

| Basic information | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1994/0106(SYN) SYN - Cooperation procedure (historic) Ambient air quality: common strategy for assessment and management Repealed by 2005/0183(COD) Subject 3.70.02 Atmospheric pollution, motor vehicle pollution | Procedure completed |

| Key players | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| European Parliament | Committee responsible | | Rapporteur | Appointed |
| | ENVI Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection | | PAPAYANNAKIS Mihail (GUE) | 30/08/1994 |
| | Former committee responsible | | Former rapporteur | Appointed |
| | ENVI Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection | | PAPAYANNAKIS Mihail (GUE) | 30/08/1994 |
| | Former committee for opinion | | Former rapporteur for opinion | Appointed |
| | BUDG Budgets | | | |
| Council of the European Union | Council configuration | | Meetings | Date |
| | Environment | | 1949 | 1996-09-27 |
| | Environment | | 1832 | 1995-03-09 |
| | Environment | | 1861 | 1995-06-22 |
| | Health | | 1890 | 1995-11-30 |

| Key events | | | |
|------------|--|--|-------------------------|
| Date | Event | Reference | Summary |
| 04/07/1994 | Legislative proposal published | COM(1994)0109  | Summary |
| 26/09/1994 | Committee referral announced in Parliament | | |
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|------------|---|--|-------------------------|
| 09/03/1995 | Debate in Council | | |
| 23/05/1995 | Vote in committee | | Summary |
| 23/05/1995 | Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading | A4-0116/1995 | |
| 15/06/1995 | Debate in Parliament |  | Summary |
| 06/07/1995 | Modified legislative proposal published | COM(1995)0312  | Summary |
| 30/11/1995 | Council position published | 09514/3/1995 | Summary |
| 01/02/1996 | Committee referral announced in Parliament, 2nd reading | | |
| 07/05/1996 | Vote in committee, 2nd reading | | Summary |
| 07/05/1996 | Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading | A4-0155/1996 | |
| 21/05/1996 | Debate in Parliament |  | Summary |
| 24/06/1996 | Modified legislative proposal published | COM(1996)0311  | |
| 27/09/1996 | Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament | | Summary |
| 27/09/1996 | End of procedure in Parliament | | |
| 21/11/1996 | Final act published in Official Journal | | |

| Technical information | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Procedure reference | 1994/0106(SYN) |
| Procedure type | SYN - Cooperation procedure (historic) |
| Procedure subtype | Legislation |
| Amendments and repeals | Repealed by 2005/0183(COD) |
| Legal basis | EC Treaty (before Amsterdam) E 130S-p1 |
| Stage reached in procedure | Procedure completed |
| Committee dossier | ENVI/4/07353 |

| Documentation gateway | | | | |
|---|-----------|--|------------|-------------------------|
| European Parliament | | | | |
| Document type | Committee | Reference | Date | Summary |
| Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading | | A4-0116/1995 OJ C 166 03.07.1995, p. 0003 | 23/05/1995 | |
| Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading | | T4-0317/1995 OJ C 166 03.07.1995, p. 0161-0167 | 16/06/1995 | Summary |
| Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading | | A4-0155/1996 OJ C 166 10.06.1996, p. 0004 | 07/05/1996 | |
| Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading | | T4-0238/1996 OJ C 166 10.06.1996, p. 0054-0063 | 22/05/1996 | Summary |

Council of the EU

| Document type | Reference | Date | Summary |
|------------------|--|------------|---------|
| Council position | 09514/3/1995 OJ C 059 28.02.1996, p. 0024 | 30/11/1995 | Summary |

European Commission

| Document type | Reference | Date | Summary |
|--|---|------------|---------|
| Legislative proposal | COM(1994)0109  OJ C 216 06.08.1994, p. 0004 | 04/07/1994 | Summary |
| Modified legislative proposal | COM(1995)0312  OJ C 238 13.09.1995, p. 0010 | 06/07/1995 | Summary |
| Commission communication on Council's position | SEC(1995)1653  | 26/01/1996 | Summary |
| Modified legislative proposal | COM(1996)0311  | 24/06/1996 | |
| Follow-up document | COM(2002)0609  | 07/11/2002 | Summary |

Other institutions and bodies

| Institution/body | Document type | Reference | Date | Summary |
|------------------|---|--|------------|---------|
| EESC | Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report | CES0185/1995 OJ C 110 02.05.1995, p. 0005 | 22/02/1995 | Summary |

Additional information

| Source | Document | Date |
|---------------------|----------|------|
| European Commission | EUR-Lex | |

Final act

Directive 1996/0062
OJ L 296 21.11.1996, p. 0055

Summary

Ambient air quality: common strategy for assessment and management

1994/0106(SYN) - 26/01/1996 - Commission communication on Council's position

The Commission accepted all the amendments made by the Council in its common position which were compatible with the objectives of the directive.

