

Ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe

2005/0183(COD) - 11/12/2007 - Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Holger **KRAHMER** (ALDE, DE) and made some amendments to the Council's common position on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe. Parliament and Council agreed on a package of compromise amendments:

Smallest particles (PM_{2.5}): for particles with a diameter of less than 2.5 micrometres (PM_{2.5}), Parliament and Council agreed on an initial target value of 25µg/m³ from 2010. From 2015, this figure would become a binding limit. Parliament successfully argued for a second limit value - an indicative one - of 20µg/m³ to be achieved by 1 January 2020, five years after the first limit. The European Commission must review this indicative figure in 2013 to confirm the value laid down (20µg/m³) or to propose that it be altered.

Parliament also introduced the notion of an "exposure concentration obligation", meaning "a level fixed on the basis of the average exposure indicator with the aim of reducing harmful effects on human health, to be attained over a given period". When the Commission carries out its 2013 review of PM_{2.5}, this exposure concentration obligation must also be reviewed.

Largest particles (PM₁₀): no modification of the annual PM₁₀ limit value is included in the compromise package.

Postponing deadlines and exemptions: where, in a given zone or agglomeration, conformity with the limit values for PM₁₀ as specified in Annex XI cannot be achieved because of site-specific dispersion characteristics, adverse climatic conditions or trans-boundary contributions, a Member State shall be exempt from the obligation to apply those limit values until 3 years after the date of entry into force of the Directive provided that specific conditions are fulfilled and that the Member State shows that all appropriate measures have been taken at national, regional and local level to meet the deadlines.

In its assessment, the Commission shall take into account estimated effects on ambient air quality in the Member States, at present and in the future, of measures that have been taken by the Member States as well as estimated effects on ambient air quality of current Community measures and planned Community measures to be proposed by the Commission.

Air quality plans: the air quality plan may additionally include specific measures aiming at the protection of sensitive population groups, including children. These actions plans also include specific actions to protect sensitive populations. The Commission is invited to specifically publish examples of best practices for the protection of sensitive populations, including children, within those action plans.

Short-term action plans: these may include measures in relation to motor-vehicle traffic, construction works, ships at berth, and the use of industrial plants or products and domestic heating. Specific actions aiming at the protection of sensitive population groups, including children, may also be considered in the framework of those plans. For the first time before 2 years after entry into force of the Directive, and at regular intervals thereafter, the Commission shall publish examples of best practices for the drawing-up of short-term action plans, including examples of best practices for the protection of sensitive population groups, including children.

Situation of sampling points: the application in Member States of the criteria for selecting sampling points shall be monitored by the Commission so as to facilitate the harmonised application of those criteria throughout the European Union.

Review: as regards PM_{2.5}, the 2013 review shall be undertaken with a view to establishing a legally binding national exposure reduction obligation in order to replace the national exposure reduction target and to review the exposure concentration obligation, taking into account certain specified elements. The Commission shall take into account the feasibility of adopting a more ambitious limit value for PM_{2.5}, shall review the indicative limit value of the second stage for PM_{2.5} and consider confirming or altering that value. As part of the review, the Commission shall also prepare a report on the experience and on the necessity of monitoring of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}.

Average exposure indicator: the AEI for the year 2015 shall be the 3-year running mean concentration averaged over all those sampling points for the years 2013, 2014 and 2015. The AEI is used for the examination whether the exposure concentration obligation is met. Where the AEI in the reference year is 8.5 µg/m³ or less the exposure reduction target shall be zero. The reduction target shall be zero also in cases where the AEI reaches the level of 8.5 µg/m³ at any point of time during the period from 2010 to 2020 and is maintained at or below that level.

Transposition: 2 years after entry into force of the Directive.

Furthermore, **amended recitals** state the following:

- where possible modelling techniques should be applied to enable point data to be interpreted in terms of geographical distribution of concentration. This could serve as a basis for calculating the collective exposure of the population living in the area;
- the availability of necessary Community measures reflecting the chosen ambition level in the Thematic Strategy on air pollution to reduce emissions at source will be important for an effective emission reduction by the timeframe established in this Directive for compliance with the limit values and should be taken into account when assessing requests to postpone deadlines for compliance;
- the necessary Community measures to reduce emissions at source, in particular measures to improve the effectiveness of Community legislation on industrial emissions, to limit the exhaust emissions of engines installed in heavy duty vehicles, to further reduce the Member States' permitted national emissions of key pollutants and the emissions associated with refuelling of petrol cars at service stations, and to address the sulphur content of fuels including marine fuels should be duly examined as a priority by all institutions involved;
- full account will be taken of the ambient air quality objectives provided for in the Directive, where permits are granted for industrial activities pursuant to Council Directive 96/61/EC on integrated pollution prevention and control.