



Impact assessment

28 June 2024

Order on zero-emission zones in demarcated urban areas

1. Background and objectives of the envisaged rules

Traffic is one of the main sources of air, climate and noise pollution in major cities. Especially during rush hours, traffic pollution is predominant on busy streets. The green transition of cars is already well underway due to the ambition to promote clean and fossil-free vehicles and the government wishes to accelerate the development of green transport in Denmark by 2030. To support this, it is key that green cars are prioritised in the planning efforts of cities.

The government wants to provide municipalities with tools to make cities greener and healthier, as well as to allow municipalities to take action against air and noise pollution locally.

The Order implements a draft Act on zero-emission zones, which will allow municipal councils to establish zero-emission zones in demarcated urban areas where, as a rule, only zero-emission vehicles are allowed. With zero-emission zones in demarcated urban areas, municipalities can reduce local noise and air pollution, contribute to the municipality's climate goals and promote green mobility.

2. Content of the envisaged rules

Implements previously notified draft legislation that will allow the country's municipal councils to establish zero-emission zones in demarcated urban areas where, as a rule, only zero-emission vehicles are allowed.

The purpose of the Order is to lay down rules for municipal council powers to decide on the establishment, extension, reduction or cancellation of zero-emission zones, as well as to lay down rules for dispensations and exemptions from the zero-emission zone requirements.

The Order lays down the detailed rules for the zero-emission zone scheme, including the substantive requirements, the information basis the municipal council must send out for public consultation and in subsequent consultation with the Minister for the Environment, but also procedural requirements, such as

the involvement of the public in the municipality's proposal for the establishment of a zero-emission zone.

3. Climate and environmental considerations

The municipal option to establish zero-emission zones in demarcated urban areas is considered to have a small indirect effect on the climate, as more people will be motivated to replace a vehicle with an internal combustion engine by a zero-emission zone vehicle. However, the regulation itself is not considered to have direct climate consequences.

Zero-emission zones will lead to both improved air quality and reduced noise pollution and it is estimated that zero-emission zones will have a significant impact as a catalyst for progress towards emission reduction and the consequent strengthening of public health. The direct environmental impact of establishing zero-emission zones will be a contribution to the improvement of the environment (health), as zero-emission zones can reduce local noise and air pollution and promote health through increased use of sustainable modes of transport such as cycling and walking. The environmental impact of the zero-emission zones depends, like the climate consequences, on the model chosen and how many municipalities wish to establish zero-emission zones, as well as the geographical size and location of the zones.

4. Entry into force

It is proposed that the Order enter into force on 1 March 2025.