

# Thematic strategy on air pollution

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report drawn up by Dorette CORBEY (PES, NL) in response to the Commission's paper on the thematic strategy for air pollution. MEPs pointed out that air pollution can be effectively combated only by means of a coordinated package of measures - at European, national and local level - which is primarily geared to combating emissions of pollutants at source. They added that effective - and consistent - implementation of existing legislation was crucial for achieving improvements in air quality in 2020, and that many Member States did not meet the limit values under current legislation.

The report regretted that the strategy did not include any legal requirement to reduce particulate emissions but merely confined itself to suggesting indicative targets. It wanted to see more ambitious targets for reducing concentration levels of nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), volatile organic compounds (VOC) and fine particles (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). The committee called for the introduction of a PM<sub>2.5</sub> target value of 20 g/m<sup>3</sup> in 2010, turning into a limit value in 2015, and a long-term target value for PM<sub>2.5</sub> of 10 g/m<sup>3</sup> as recommended by the WHO. While supporting the Commission's proposed target exposure reduction of 20% for PM<sub>2.5</sub> in 2020, MEPs also wanted to see differentiated reduction targets which take account of the different initial levels of the Member States and the measures taken previously. The report added that there should be greater uniformity of the methods of measurement and calculation used by different Member States for fine particulate concentrations.

MEPs also wanted to see more focus on the sources of pollution, including agriculture, shipping, industry and transport systems. The Commission was urged to put forward a proposal for revision of the National Emission Ceilings Directive as soon as possible to make it "commensurate with the level of ambition advocated by Parliament". Lastly, the report called for the Commission to carry out a review in 2012 of the progress made in attaining the objectives of the strategy and to assess the potential in different sectors for further cost-effective reductions.