

## ‘German court cracks down on diesel cars’

### Intro

**Q1-** How would you feel if you could no longer drive your car into the heart of your own home town?

**Q2-** In your opinion should cars be cleaner in your city? Does it affect pollution and should it be changed?

### Text

vehicles	manipulated	introduce	decline
plummet	banned	as well as	value
obligation	verdict	thresholds	cheat

A ruling by the German courts has **cracked down** heavily on polluting vehicles which can now be \_\_\_\_\_ from the centres of Stuttgart and Düsseldorf, a precedent verdict that could dramatically hit the \_\_\_\_\_ of diesel cars.

Various eco-warriors, who have been prosecuting German cities, argue that they have a \_\_\_\_\_ to reduce pollution to safeguard people’s health.

Stuttgart and Düsseldorf can now legally prohibit older, mass-polluting-\_\_\_\_\_, but the decision will reverberate around the whole country, **paving the way** for other less-polluted-cities to \_\_\_\_\_ bans.

Munich and Cologne \_\_\_\_\_ 70 other German cities recorded average nitrogen dioxide levels above EU \_\_\_\_\_ in 2017, according to the federal environment agency (UBA).

Both the German government and automotive industry have been **making waves** regarding the \_\_\_\_\_, concerned that the lives of diesel car owners will be massively inconvenienced, who will not only find themselves unable to drive their cars, but also in possession of vehicles that will \_\_\_\_\_ in value.

Angela Merkel has **slapped on the table** a €1bn fund, partly paid for by the industry, to vastly improve public transportation and upgrade fleets to electric buses.

Volkswagen, BMW and Daimler, meanwhile, have **struck a sombre tone** after VW’s “dieselgate” affair, in which it \_\_\_\_\_ the systems on 11m vehicles worldwide to \_\_\_\_\_ regulators’ emissions tests.

Car companies have already seen the market share for diesel vehicles in **Germany** \_\_\_\_\_ from 48% in 2015 to about 39% last year.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/feb/27/german-court-rules-cities-can-ban-diesel-cars-to-tackle-pollution>

**Questions** – True / False

- Q1 - German courts have permitted diesel cars into German cities? Y / N
- Q2 - Environmentalists have sued many German towns? Y / N
- Q3 - The law will ban all diesel cars from Stuttgart and Dusseldorf? Y / N
- Q4 - This is only the beginning before more cities adopt the new law? Y / N
- Q5 - 70 German cities had nitrogen levels below the EU limit? Y / N
- Q6 - The auto industry is happy with the court's decision? Y / N
- Q7 - Diesel owner's cars will soar in price? Y / N
- Q8 - Mrs Merkel has offered 1 billion to help improve transport? Y / N
- Q9 - VW's subsidiaries have taken an aggressive approach to the law? Y / N
- Q10 - Diesel cars sales have dropped by over 10 in one year? Y / N

**Antonym match** – Find the opposite meanings

Sombre	Worth
Plummet	Reduce
Obligation	Levels
Crack down	Also
Banned	Become stricter
Verdict	Trick
Introduce	Start
As well as	Sentence
Thresholds	Drop heavily
Decline	Duty
Value	Prohibited
Cheat	Saddening

**Bonus Discussion**

- Q1 - Have you ever cracked down on anything?
- Q2 - What decisions have you made that paved the way for something else?
- Q3 - Who or what has been making waves in the newspapers this month?
- Q4 - What did you slap on the negotiating table recently?
- Q5 - What has a struck a sombre chord with you recently?

**Discussion /Extra Grammar** - Driving Idiomatic expressions – Explain these questions!

Who is the <b>driving force</b> in your company / family? Why and what have they implementing recently?
Are Diesel cars finished? Is this the right decision?
Do you think banning diesel engines cars will <b>drive down the price</b> of the cars?
Should all cars be banned from city centres and more investment made on public transport?
Do you know somebody who <b>drives a hard bargain</b> ?
Will banning Diesel really bring down pollution levels?
Is there anybody at work who <b>drives you up the wall</b> ? Why? What have they done recently to make you feel this way?
Could you imagine riding to work everyday?
Have you ever <b>driven yourself into the ground</b> due to too much work or stress?
Have you ever been involved in a <b>'hit and run'</b> ?
Should all cars be fitted with 'alco-locks' to prevent drink drivers from driving?
If someone said <b>"Lets have one for the road?"</b> how would you respond?
Are autonomous cars the future? Can you foresee car-free cities in the future? How do you feel about that?
When did you <b>lose your train of thought</b> ? What were you thinking about that made you get distracted?
Do you know anybody with a <b>'one track mind'</b> ?
Have you ever experienced road rage? What happened?
Have you ever <b>covered your tracks</b> from your family or boss?
If talking on the phone whilst driving is illegal, why can't you smoke and drive? Isn't that just as dangerous?
Have you ever <b>been off the beaten track</b> ? Where did you go and when?
What is the future for transportation; electric, hybrid, solar, hydrogen, feet, pedals, scooters?

Answers

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Stuttgart and Düsseldorf can now legally prohibit older, mass-polluting-**vehicles** , but the decision will reverberate around the whole country, **paving the way** for other less-polluted-cities to **introduce** bans.

Munich and Cologne **as well as** 70 other German cities recorded average nitrogen dioxide levels above EU **thresholds** in 2017, according to the federal environment agency (UBA).

Both the German government and automotive industry have been **making waves** regarding the **verdict**, concerned that the lives of diesel car owners will be massively inconvenienced, who will not only find themselves unable to drive their cars, but also in possession of vehicles that will **decline** in value.

Angela Merkel has **slapped on the table** a €1bn fund, partly paid for by the industry, to vastly improve public transportation and upgrade fleets to electric buses.

Volkswagen, BMW and Daimler, meanwhile, have **struck a sombre tone** after VW's "dieseldate" affair, in which it **manipulated** the systems on 11m vehicles worldwide to **cheat** regulators' emissions tests.

Car companies have already seen the market share for diesel vehicles in **Germany plummet** from 48% in 2015 to about 39% last year.

Antonym

Sombre	Saddening
Plummet	Drop heavily
Obligation	Duty
Crack down	Become stricter
Banned	Prohibited
Verdict	Sentence
Introduce	Start
As well as	Also
Thresholds	Levels
Decline	Reduce
Value	Worth
Cheat	Trick

Grammar

Crack down – become stricter	One for the road – one last drink
Paved the way – it allowed something else to occur; it led to	
Making waves – causing discussion, making headlines	
Struck a sombre chord – something has caused a sad reaction	
Slap on the table – an offer you bring to negotiate with	
Drives you up the wall – someone/thing who irritates you	
Cover your tracks – to hide something from others	
Lose your train of thought – lose your focus on one aspect	
One track mind – you can only think about one thing, nothing else	
Drives a hard bargain – a strong negotiator	
Off the beaten track – away from everything touristic	
Driving force – the leader and energy force behind the project	