

BVRLA



Business Impact:

The following information will ensure your vehicles carry the correct documentation and equipment when travelling abroad and are compliant with international legislation.

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Advice should always be obtained from your own professional advisers before committing to a specific action.

BVRLA FACT SHEET 518: ISSUED 15 September 2017

Taking Vehicles Abroad

Background

When renting or leasing a vehicle it is essential to check if your customer intends to take your vehicle abroad. With the range of requirements imposed in the different European countries, one of the first points you need to establish is to which country your customer is travelling. [The AA](#) and [The RAC](#) have websites that are particularly helpful.

Document Requirements

Driving Licence

A current full (not provisional) UK Driving Licence is valid in most countries throughout the world, with a few exceptions (a current list of those countries can be obtained from the AA or the RAC). In those countries which do not recognise a UK Driving Licence your customer will need, in addition, an International Driving Permit (IDP). An IDP is internationally recognised and normally allows the holder to drive a private motor vehicle without additional formality. IDPs can be obtained from the AA, the Post Office and the RAC, but cannot be backdated so must be ordered in advance of the commencement of the trip.

Your customer needs to be aware that UK citizens must carry their driving licences at all times, and it must be produced on demand. There are no days of grace as there are in the UK. Please note also that the minimum driving age can vary from country to country.

Passports and Visas

British citizens travelling to Continental Europe must be in possession of a valid passport that will not expire during the course of the trip. If your customer is planning to visit countries outside of the European Union, please note that

some of these countries have an immigration requirement for a passport to remain valid for a minimum period beyond the date of entry to the country. [The Foreign and Commonwealth Office](#) has a comprehensive list which includes details on any visas which may be required.

Vehicle on Hire Certificate (VE103)

The VE103 is the legally accepted evidence that the hirer has the permission of the vehicle owner to take the vehicle abroad. It also replaces the need to carry the vehicle registration document (V5C) with the vehicle, which would otherwise be required abroad. Photocopies of the relevant documents and letters of authority are not legally recognised alternatives. Members should ensure their customer has the appropriate documentation before travel. Failure to do so could subject the hirer to a fine/or the vehicle being impounded. VE103 certificates can be obtained by contacting BVRLA Member Services on 01494 545704 or memberservices@bvrla.co.uk.

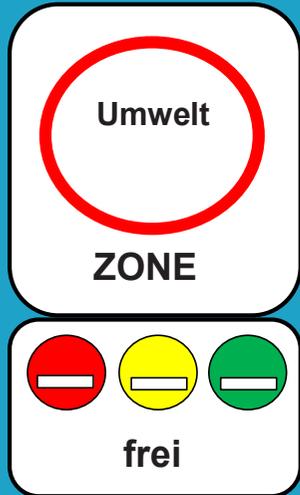
Low Emission Zones & Road Tolls

Germany

Low emission zones are in place in 17 cities across Germany a list is available [here](#). A number of these cities also ban certain types of vehicles (e.g. HGVs) from some roads, details of access bans are available [here](#)

The low emission zones are depicted by signage which is shown in the column of page 2 in this fact sheet. All vehicles entering a low emission zone are required to display a green, yellow or red windscreen sticker based on the vehicle's EURO standard rating and/or the year the vehicle was first registered.

Customers taking hired or leased vehicles to Germany will need to



German Low Emission Zone Signage

France Low Emission Zone Sticker



Taking Vehicles Abroad (continued)

obtain an environmental sticker to enter these zones.

Failure to display this sticker will result in a €80 fine. The responsibility for obtaining the sticker is the drivers' although members may wish to arrange this on the customer's behalf.

Windscreen stickers can be purchased locally in hotels, garages and environmental offices on presentation of a valid VE103B form. The VE103B form contains the date the vehicle was first registered. The stickers can also be purchased by clicking [here](#) but your customer will need a PDF scan of the V5 or VE103B. The same sticker is valid for all the low emission zones in Germany.

France

Low emission zones are in place in 3 cities in France including: Paris, Lyon and Grenoble (8:00am until 8:00pm).

The French low emission zones operate in a similar way to the German scheme and a sticker is required in the vehicle to depict the euro standards of the vehicle.

Failure to display the sticker will result in a fine between €68 and €135. The responsibility for obtaining the sticker is the drivers' although members may wish to arrange this on the customer's behalf.

Stickers cost €3.70 plus the cost of postage and can be purchased [online](#). Customers will need to know the EURO standard of their vehicle to purchase a sticker.

Belgian road toll introduced from 1 April 2016

All goods vehicles above 3.5 tonnes travelling in Belgium are required to have an OBU (On Board Unit) for a road tolling system.

Further information, can be found on the [Viapass website](#). OBUs can be obtained [here](#) or from various service points across Belgium, a map is available [here](#).

The system is enforced by ANPR cameras and mobile enforcement units, the fine for non-compliance is up to €1,000.

Insurance Requirements

International Motor Insurance

It is advisable that drivers carry evidence of insurance at all times whilst driving abroad in a UK registered vehicle.

The UK motor insurance policy provided to or by the customer will usually provide the legal minimum cover required by law in EU countries and Norway and Switzerland, or the minimum cover required by UK law if that is greater. (Insurance requirements across Europe demand a minimum of third party risk cover).

If the insurance offers comprehensive cover, you or your customer will need to notify the insurance company to extend the full policy to the relevant country. Failure to do so might mean that the insurance is automatically reduced to third party cover only. If a boat or caravan is to be towed, you or your customer should make sure that the policy covers towing in Europe.

