCIAL IMPACTS OF CAR-RESTRICTIVE POLICIES

The first phase of the project provided an in-depth understanding of the challenges faced by mobility, environmental, social and air quality professionals impacted by the LEZ or designing it. This phase started with two main questions: “**How could professionals answer adequately to the social challenges surrounding LEZ? What do professionals need to better prevent and tackle negative effects and social inequalities that car-restrictive policies such as LEZ and all types of UVARs might bring or exacerbate?**”

To answer these questions, the University of Antwerp, with the LEZ4All partners, conducted a qualitative and quantitative survey, which complemented the existing scientific literature on the subject. The quantitative survey received more than 330 responses from across Belgium, Spain and France.

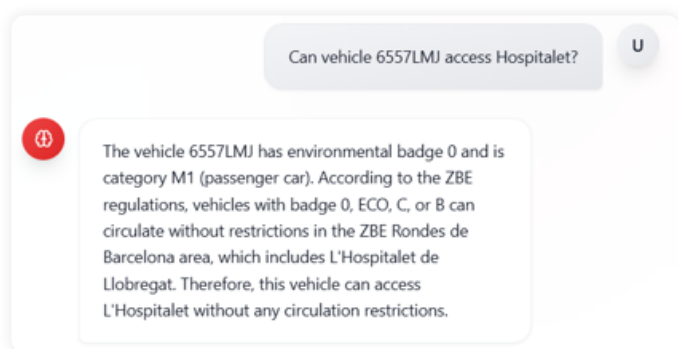
Some key findings highlighting the needs shared by all professionals, despite differences in profiles, are listed below:

- **Having a more comprehensive understanding of barriers and challenges in mobility for people in different vulnerable socio-economic positions:** very few LEZ professionals have experienced social vulnerability in their personal lives or are directly impacted by car-restrictive policies.
- **Developing intersectoral collaboration:** the complexity of car-restrictive policies demands new types of collaboration between different departments and sectors, which comes with communication challenges.
- **Improving knowledge on all the social aspects of mobility,** such as factors that contribute to social vulnerability and mobility poverty.
- **Learning and exchanging on developing mobility policy frameworks that are socially just.**
- **Questioning personal attitudes and biases on urban liveability, car accessibility and the role of the government.**

## FROM NEEDS TO CONCRETE ACTION: PROVIDING A TOOLKIT FOR LEZ PROFESSIONALS

**The LEZ4All-partners have developed four pilot projects aimed at reducing the negative effects of policies restricting car use.** From the potential of AI-based chatbot to the issue of training for professionals, and including local advice and individual support, these four pilot projects have outlined a wide range of solutions, drawing inspiration from existing tools and solutions.

Pilot project 1: **Developing an IA based chatbot for social and mobility professionals to improve understanding and information knowledge related to the Low Emission Zone (rules, exemptions, etc.) and alternatives to drive alone.**



This pilot project involves the development and test of **a chatbot based on AI and designed to support professionals who provide information and assistance to citizens on Low Emission Zones (LEZs).** The tool is designed for metropolitan and municipal services, as well as associations (in the case of Belgium). It centralises information on LEZ restrictions, authorisations, schedules and on all potential travel options depending on the users' personal situation. This pilot not only enables partners to test a solution to improve the information given to the citizens but is also an opportunity for a shared learning process on how artificial intelligence tools can support professionals in their everyday work.

Pilot project 2: **Implementing a Mobility Guidance Office for tailor-made mobility advice towards people affected by the LEZ in Barcelona.**

Inspired by the Brussels Mobility coach, the Mobility Guidance Office implemented by AMB is **a free, personalized advisory service designed to help residents rethink how they travel across the metropolitan area.** It is built around the figure of a “mobility coach”, a trained mobility expert who provides individual support adapted to each user's needs. The pilot allowed AMB to evaluate how personalised advisory services could help residents understand regulatory changes, manage administrative procedures (such as permits and registrations), and transition towards more sustainable transport options.