Ambient air quality: common strategy for assessment and management

1994/0106(SYN) - 04/07/1994 - Legislative proposal

The Council's proposal for a directive seeks to provide a Community framework for evaluating the management and quality of ambient air, while leaving it up to the Member States to take specific measures to reduce pollution levels on their territory. The pollutants concerned - 14 in total - are those already governed by Community directives (sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, black smoke, suspended particulate matter, lead, ozone), plus the following substances: carbon monoxide, cadmium, acid fallout, benzene, poly-aromatic hydrocarbons, arsenic, fluoride and nickel. More specifically, the draft text lays down the principles to be applied in order to: - harmonize the evaluation of air quality; - set objectives concerning the quality of ambient air: limit values which must be achieved within the next ten or fifteen years will be laid down, together with alert thresholds at which the population must be informed; - maintain or improve the quality of ambient air: a) Member States must take measures and draw up action plans to improve air quality where limit values are exceeded; b) the long-term limit value must be achieved by a specific deadline where levels fall between the admissible value and the long-term limit value; c) the population must be informed when alert thresholds are exceeded; - ensure that the public receives more regular reports on atmospheric pollution, to be published by the Commission on the basis of information provided by the Member States. The timetable for the implementation of the directive sets two deadlines for adopting quality objectives, evaluation criteria and measuring methods, viz. 31 December 1996 for substances already governed by directives and 31 December 1999 for other substances.

Ambient air quality: common strategy for assessment and management

1994/0106(SYN) - 22/06/1995

The aim of the proposal, for which provision was made in the fifth Community environmental action programme, is to establish the basic principles of a common strategy to define objectives for ambient air quality designed to limit or prevent harmful effects on both the environment and health. The text specifies a timetable for the submission by the Commission of proposals on limit values and alert thresholds, listing pollutants that need to be given priority in those proposals: - no later than 31 December 1996 for sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, fine particulate matter such as soot, suspended particulate matter and lead; - as soon as possible and no later than 31 December 1999 for benzene, poly-aromatic hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide, cadmium, arsenic, nickel and mercury. In the case of ozone, proposals will be made before 1 March 1998 in accordance with Directive 92/72/EEC, and will need to take account of the specific formation mechanisms of that pollutant, for which purpose provision may be made for target values and/or limit values.

Ambient air quality: common strategy for assessment and management

1994/0106(SYN) - 30/11/1995

The Council formally adopted the common position on the proposal for a Council directive on ambient air quality assessment and management, further to the agreement reached by the Environment Council at its meeting on 22 and 23 June 1995.

Ambient air quality: common strategy for assessment and management

1994/0106(SYN) - 06/07/1995 - Modified legislative proposal

The Commission's amended proposal incorporates the amendments by the European Parliament which: - introduce the need for regular evaluation of quality objectives in the light of new scientific or technical developments; - amend the structure of Annex I making provision for a third series of substances to be considered at a later stage and for the priorities for substances in the Commission's initial proposal to be amended; - involve the European Environment Agency in the various duties allocated to the Commission. However, the Commission did not incorporate amendments concerning: - the participation of the European Parliament either in the process of submission of subsequent proposals by the Commission or in the work of the committee set up in the proposal; - the introduction of the critical load concept and the definition of maximum emission levels or the setting of such levels; - information for the public by the Member States; - the participation of non-governmental organizations (granting of formal status); - the shortening of deadlines for pollutants in the second part of Annex I; - setting an identical time limit for all substances.

Ambient air quality: common strategy for assessment and management

1994/0106(SYN) - 07/11/2002 - Follow-up document

The Commission has presented a report on the state of implementation of the ambient air quality Directives 80/779/EEC, 82/884/EEC and 85/203/EEC in the period 1997-1999. By April 2002 all 15 Member States had sent a report to the Commission on exceedances of limit values under the "old" air quality directives in the period 1997-1999. Not all reports received were fully consistent with the formal requirements of the directives. Four Member States reported exceedances of 80/779/EEC limit values, most of which concerned suspended particulates. Five Member States reported exceedance of the NO₂ limit value in 1997, three Member States in 1998 and four in 1999. None of the Member States reported exceedance of the limit value for lead. The importance of reporting under the old air quality directives has diminished considerably in recent years. This is the result of major improvement to EU legislation and reporting infrastructure on air quality, which is replacing the framework defined by the old directives. The implementation problems, which have already been described in a previous report, will be more effectively addressed under the new air quality

directives. However, until the years in which the new air quality thresholds for the protection of human health have to be met, 2005 and 2010 respectively, the old directives will continue to set the legal limit values for concentrations in the air at EU level. Annual limit values for SO₂ for the protection of ecosystems and for NO_x for the protection of vegetation came in force already in 2001.