Green Card

Although it is generally not a legal requirement, some rental companies and their insurers prefer to issue an International Motor Insurance Certificate, also known as a Green Card. This is proof that the minimum legal requirements for the third party liability insurance in any country for which the

Taking Vehicles Abroad (continued)

Green Card is valid will be met by the motor policy covering the vehicle. Green cards are not compulsory in the EU, but are a requirement if the vehicle is to be driven outside the EU, for more information [click here](#).

European Breakdown Cover

For the peace of mind of your customers and the security of knowing that your vehicle will be fixed at the roadside or towed to a garage for repair (and repatriated to the UK if necessary) European Breakdown Cover is essential. [The AA](#) and [The RAC](#) provide European Breakdown for fleets.

Returning to the UK

Import and exports of animals and animal products represent an important and significant contribution to the UK economy – but they can also bring with them the risk of animal diseases. Imports are therefore subject to strict controls at the UK border under EU and national rules. [DEFRA](#) offer advice on the importing and exporting of animals.

If you are travelling to the UK from the European Union (EU), you can bring in an unlimited amount of most goods for your own use without paying tax or duty, but certain rules apply, [HMRC](#) provide further information.

Vehicle Requirements

Vehicle Accessories

In some countries it is compulsory to carry certain spare parts (check with the AA or RAC). It is always strongly advisable for the vehicle to carry spare bulbs, fuses, supplies of oil and water and a fire extinguisher.

Headlamp Adjustment

It is obligatory to use dipped headlights when driving in Europe.

Headlamp converters can be purchased from most car accessory stores nationwide.

First Aid Kit

A first aid kit is required in many countries, including the UK.

Warning Triangle

This should be carried (two are required in certain cases) in case of accident and breakdown and is compulsory in most European countries.

Reflective Jackets

It is obligatory in some European countries to carry at least one reflective yellow or orange jacket (details of these countries can be found on the AA website). This must be worn when standing with, inspecting or repairing a vehicle on a public highway. It is recommended that two reflective are carried in the vehicle to accommodate for a passenger. Fines can be imposed if this law is not abided by.

Snow Chains

In many regions in Europe, a set of snow chains is a legal requirement during winter. Advise customers that they should use them only when compulsory or necessary because prolonged use on hard surface will damage tyres.

Vehicle Nationality Plate (GB Plate)

UK registered vehicles displaying Euro-plates (circle of 12 stars above the national identifier on blue background) are no longer obliged to display a GB sticker to the rear of the vehicle when driving in European Union countries. However, a GB sticker is still required on the rear of any UK registered motor vehicle, caravan or trailer if it does not display Euro-plates or when it is being driven in any non-European Union



Further information

Just click each link or visit the BVRLA website:
www.bvrla.co.uk

VE103 Vehicle on Hire Certificate

Driving a Minibus in the UK & Abroad

Allowing vehicles to go abroad

For questions on this or any other matter concerning taking vehicles abroad, contact the BVRLA Member Services team:

memberservices@bvrla.co.uk

01494 434747

BVRLA FACT SHEET 518: ISSUED 15 September 2017

Taking Vehicles Abroad (continued)

countries. You should ensure that this is correctly positioned as close as possible to the rear number plate.

Speed Limits

Speed limits will vary from country to country and you may want to remind your customers that these limits will be stated in kilometres rather than miles to prevent confusion. The table below lists popular European destinations and the speed limits.

Country	Motorways	Ordinary roads	Towns/villages
Austria	130	100	50
Belgium	120	90	50
France	130	90	50
Greece	100 or 120	80	50
Iceland	90	80	50
Italy	100 or 130	90	50
Holland	120	80	50
Norway	90	80	50
Spain	120	90	50
Switzerland	120	80	50

Drinking and Driving

Each country has specific alcohol limits that will be enforced if the driver is found to be driving with alcohol in his/her system.

Mobile Phones

Each country has its own laws governing the use of mobile phones, both handheld and hands free. In some just having the mobile switched on whilst driving is illegal. As a general rule if your customer is going to make a call or take a call, advise them to pull over, find a suitable place to park and switch the engine off regardless of what type of mobile is in use.

Passengers / Children in Cars

Many European countries do not permit children to travel as front-seat passengers, or only allow them to do so when using a restraint appropriate to age and/or height.

Road Safety Related Offences

The DVLA have to provide details of the registered keeper of a vehicle when authorities abroad request it for the following offences:

- Speeding
- Drink/drug driving
- Seatbelt/crash helmet
- Red light/forbidden lane, and
- Mobile phone offences

The details can only be requested where the offender is not penalised while still in the country.

Where members received such penalties the BVRLA advises that in the first instance you provide details of who the vehicle was on hire or lease to if your contract allows and advise the customer accordingly. However, there is no formal transfer of liability process so if the authority contact you again you may need to pay the penalty and recharge the customer accordingly.

Whilst the penalties can only be enforced by taking the driver or registered keeper to court in the country of issue there could be a problem if the vehicle is taken to the same country again and there is an outstanding penalty. It is also important to note this system is not in place for parking or toll notices incurred whilst your vehicles are abroad.

Advice for customers

It is advisable that your customer checks out the vehicle requirements, speed limits, local road laws including child car seat and mobile phone use for any country they are visiting or travelling through. [The AA](#) has a comprehensive country by country lists.