

Driving abroad?

Key things you need to know before
and during your trip

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If you are planning on taking your car abroad, you'll need to comply with the rules and regulations applicable to the country you are travelling to or through; some of which can only be arranged before you travel.

1 Passport requirements

As a general rule, your passport will need to have been issued less than ten years before the date you wish to travel and must expire at least three months after the date you wish to leave. Depending on when you last renewed, extra months may have been added to its expiry, so remember to check both dates.

2 Health issues

European countries tend not to impose travel restrictions on health grounds. However, it is still advisable to check the latest information at [gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) before booking, and it is also worth checking that your travel insurance covers any pre-existing conditions.

3 Documentation

You will need to have a VE103 Vehicle on Hire certificate to show that you are permitted to use a lease vehicle outside the UK (if it's your own vehicle then it will be your V5C logbook). To make sure the documentation comes through in time, please request this at least 10 working days in advance.

Request your VE103 vehicle on hire certificate at:
<https://ve103.mynovunavehicle.co.uk>

If you are travelling to Liechtenstein, you will also need to carry an International Certificate for Motor Vehicles (ICMV) with you. This can be arranged by calling the number above.





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4 Driving licence

You need to carry a valid GB or Northern Ireland driving licence with you at all times. If you have a paper driving licence, or if your licence was issued in Gibraltar, Guernsey, Jersey, or the Isle of Man, some European countries, including Norway, require you to carry an International Driving Permit (IDP). You may also need an IDP if travelling outside Europe. IDPs can be purchased at participating PayPoint stores. An IDP costs £5.50.

5 Insurance

There's no need to carry an insurance green card in order to drive in most European countries, but you will need a valid insurance certificate or other proof of insurance. That said, you will still need a green card to drive in countries like Albania, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Turkey, and Ukraine.

6 UK stickers and number plates

If your number plate has numbers and letters only (with no flag or identifier), a GB identifier with the Union Jack, a European Union flag, or a national flag of England, Scotland, or Wales then a UK sticker is required. If your number plate already has the UK identifier with the Union Jack then no sticker is required. If you are driving in Spain, Cyprus or Malta, you must display a UK sticker no matter what is on your number plate.

7 Trailers

If your car has a trailer, you may need to register it before using it abroad. To find out more visit: gov.uk/guidance/trailer-registration

8 Additional items

Rules regarding alcohol, mobiles, and items you must carry with you vary between countries. To check the up-to-date rules and regulations, go to: gov.uk/drive-abroad. More handy tips for driving at home or abroad can be found at: novunavehiclesolutions.co.uk/news-and-insights

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Charging your EV in Europe

If you are planning on taking your electric car to Europe this summer, it's best to plan ahead and check the chargepoint providers with the best coverage in the areas you plan to visit.

The good news is that in order to comply with the EU's Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Directive, recharging points should be equipped for the standard Type 2 connectors used in the UK, as well as CCS/Combo 2 for high-power DC charging. However, while the faster DC chargers will generally have a tethered charging cable, this isn't necessarily true of all chargepoints and so it's worth taking some cables with you.

While RFID roaming cards or apps from providers like Chargemap or Shell Recharge (which grant access to over 850,000 European chargepoints) are highly recommended, new EU laws mandate that all newly installed fast chargers must accept standard contactless debit or credit card payments.

For those wanting charge speeds of up to 350kW then IONITY has just under 6,000 chargers across Europe and of course, for those with a Tesla, the European Tesla Supercharging network now has over 1,100 sites and 14,000 individual Superchargers across mainland Europe.

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France

By law, drivers are required to carry reflective jackets, a warning triangle, headlamp beam deflectors and snow chains when driving through designated 'snow zones'.

Drivers are also required to display a windscreen sticker which denotes their vehicle's level of emissions. Entry to controlled areas depends on meeting the specified standard and displaying the right sticker. There are six categories of sticker, known as Crit'Air vignettes, which also offer preferential parking for the least polluting vehicles.

