

Open letter to the Municipality of Budapest and district councils to reduce oil consumption

Dear Lord Mayor!

Dear Deputy Mayors!

Dear District Mayors!

Joining the call of several European NGOs¹, we ask you to take action to reduce the use of oil products in Budapest without delay. This is also Budapest's responsibility as one of the participants in the *100 Climate-Neutral Cities 2030 Mission*² launched by the European Union.

In addition to Budapest's climate and environmental commitments, there is now another very timely reason to do all we can to reduce fossil fuel consumption as soon as possible. After all, what are the millions of euros that the EU has **so far** spent on helping Ukraine worth if such large sums are transferred **daily** to Putin's oil companies? In 2021 alone, the countries of the European Union paid €140 billion for oil from Russia, three times more than they spent on Russian gas.

When the whole world is already in flames from global warming, destruction and wars, it is far from enough to act with words, we need immediate action. Everyone must contribute to reducing oil use!

We urge the Municipality of Budapest and the district municipalities to take the following low-cost measures, which can be implemented in the short term, in line with the recommendations of the International Energy Agency³ and the European Commission⁴:

1. Conduct a broad awareness campaign on the harmful environmental impact of using oil products and the fact that by burning every litre of petrol or diesel we are contributing to the continuation of Russian aggression against Ukraine, which, in addition to human casualties, threatens the whole world with a serious economic crisis and skyrocketing energy and food prices. Please also inform citizens and companies how they can reduce their oil consumption.
2. Following the example of Brussels, Graz, Paris and other European cities, introduce a 30 km/h speed limit throughout the city (except on main roads).⁵
3. Enforce traffic calming (such as the 30 km/h speed limit) also through the use of simple physical means (e.g. painting signs on the asphalt or placing flower boxes).
4. Hold regular car-free Sundays, covering an increasing part of the city.⁶
5. Permanently open the section of the Lower Danube Embankment on the Pest side between Margit Bridge and Közraktár Street to pedestrians and cyclists, with the exclusion of car traffic.⁷
6. After the renovation of the Chain Bridge, allow only public transport vehicles, taxis, vehicles using differentiated signs, pedestrians and cyclists to cross the bridge.

¹ <https://www.pine.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/call-to-EC-for-limitation-of-oil-import-final-text-PL-and-EN-und-DE.pdf>

² https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/hu/ip_22_2591

³ <https://www.iea.org/reports/a-10-point-plan-to-cut-oil-use>

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/european-commission-and-iea-outline-key-energy-saving-actions-2022-apr-21_en

⁵ https://levegomunkacsoport.blog.hu/2021/10/05/jobb_az_etet_a_30_kilometer_oras_ovezetekben

⁶ https://levegomunkacsoport.blog.hu/2017/06/29/miert_nem_kiterjedtebb_az_automentes_nap_budapesten

⁷ <https://www.levego.hu/hirek/2020/11/22-civil-szervezet-keri-a-fopolgarmestertol-a-gyalogos-es-bringabaratt-pesti-also-rakpartot/>
<https://telex.hu/belfold/2020/10/21/pesti-rakpart-lezaras-gyalogos-kerekparos>

7. Accelerate modifications to give priority to public transport vehicles in traffic.
8. Adopt the Budapest city logistics concept and action plan and start implementing it as soon as possible.⁸
9. Prepare a timetable for the phasing out of internal combustion engine vehicles (cars, motorcycles, scooters, buses, commercial vehicles) in Budapest by 2035, with a short-term phase-out of the most polluting old (Euro 4 or worse diesel and Euro 3 or worse) vehicles in the city.⁹
10. Significantly expand paid parking, especially in areas where residential parking spaces are widely used as P+R.
11. Create a proper number of exclusive carsharing parking spaces.¹⁰
12. Establish carpool meeting points.¹¹
13. Where possible, ban cars from the street in front of schools during the school day (e.g. in the morning between 7.30 and 8.30). Where this is not possible, ban cars from stopping there during this period.¹²
14. Speed up the installation of bicycle lanes instead of car lanes (along the lines of the already proven solution on Bartók Béla Street in District XI), including by converting the bus lanes that will become unnecessary after the renovation of Metro 3 into bicycle lanes.
15. Require municipal companies and institutions to prepare a workplace mobility plan.¹³
16. Reorganise the traffic flow in densely populated neighbourhoods to ban through traffic, eliminating the use of residential streets as escape routes.

We look forward to receiving your response and action on the above as soon as possible.

Sincerely:

Veronika Kiss, EcosystemEvaluation
András Perger, Greenpeace Hungary
Máté Lukács, Walking Association
András Lukács, Clean Air Action Group
Adrienn Hajósy, Women for Lake Balaton Association
Veronika Móra, Ökotárs Foundation
Péter Marinov, Újlipótváros Superblock
Györgyi Újszászi, Protect the Future Association
János Árva, Velo Budapest

Budapest, 13 May 2022

⁸ The concept was ready years ago. One important element of the implementation should be the extension of the two-step small parcel delivery system, already proven in the city centre, to other districts, where parcels are delivered to a distribution warehouse and from there are transported to the recipient by micro-mobility means - on foot, by bicycle, by tricycle. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XPEQ-DDabIM>

⁹ A quick result could be achieved by banning internal combustion engine scooters as soon as possible, https://www.levego.hu/sites/default/files/e-ketkerekuek_kormanyhatarozathoz_javaslat_2016jun22.pdf

¹⁰ <https://g7.hu/elet/20220129/szukseg-van-meg-sajat-kocsira-vagy-jarhatunk-helyette-kozautoval/>

¹¹ https://levegomunkacsoport.blog.hu/2020/02/18/van_hova_fejleszteni_a_telekocsizast

¹² <https://www.facebook.com/levego/posts/9217207201630087>

¹³ <https://www.levego.hu/tevekenysegeink/kozlekedes/munkahelyi-kozlekedes/>