Pilot project 3 : **To have vulnerable groups discovering and testing alternative mobility solutions in Brussels.**



Brussels Environnement tested a **new approach of collaboration with a local community center to promote car sharing within their networks, by providing information, advice and micro-grants to cover testing expenses.** The test began with the training of the social workers on the use of carsharing. They were then able to test the solution for several weeks to prepare them to support their beneficiaries as part of the test. A budget was allocated to them for this purpose. The beneficiaries then went through the same training and trial stages, supervised by the social workers. This test led to the implementation of other tests with various actors in direct contact with vulnerable households and has been open to trialling solutions other than just carsharing (e.g: bike sharing and cargo bike).

Pilot project 4 : **Developing a training module to empower professionals.**

The development of a **training programme for professionals** was one of the project's key objectives. Consisting of **seven modules combining theory and practice** (role-play, comic strips, serious game, etc.), its content was based on the findings of the study carried out by the University of Antwerp on professionals' training needs. The training programme, designed by Auxilia, was tested across the various project regions during sessions attended by professionals from the social services and mobility sectors. It was subsequently revised and is now available as open-source material on the project's website. In the summer 2026, more than 60 professionals had been trained in Barcelona, Brussels and Paris.



# HOW CAN WE SUPPORT THOSE WHO ARE FINDING IT DIFFICULT TO ADAPT TO THE RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED BY THE LEZ?

## KEY INSIGHTS IN A NUTSHELL TO HELP YOU TAKE ACTION

This page summarises the key lessons learnt from the pilot projects. It sets out, phase by phase, the 'best practices' to follow.



### Initial phase: developing a solution collectively

- **Carry out an initial benchmarking exercise of existing solutions and consult with solution providers to identify best practices and pitfalls to avoid.** This first step also helps to better define the scope and objectives of the service, as well as the elements required for its operational set-up.
- **Engage local decision-makers early** to clarify the service's role and framing, positioning it as a facilitator of acceptance rather than a trigger for controversy around LEZ or UVAR.
- **Identify local partners capable of bringing the solution to life, giving priority to those who are in direct contact with the public on the ground.** If possible, allow partners to define their level of involvement according to their resources, capacities and expertise, and adapt your own role accordingly. Depending on their availability and experience, partners may wish to take the lead or only act as intermediaries. All approaches can lead to successful outcomes.
- **Develop the solution in collaboration with the identified local partners.**
- **Take into account the needs of the target audiences when selecting the tool and its content,** to ensure that it effectively meets those needs and is accessible. Consider also potential biases (e.g. the allocated budget being perceived by participants as too high for people on low incomes)
- **Clarify a roadmap** before launching the service to ensure all parties are prepared and can have a complementary role with others.



### Launch phase: a gradual roll-out to ensure the long-term implementation of the solution

- Don't hesitate to **experiment with the solution and roll out the service in stages** to allow time for it to be scaled up, both in terms of the tools available (e.g. mobility advice initially available only by telephone and then in person) and in terms of geographical coverage.
- **Give due consideration to communication issues** to ensure that the solution is known, understood and fully embraced by the target audience.
- **Take the time needed to clearly explain and demonstrate the solutions to the target audience.** Remain available to provide additional support tools whenever necessary (e.g. video tutorials or practical guides). Even people who make limited use of the solutions can benefit from the knowledge and may encourage others to use them.



### Cross-cutting phase: the ongoing evaluation of the solution to support its development

- **Regularly evaluate the solution** to take a step back, improve it and identify elements that can be replicated
- **During the trial phases, arrange for regular follow-ups with the participants** to gather feedback on the difficulties they face, any necessary adjustments, etc.
- **Sustain a constructive dialogue with the different operators and local authorities** to ensure that the feedback collected can lead to practical improvements and adaptations.