- **Green** 100% electric and hydrogen vehicles
- **Purple** Crit'Air 1 (All gas and plug-in hybrids, Euro 5, 6 petrol vehicles)
- **Yellow** Crit'Air 2 (Euro 4 petrol vehicles, Euro 5, 6 diesel vehicles)
- **Orange** Crit'Air 3 (Euro 2, 3 petrol vehicles, Euro 4 diesel vehicles)
- **Burgundy** Crit'Air 4 (Euro 3 diesel vehicles)
- **Dark Grey** Crit'Air 5 (Euro 2 diesel vehicles)

The cost of a Crit'Air vignette is €3.11 plus €2.00 postage and they can be purchased from the French government's website at certificat-air.gouv.fr

The penalty for failing to display the appropriate sticker varies between regions, but it is often between €68 and €180. However, it can be much more and the fine may also increase if payment is not made within the specified timeframe.

Taking your EV to France?

A Fulli card, which is available for under €10 will enable you to access 140,000 public charging stations. In a similar vein, the €4.99 Freshmile Pass, or an IZIVIA Pass at €15, will enable you to access a large network across France and over 650,000 chargepoints across Europe.



160,000+
Chargepoints

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Germany

Many of Germany's major cities require drivers to display an emissions sticker (Umweltplakette) in their vehicle when entering a controlled zone, with road signs at the main entry points showing which vehicles are allowed.

Euro 5 and above (and electric vehicles) will need to display a green Umweltplakette, whereas Euro 4 vehicles will use the yellow version. Higher polluting vehicles were originally given a red sticker, however, these are no longer on sale and vehicles with a red sticker can no longer enter any low-emission zones. In fact, most German cities now only allow vehicles carrying a green sticker.

You can buy stickers from a number of places but the most reliable, and generally cheapest, is to use the official website for the region you are travelling to (such as [berlin.de](https://www.berlin.de)). Stickers can take a few weeks to arrive and so it is best to order one well in advance of your intended travel date. Failing to display a sticker in a controlled zone can result in a fine of at least €100 and you may be restricted from continuing your journey.

Taking your EV to Germany?

Germany has a strong public charging infrastructure, with one of the biggest providers, MAINGAU, offering easy access to over 127,000 chargepoints with no contract term, no monthly fee, and kWh-based billing.

You'll also find chargepoints in all the usual places, including at supermarket giants Lidl and Aldi.



196,000+
Chargepoints

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Italy

Major cities, including Rome, Florence, Milan and Pisa, operate ZTL zones (Zona a Traffico Limitato) restricting access for all non-resident vehicles. Across the country, all drivers are required to carry reflective jackets, a warning triangle and headlamp beam deflectors.

Italy has a wide variety of low-emission zones, often with differing regulations and requirements. Some of these can be quite complex to understand, such as only applying on certain days in the week or at different times of the day. The regulations can also vary between summer and winter.

Many of the schemes are less restrictive than other countries but more stringent controls are gradually being put in place. For example, the Fascia Verde (Green Belt) covering the entire city of Rome currently sets the minimum standard for petrol cars at Euro 3 and Euro 4 for diesels.

There are also 'Ecological Sundays' in Rome, when vehicles with a combustion engine are excluded from 07:30 to 12:30 and again from 16:30 to 20:30.

The schemes are generally accompanied by road signage but it is best to check the local government website, or a reputable source of travel advice, before driving in Italy.

Taking your EV to Italy?

Italy has a growing public charging infrastructure with Enel X and BeCharge among the names to look out for.

There is also the high-power charging station network, IONITY, which has 282 chargepoints offering up to 350 kilowatts (kW) in 40 locations across the country.



60,000+
Chargepoints

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Spain

Reflective jackets, a warning triangle and headlamp deflectors are required by law. However, headlamps can also be manually adjusted to avoid dazzling oncoming drivers.

Spain's Climate Change Bill states that municipalities with more than 50,000 inhabitants must operate a low-emission zone. The zones are generically known as Zonas de Bajas Emisiones (ZBE) but local schemes can also have their own name. The penalty for failing to comply with the appropriate regulations can be steep, with fines of €200 or higher, depending on the region and type of vehicle.

