





Una manera de Racer Europa



"Deployment of the low emission zone in the metropolitan area of Barcelona through a comprehensive and intelligent sustainable mobility management system"

Government of Catalonia

Programa Operativo de Cataluña

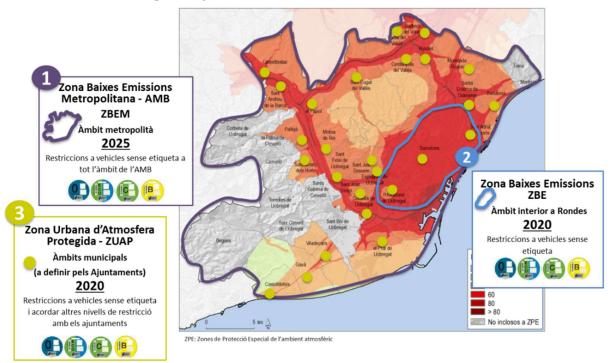
Año 2022

Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional

The project "Deployment of the low emission zone in the metropolitan area of Barcelona through a comprehensive and intelligent sustainable mobility management system" is presented as a Good Practice.

The project consists in the deployment of a comprehensive and intelligent mobility management system through the Low Emission Zone (LEZ) of Barcelona's Ring Roads that allows progress in the transition towards a low carbon economy. The measure also aims to protect people and the environment from air pollution caused by the most polluting vehicles.

The LEZ Barcelona's ring roads is an area of more than 95 km² that includes Barcelona and the municipalities surrounding Barcelona's ring roads, and which entails the progressive restriction of the circulation of the most polluting vehicles.



- 1. Metropolitan Low Emissions Zone AMB MLEZ, Barcelona Metropolitan Area (2025), restrictions for vehicles without a label throughout the Barcelona Metropolitan Area
- 2. The Barcelona Ring Roads Low Emissions Zone (ZBE Rondes Barcelona, 2020), restrictions for vehicles without a label
- 3. Urban Zone of Protected Atmosphere municipal level (to be defined by the town halls, 2020), restrictions for vehicles without a label and agreeing on other restrictions with the town halls

As part of this operation, five performances have been carried out. In the first place, the studies of basic requirements and functional characterization of the technical design of the LEZ. Next, the deployment of the LEZ signs. Thirdly, the technology has been installed at the management and control points for traffic restrictions in the Barcelona Ring Roads. The fourth action is related to the development of the technological platform for the management of the LEZ of the roundabouts in relation to the control and exploitation of environmental and mobility data. Finally, measures aimed at raising citizens' awareness have been taken.

The project involves the total cost of €3,725,833.50 and an eligible cost of €3,084,928.52, with an ERDF aid of €1,542,464.26.

Since the launch of the LEZ, the main pollutants have been reduced. Particle emissions from vehicles were reduced by 20%, nitrogen dioxide (NO_x) by 50% and CO2 by between 5 and 10%. The European Environmental Agency estimates the reduction of pollutants in the Barcelona Ring Roads LEZ at around 30%.

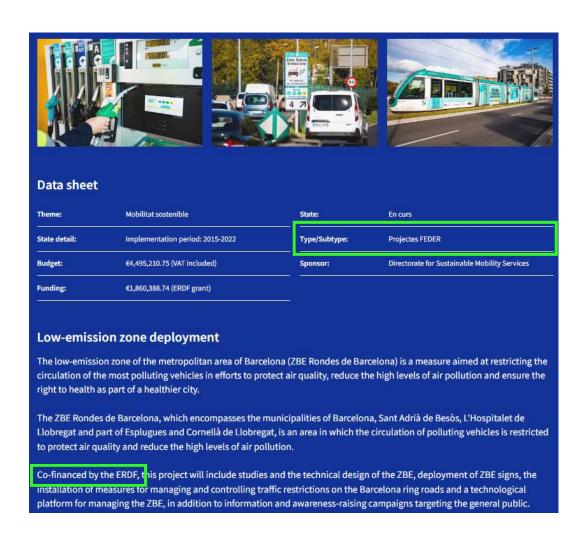
This operation is presented as a good practice because the following criteria are met:

