

## Top German court allows cities to ban diesel cars to combat air pollution

A scene in Stuttgart on February 21, 2018. A German court has allowed cities to ban diesel cars to lower air pollution. | Photo Credit: [AP](#)

A top German court on February 27 ruled in favour of allowing major cities to ban heavily polluting diesel cars, a move likely to hit the value of 12 million vehicles in Europe's largest car market and force carmakers to pay for costly modifications.

There has been a global backlash against diesel engine cars since [Volkswagen admitted in 2015 to cheating U.S. exhaust tests](#), meant to limit emissions of particulate matter and nitrogen oxide (NOx), known to cause respiratory diseases.

While other countries are also considering restrictions on diesel cars, a ban in the birthplace of the modern automobile is a new blow to the car industry, and an embarrassment for Chancellor Angela Merkel's government, which opposes bans.

The ruling by the country's highest federal administrative court came after German states appealed against bans imposed by local courts in Stuttgart and Duesseldorf in cases brought by environmental group DUH over poor air quality.

Ms. Merkel's government, which has come under fire for its close ties to the car industry, had lobbied against a ban, fearing it could anger millions of drivers and disrupt traffic in cities, with public transport not in a position to take up the slack.

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