UK vehicles are not generally required to display one of the four emissions stickers but some cities, including Barcelona, require you to register your vehicle before entering a low-emission zone in order to be granted a single, multi-day, or long-term permit. Others limit the entry of certain vehicle types to 2 hours each day.

It is best to check the local regulations before travelling. Useful resources include Madrid City Council (www.madrid.es) or Barcelona City Council (<https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/qualitataire/en>).

Taking your EV to Spain?

Spain may not have the largest network but major cities, such as Barcelona, Madrid, and Valencia, have reasonable coverage and there's a growing network running along the coastline.

Key providers include Iberdrola who operate over 11,000 public chargepoints and Enel, with over 23,000 connectors across the country. There's also Repsol, with 2,400 chargepoints using 100% renewable energy.



50,000+
Chargepoints





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Netherlands

In common with many other European countries, cars need to be fitted with headlamp converters that ensure oncoming drivers are not blinded by lights set up for driving on the left-hand side of the road.

There are low-emission zones across the Netherlands, including Amsterdam and Utrecht which both require a minimum standard of Euro 5 and The Hague and Arnhem where diesel cars must reach the Euro 4 standard or higher. There are also 14 municipalities with a zero-emission zone, including Amsterdam, Utrecht, Rotterdam, and Eindhoven, with many more on the way.

The zones are generally signposted indicating which cars are allowed to enter. In the green zone, only diesel cars and vans with a Euro 4 emission standard or higher are allowed. And in the blue zone, this increases to Euro 5.

There is no need to order stickers in advance but fines for failing to comply with low-emission regulations are between €130 and €250.

Taking your EV to The Netherlands?

The Netherlands is home to one of the largest charging networks in Europe and has one of the lowest number of vehicles to chargepoint ratios in the world.

The Fastned high-speed charging network offers drivers a pay-as-you-go tariff starting from €0.77 per kWh for speeds of 43kW to 350kW.

Alternatively, Vattenfall has chargepoints in 320,000 locations across the Netherlands and the rest of Europe, which are accessible using their InCharge card or app.



190,000+
Chargepoints

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Portugal

Reflective jackets, a warning triangle and headlamp deflectors are all required by law. However, you are also allowed to manually adjust your headlamps to achieve the same effect, i.e. not dazzling oncoming drivers with lights set up for driving on the left.

Portugal is known for its trams, so it's worth knowing that you can only pass a stationary tram if there's an island for passengers to safely get on or off.

Low-emission zones are controlled by each municipality. For example, Lisbon's Zona de Emissões Reduzidas (ZER) is divided into two areas, each with different limitations. However, the rules are far less restrictive than many other countries, with Zone 1 setting the minimum entry requirement at Euro 3 and Zone 2 at Euro 2. This means that, unless your car was manufactured before 2001, you are unlikely to be affected.

Taking your EV to Portugal?