1. High dissemination level among beneficiaries, potential beneficiaries and the general public

This operation has been conveniently disseminated through the following actions:

Dissemination of the project on the web pages:

https://feder.amb.cat/



Triptych:



Banners published both on social networks and in numerous digital media:



- 1. Pollution causes 50% of childhood asthma cases in Barcelona. There is no time to lose. The restrictions come into force on September 15th
- 2. At the time of entering and leaving school, the air contamination levels double. There is no time to lose. The restrictions come into force on September 15th

Advertising spots broadcast on multiple radio channels, television channels and the press:



Billboards, screens, signs and exteriors integrated into the means of transport:









2. The incorporation of innovative elements



The ZBE Rondes Barcelona itself is an innovative and reference policy for all the cities of the state.

Three aspects stand out among the actions financed by ERDF. Firstly, the labeling used, which has been a pioneer in Catalonia and later recognized by the General Directorate of Traffic as a model throughout the State. Secondly, it is worth highlighting the Metropolitan Registry, which has been designed from the beginning as a 100% digital citizen portal allowing citizens to carry out LEZ procedures completely online. Likewise, alliances have been created with third parties to extend the face-to-face capabilities in the area without the need to deploy additional resources.

The establishment of the LEZ Registry has meant a true transformation of metropolitan procedures, with

90% of all procedures done remotely. Finally, it is also worth highlighting the control system of

the ZBE Rondes Barcelona, which has started and materialized from the Technological Platform, developed with ERDF Funds.

This platform is the "brain" of all the cameras installed in the different municipalities that allows automatic validation of compliance with the standard and, at the same time, the intelligent use of Big Data to improve knowledge of mobility and establish more effective mobility policies.

3. Evaluation of the results obtained from the operation against the established objectives

The objective of the operation is to achieve a 30% reduction in emissions associated with road traffic within 15 years. During the LEZ implementation period, the circulating fleet, that is, the composition of the vehicles that circulate, has been significantly "greened" with a drastic reduction of the most polluting circulating vehicles, that is, those vehicles that do not have a DGT environmental label.

Before the LEZ was implemented, the most polluting vehicles, that is, those without an environmental label, represented 20% of the total fleet. At the end of 2022, the circulation of these vehicles is residual.

The renewal of the circulating fleet resulting from the reduction of vehicles without labels, has led to an evolution in the emission factors of the circulating vehicles throughout the entire fleet in the ZBE Rondes for each pollutant. In September 2021, a reduction of 51.0% was registered in NOx levels and 18.5% in the case of suspended particles known as PM10, which are solid or liquid particles of dust, ashes, soot, metallic particles, cement or pollen, dispersed in the atmosphere, and whose diameter varies between 2.5 and $10~\mu m$. Prolonged or repetitive exposure to PM10 can cause harmful effects on the respiratory system of people.

One last example of the positive effect of the LEZ related to the renewal of the car park is the evolution of the average age of the vehicles registered in the city of Barcelona, lower than the state average, which does not follow the negative trend of the Spanish state.

4. Contribution to solving a regional problem or weakness

In the Barcelona metropolitan area, as something common to urban agglomerations, there is an excess concentration of suspended particles (PM10) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), surpassing the legally established values with relative frequency.

In December 2014, the regional government of Catalonia (Generalitat de Catalunya) approved the Action Plan for the improvement of air quality in areas of special protection of the atmospheric environment (PAMQA), Horizon 2020, with the aim of reducing the level of nitrogen oxide emissions and suspended particles with a diameter of less than 10 microns.



Due to the advanced state of the operation and the recent data collection, it can be stated that the operation has reached the objective of reducing NO₂ levels by 11%, thus contributing to improving air quality.