Ambient air quality: common strategy for assessment and management

1994/0106(SYN) - 27/09/1996 - Final act

OBJECTIVE: This Directive, which was provided for in the fifth Community environmental action programme, sets out the basic principles of a common strategy for establishing ambient air quality objectives with a view to reducing or preventing harmful effects on the environment and health.

COMMUNITY MEASURE: Council Directive 96/62/EC on ambient air quality assessment and management. **SUBSTANCE:** The Directive's general aim is to define basic principles with a view to: - defining and establishing objectives for ambient air quality in the Community designed to avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole; - assessing the ambient air quality in Member States on the basis of common methods and criteria; - obtaining adequate information on ambient air quality and ensuring that it is made available to the public, inter alia by means of alert thresholds; - maintaining ambient air quality where it is good, and improving it in other cases. The Directive lays down a timetable for submission by the Commission of proposals for the setting of limit values and alert thresholds in respect of ambient air quality. The Commission must submit proposals: - no later than 31 December 1996 in respect of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, fine particulate matter such as soot, suspended particulate matter and lead; - no later than 31 December 1997 in respect of benzene and poly-aromatic hydrocarbons; - as soon as possible and no later than 31 December 1999 in respect of carbon monoxide, cadmium, arsenic, nickel and mercury. The proposals regarding ozone must be made before 1 March 1998, pursuant to Directive 92/72/EEC, and should take account of the specific formation mechanisms of this pollutant; to this end, provision may be made for target and/or limit values. The text contains provisions regarding the assessment of ambient air quality and stipulates that such assessments must be made throughout the territory of the Member States once limit values and alert thresholds have been set. The Member States are required to draw up action plans indicating the measures to be taken in the short term where there is a risk of the limit values being exceeded, in order to reduce that risk and to limit the duration of such an occurrence. Such plans may, depending on the individual circumstances, provide for measures to control and, where necessary, suspend activities, including motor vehicle traffic, which contribute to the limit values being exceeded. The Member States must also take measures in the zones in which the levels of one or more pollutants are higher than the limit value and, in zones and agglomerations in which pollutant levels are below the limit values, they must maintain those levels below the limit values and endeavour to preserve the best ambient air quality compatible with sustainable development. **ENTRY INTO FORCE:** 21/11/1996 **DEADLINE FOR TRANSPOSITION:** 21/05/1998

Ambient air quality: common strategy for assessment and management

1994/0106(SYN) - 16/06/1995 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

Adopting the report by Mr Papayannakis, the European Parliament approved the proposal subject to certain amendments recommending that: - benzene and carbon monoxide should be included in the list of pollutants to be dealt with immediately; - a third list of pollutants to be studied at a later stage (dioxin, volatile organic compounds, methane, ammonia, nitric acid, poly-aromatic hydrocarbons) should be added to the two lists in Annex I; - there was a need for more measures in more places (agglomerations with more than 100,000 inhabitants and highly industrialized zones) and more efficient technologies; - Member States' action plans should act as emergency plans if the limit values set by the experts were exceeded and should, if necessary, include temporary suspension of the industrial process causing the pollution; - the problem of cross-border pollution should be highlighted; - the European Environment Agency and the European Parliament should receive better quality information.

Ambient air quality: common strategy for assessment and management

1994/0106(SYN) - 22/05/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading