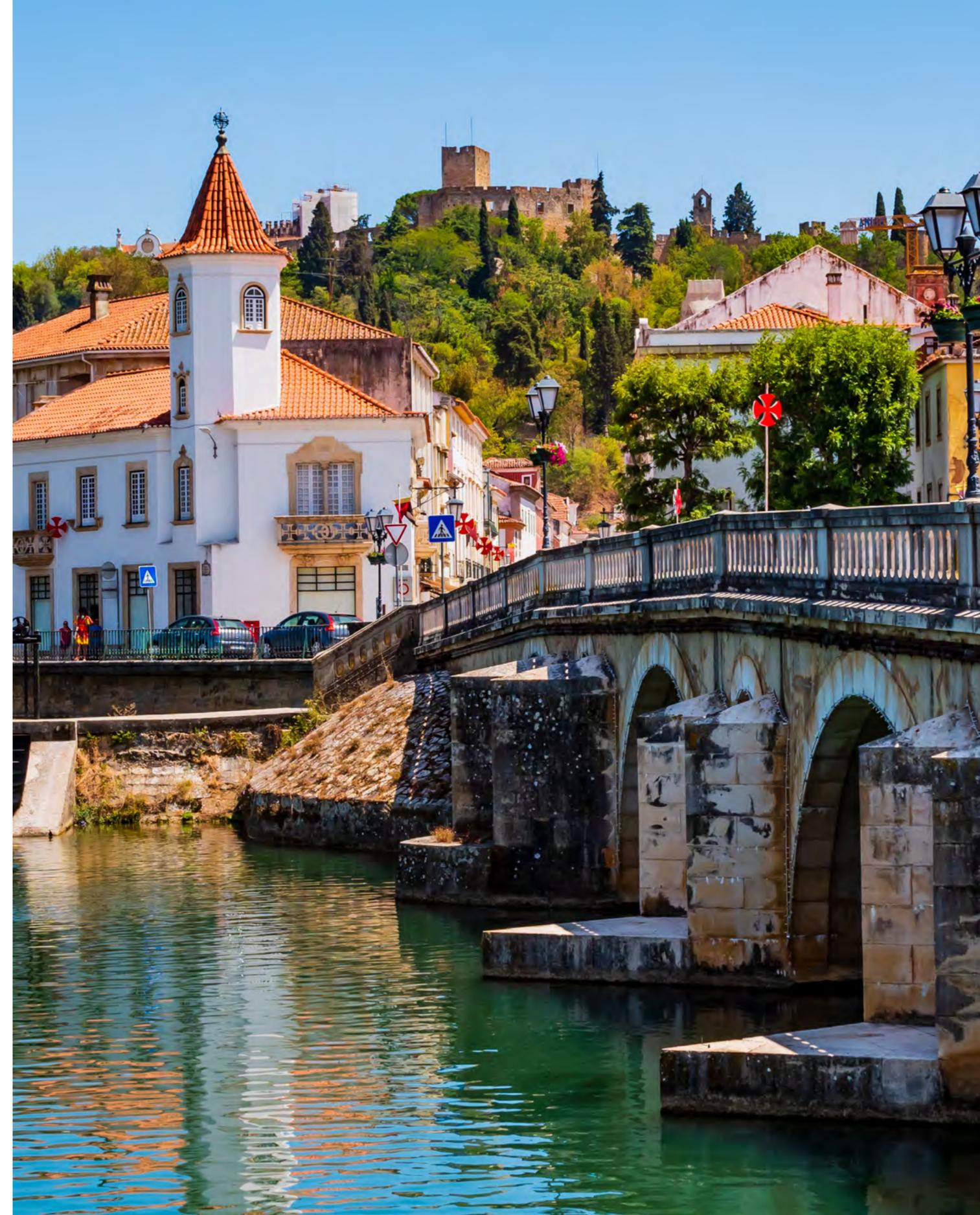
Over 25% of Portugal's evolving EV charging infrastructure is in Lisbon and Porto. However, all service stations managed by Repsol and bp along the main Brisa motorways have EDP fast and ultra-fast charging capabilities. This includes chargepoints on the A1, A2, A4, A6 or A9 motorways.

Miio is one of the leading payment providers, with automatic top-up payments or pay-as-you-go options. One of the biggest networks is the Mobi.E network, which has more than 7,000 stations and 14,000 chargepoints, over 3,000 of which feature fast or ultra-fast charging.



14,000+
Chargepoints

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Ireland

Ireland's driving rules are broadly the same as those in the UK, however, speed limits are displayed in kilometres rather than miles and certain limits and penalties differ, so it's important to pay attention to local road signs.

Currently, there are no low-emission zones that restrict passenger cars anywhere on the island of Ireland. However, environmental and traffic regulations can change, so it is always advisable to check local requirements before travelling.

Taking your EV to Ireland?

EZO (formerly EasyGo) was Ireland's first private, totally EV dedicated, charging company and they currently provide access to the vast majority of Ireland's public chargepoints. This equates to more than 4,000 chargers, including those operated by ESB eCars and IONITY.

Although there are no mandatory subscription costs, you do have the option to purchase an EasyGo access fob for €6 when registering, or you can pay-as-you-go using the EasyGo app.



4,000+
Chargepoints

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Any questions?

For more handy tips and advice on all aspects of personal or business motoring, take a look at our blog NovunaVehicleSolutions.co.uk/news-and-insights

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