## TAKING A STEP BACK TO REFLECT ON THE LESSONS LEARNT:

### TOWARDS INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

#### 1. Going further in the integration of social justice into mobility projects

##### KEY LESSON

The LEZ4All project has highlighted a continuing **lack of awareness among professionals regarding the intersecting issues of mobility and social justice**. It has helped to showcase existing services while highlighting certain gaps, particularly in terms of practical knowledge of these issues on the ground.

*« We are quite far away from the reality faced by citizens, especially regarding mobility poverty. [...] We are trying to address social realities, but in many ways, we are only skimming the surface of that reality.»*



Jordi Jové Palou  
Area Metropolitana de Barcelona

#### 2. Taking action: solutions to explore and obstacles to overcome

##### KEY LESSONS

- There is no single solution to addressing the social challenges faced by UVARs, but rather a range of solutions, some of which have already been trialled in other areas. **These solutions are often complementary and require meticulous work on the ground** with partners acting as local facilitators.
- Creating collaborations is crucial and questions related to mobility poverty can only be addressed by the mobility sector and the social sector together. This can be done by implementing projects together but also creating a common culture of the issues at stake.

*« Supporting inclusive sustainable mobility is a task that requires a tailored approach. There is no single model that can be applied to all cities.»*



Nicola Da Schio  
Bruxelles Environnement

##### OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME

- **For some of the solutions tested**, the need for a local approach and for adaptation to each specific context – particularly at an individual level – raises the question of **whether they can be implemented on a larger scale**.
- **Mobilising frontline workers**, particularly social professionals, who are already dealing with an overwhelming workload across a wide range of issues affecting every aspect of the lives of the people they support, remains a challenge that the LEZ4All project has not fully managed to overcome.

*«It is difficult to reach social professionals and to involve them. They don't see as their job to develop things around mobility.»*



Lisa De Vos  
University of Antwerp

### 3. Upcoming challenges: the forest behind the ZFE-tree

«The LEZ is only a small part of the challenge.»

Eva Español Uson, AMB Informació

While the LEZ4All project has helped to raise awareness, discussions and the implementation of measures, it has also raised **questions that sometimes go beyond the subject of Low Emission Zones**. These are summarised below:

- **Better understand the public affected by car-restriction policies.** This group is not homogeneous, difficult to identify and sometimes appears is barely invisible to both institutions and those working on the ground.
- **Develop the capacity to assess the social impacts – both upstream and downstream – of public policies.** Indeed, current evaluation criteria very rarely take social issues into account.
- The compliance with the new European regulation (Directive 2024/2881) presents a challenge for European metropolitan areas, which will need to **identify the leverage points capable of taking the air quality improvement trajectories already underway** a step further
- **The need for structural changes** (breaking down silos, raising awareness amongst all technical staff and decision-makers, etc.) to ensure that social justice issues are taken into account across all public policies.

«We need to start planning for 2030 right now. The targets will be harder to meet. [...] We must be careful not to repeat the same mistakes by pointing the finger at the practices of the most vulnerable people. That is what we did with the LEZs.»



Marc Fontanès  
Auxilia



## RECOMMENDATIONS



**To challenge the car dependent urban development** that was mainstreamed for many decades and to challenge the notion of freedom that individual car mobility still holds for many people.

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**To deepen our understanding of the groups affected by car-restriction policies**, particularly the UVARs..

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**To take into account social inclusion from initial stages of policy design.** To achieve this, it will be necessary to make greater use of and raise awareness of knowledge on this subject, particularly amongst decision-makers, who must, as priority, be made aware of and trained in these issues.



**To develop and strengthen a culture of inclusive mobility in Europe**, both in terms of raising awareness amongst stakeholders and developing tools to better address the associated issues (e.g. social assessment of public mobility policies)

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**Continue to build bridges between professionals in the mobility, sustainable environment and social sectors**, and between those responsible for designing public policies, those working directly with the public and with academics.

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**To promote mutual understanding between local authorities and the sharing of knowledge regarding solutions implemented and tested by local authorities to support those affected by car-use restriction measures**, particularly in the context of new European regulations on air pollution.

To know more about the project and find out all our publications:

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