Parliament adopted the recommendation for second reading by Mr Mihail PAPAYANNAKIS (GUE/NGL, EL) on the common position established by the Council with a view to the adoption of a Council directive on ambient air quality assessment and management. Some amendments adopted by Parliament at first reading but not accepted by the Council were retabled by the European Parliament. These amendments mainly cover the following aspects: - the introduction of a definition of the "critical load" concept; - the definition of "target value": a level based on scientific knowledge concerning the critical load, i.e. the concentration above which direct adverse effects on human beings, animals, plants or goods may occur, fixed with the aim of averting or preventing more long-term harmful effects on human health and the environment; - in the definition of "agglomeration", the threshold of 100,000 (as opposed to 250,000) inhabitants should be considered as the population density justifying air quality assessment and management; - the fixing of a maximum period of five years for the temporary margin of tolerance for a limit value, where such a margin is laid down; - the shortening of the time-limits (from 2 years to 1 year) for the submission by the Member States of the air quality improvement plans; - the replacement of the regulatory committee (type IIIa) by an advisory committee responsible for updating the directive in line with scientific and technical progress, in accordance with the initial Commission proposal and the normal practice followed by Parliament; - the shortening of the deadlines for the submission of proposals on benzene and carbon monoxide and, by extension, the transfer of these pollutants to the first series in Annex I; - the incorporation in Annex I of a third series of pollutants to be considered at a later stage, given that the other two series set out in that Annex do not cover all the dangerous pollutants which should be subject to regulatory measures.

Ambient air quality: common strategy for assessment and management

1994/0106(SYN) - 30/11/1995 - Council position

The Council's common position incorporates 24 of the 37 amendments adopted by the European Parliament and included by the Commission in its amended proposal. The amendments included concerned: - an additional provision governing the revision of limit values and alert thresholds; - a new recital relating to the need for research into the combined effects of pollutants and climate; - the term "sampling"; - the role of the European Environment Agency in implementing the directive; - coordination of measures adopted under this directive with those implemented in connection with the directive on integrated pollution control; - a reference to short-term measures, including the suspension of industrial activities, when there is a risk that limit values will be exceeded; - the inclusion of particulate matter of less than 10 micrometres in Annex I (the Council deleted fluoride and acid deposits and added mercury, poly-aromatic hydrocarbons and nickel in general). However, the Council did not accept the amendments concerning: - a third series of pollutants to be considered at a later stage; - shorter deadlines for proposals relating to CO and benzene; - shorter deadlines for finalizing and submitting air quality improvement plans. The Council also: - abandoned the idea of labeling zones on the basis of the air quality; - introduced the concept of a "target value" for ozone (and only ozone) due to the specific nature of this pollutant; - defined the term "agglomeration"; - added a list of factors to be taken into account when setting limit values/alert thresholds (new Annex); - added a new provision making preliminary data on levels of pollutants available before the specific directives provided for in the directive enter into force; - introduced the principle of maintaining air quality in zones where levels are below the limit value; - replaced the advisory committee by a type IIIa regulatory committee responsible for adapting to technical progress.

Ambient air quality: common strategy for assessment and management

1994/0106(SYN) - 22/02/1995 - Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report

The ESC endorsed the thrust of the proposal for a directive and the proposed rules, subject to the following proposed changes. It felt that the dangers and potential damage of atmospheric pollution made the issue and implementation of this directive a matter of urgency. It was pleased to note that the proposal for a directive provided for a programme for the adoption of air quality objectives at European level. It had recently called for a programme of this kind in its Opinion on the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive. It regretted that there was no reference in the draft Directive to the problems of cross-border atmospheric pollution. This applied particularly to cross-border atmospheric pollution within the European Union. Where bilateral or multilateral agreements existed on information, compensation or arbitration procedures, they should be applied in relation to the implementation of the draft Directive too. The Union's bodies should also work for the conclusion of such agreements. It might be appropriate for the information referred to in Article 3 to be exchanged between Member States as well as communicated to the Commission. It would also be right to require the Member States to make such communications public, subject to the relevant European and national laws. The extent to which the programme for the establishment of quality objectives provided for in the framework directive was compatible with the existing European ground-level concentration limits and the progress achieved in reducing concentrations of individual pollutants needed particular study. Article 5(2) of the draft was illogical: establishing which areas had poor or improving air quality required measurement. Initial measurements should therefore also be required outside the areas listed in Article 5(2). Subsequent measurements could then, in accordance with the proposal, be restricted. The Member States should be empowered and required to work for an improvement in air quality even where no Community limit values as yet existed. Such measures could be based on WHO values. In Article 7(3)(b) the proposal restricted itself to requiring that plans and programmes for the implementation of quality objectives be made available to the public. Participation in the preparation of these programmes and in the implementation of the air quality objectives in the Member States could also be of particular interest to the public. The ESC proposed that, in addition to the advisory committee of official representatives of the Member States, a 'committee of experts' be set up. Annex 1: the ESC suggested that carbon monoxide and benzene be included in the list for action in the short-term (31 December 1996) and thus that these pollutants be moved from Annex 1(2) to 1(1).

Ambient air quality: common strategy for assessment and management

1994/0106(SYN) - 27/09/1996

The Council adopted the framework directive by unanimous agreement.