Another point to highlight is the estimate that the changes in the vehicle fleet and the implementation of the LEZ contribute to avoiding 125 deaths per year and reducing new cases of other diseases such as childhood asthma or lung cancer.

5. Degree of coverage of the population to which it is addressed

The operation is aimed at improving air quality for the entire population of the Barcelona metropolitan area. The establishment of the LEZ has contributed decisively to socialize the problem of air quality in the public health of citizens. In this way, 95% of those surveyed in the latest OMNIBUS survey in the AMB say that pollution is a major problem in the Barcelona metropolitan area.

The different studies on the impact of the scale of the LEZ indicate that between 16 and 17% of the population of the Barcelona metropolitan area has been affected by the restriction of traffic in the LEZ. That is why they have had to change their mobility habits (going on foot, by public transport, by bicycle, etc.) or changing the vehicle.

All studies, internal and external, indicate approximately 70% acceptance of the measure by the metropolitan population.



6. Compliance with horizontal principles (sustainable development, equality between men and women and the principle of non-discrimination) and environmental regulations

The purpose of the ZBE is to comply with the European limit values for NOx and PM10 in the metropolitan environment, in accordance with Directive 2008/50/CE.

The benefits of improving air quality are universal, regardless of age, social class, or state of health. It is true that this benefit may be greater at the extremes of life, for people with health problems or for the groups of population with greater social disadvantages, but these differences suggest that those people who have more difficulty adhering to the changes promoted by LEZ are also the ones that can get the most benefit.

In fact, there are socioeconomic inequalities in terms of exposure levels and attributable health burdens. Despite not necessarily having a greater exposure to pollution, in the most disadvantaged areas of Barcelona the mortality attributable to ultrafine particles (known as PM 2.5) tends to be higher (1.22 times) compared to less disadvantaged areas. This suggests that the most disadvantaged groups suffer the most from exposure to these environmental health hazards. Ultimately, it should be noted that the European Public Health Alliance points out that low emission zones are the most effective measures to reduce pollution from local toxic PM10 and NOx.

It is worth mentioning that due to the deployment of the LEZ, social studies have been carried out on the impacts of the measure. These works verified that the impact of the restrictions affects to a lesser degree the low-income social classes and the female gender.

On the other hand, the AMB as a public administration complies with the obligations established in the applicable regulations on equality, as well as on the reservation of places for disabled people.

7. Synergies with other policies or public intervention instruments

LEZs must be integrated into the framework of sustainable mobility policies of municipalities, metropolitan areas and regions. Beyond being a reference for compliance with the aforementioned air quality directive, LEZs are also becoming a key policy to advance in harmony with the European directives aimed at reducing CO2 emissions. It should also be noted that the LEZ is a fundamental action within the NextGeneration framework, and therefore, positions the metropolitan territory in a privileged situation in terms of the deployment of mobility policies in line with European policies (green pact, NGEU, etc.). The LEZ is not a single, rigid measure, but rather a framework that allows for the inclusion of multiple measures that can accommodate changes in knowledge and circumstances. Thus, they can be implemented in the different levels of limitation and the corresponding perimeters; and it can be done by including actions aiming at gradually achieving zero emission zones, such as around schools.

The ZBE Rondes Barcelona has gone from becoming a pioneering policy in the state to a benchmark policy. The State, through Law 7/2021 on Climate Change and Energy Transition, has established the legal obligation to establish LEZs in all cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants. The metropolitan model has been the reference throughout the country. In this sense, it should be noted that the road signs designed by ZBE Rondes and co-financed by ERDF has been adopted by the General Traffic Directorate (DGT) as a reference regulatory sign (Instruction MOV 21/3). The AMB has published a technical guide with the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP) and the DGT and currently conducts various training courses and seminars to contribute to the deployment of LEZ in other cities.







Una manera de Racer Europa



Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional