Basic information

2018/2792(RSP) RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects	Procedure completed
Europe that protects: Clean air for all **Subject** 3.70.02 Atmospheric pollution, motor vehicle pollution	

Key players

European Parliament	**Committee responsible**	**Rapporteur**	**Appointed**
	ENVI Environment, Climate and Food Safety	GIRLING Julie (PPE) DANCE Seb (S&D) WIŚNIEWSKA Jadwiga (ECR) BEARDER Catherine (ALDE) HAZEKAMP Anja (GUE/NGL) TAYLOR Keith (Verts/ALE) EVI Eleonora (EFDD)	26/06/2018 26/06/2018 26/06/2018 26/06/2018 26/06/2018 26/06/2018 26/06/2018

European Commission	**Commission DG**	**Commissioner**
	Secretariat-General	JUNCKER Jean-Claude

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
14/02/2019	Debate in Parliament		
13/03/2019	Decision by Parliament	T8-0186/2019	Summary
13/03/2019	Results of vote in Parliament		
13/03/2019	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2018/2792(RSP)

Procedure type	RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects
Procedure subtype	Debate or resolution on oral question/interpellation
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 142-p5
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/8/13846

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Amendments tabled in committee		PE629.388	17/10/2018	
Motion for a resolution		B8-0156/2019	11/03/2019	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T8-0186/2019	13/03/2019	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2019)444	30/08/2019	

Europe that protects: Clean air for all

2018/2792(RSP) - 13/03/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 446 votes to 146 with 79 abstentions a resolution tabled by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety on a Europe that protects: clean air for all.

Parliament pointed out that the EU's legal emissions limits are still above what has been recommended by the WHO, and that the European Environment Agency (EEA) estimates that more than 400 000 premature deaths attributable to air pollution are reported in the EU every year. 98 % of the EU's urban population is exposed to ozone levels that exceed WHO guidelines. In 2018, six Member States were referred to the European Court of Justice for failing to comply with EU air quality standards, and 29 infringement cases are currently underway in 20 Member States for failure to comply with EU air quality limit values.

Parliament pointed to the link between air pollution and inequality, as exposure is usually higher for more vulnerable segments of society, and also to the growing body of scientific evidence on the impact of traffic-related air pollution on cognitive development in children.

General remarks

Parliament asked for a strengthening of the ***multi-level governance approach*** where all actors take responsibility for measures that can and should be taken at their level. In the same vein, it considered that policymaking in the Commission should be more joined up, and regretted that, despite being competent for air pollution, DG Environment's objectives are often undermined by policies coming out of other departments. The competent authorities in Member States were called upon to take a comprehensive approach to air pollution, taking into account farming and food production systems, nature conservation, climate change, energy efficiency, mobility and urban planning, and to prioritise pollution mitigation approaches which have co-benefits in other domain.

Members called on the Commission to:

- carry out an ambitious update of the Ambient Air Quality Directive, matching the latest WHO limit and target values for PM, SO2 and O3 and setting a short-term value for PM2.5;

- prioritise the assessment of the measures adopted by the Member States with a view to improving air quality in the context of infringement procedures, and

- step up its efforts to check compliance at Member State level, including with the standards of the Real Driving Emissions test procedure under Commission Regulation (EU) 2017/1151 on type approval of vehicles.

On the specific issue of ***particulate matter*** (PM), the resolution noted that the most recent EEA estimates of the health impacts attributable to exposure to air pollution indicate that PM 2.5 concentrations in 2014 were responsible for about 399 000 premature deaths originating from long-term exposure in the EU-28. It urged the Commission to act without delay on PM2.5 by proposing the introduction of more stringent compliance values for these particles in EU air quality legislation, as recommended by the WHO. Members recalled that approximately two thirds of Member States are currently in non-compliance with PM10 and NO2 limit values and that one in five exceed the PM2.5 target value.

Parliament went on to state that it regretted the ***flexibility mechanism*** introduced under Directive (EU) 2016/2284 on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants, noting that in 2018, 11 Member States requested adjustments to their national emission ceilings. The Commission was asked to limit the use of emission inventory adjustment to the strict minimum and to consider whether Member States have taken action to compensate for possible unforeseen emissions from certain sectors before applying for an adjustment of emission inventories.

Members also regretted the ***criteria for locating sampling points*** to measure pollutants in accordance with Directive 2008/50/EC, which leave Member States some leeway and risk not achieving the aim of representativeness. They called on the Commission to analyse the impact this leeway has on the comparability of samples and its direct consequences.

Parliament made some observations on specific sectors, inter alia:

Transport: cutting air pollution and reducing CO2 emissions from the transport sector are twin challenges in urban areas. Members underlined that it is crucial to incentivise the market for electric vehicles and to issue Member States with guiding recommendations to encourage them to implement fiscal incentives for zero- and low-emission vehicles. They also recommended, inter alia: (i) reducing access of private cars to urban centres and investing in public transportation; (ii) promoting active transport modes, such as cycling and walking; (iii) incentivising low- and zero- emission trucks; (iv) the increased use of digital technologies in the implementation of the 'polluter pays' principle, such as e-tolling and e-ticketing; (v) green public procurement through the purchasing of zero- and low-emission vehicles; (vi) promoting the use of emission control areas (ECAs) in EU waters.

Agriculture: Parliament called Con the co-legislators to include in the future CAP, measures to enable farmers to reduce the overall air pollutant emissions of the agricultural sector. Current food and farming systems are responsible for excessive ammonia (NH3), nitrous oxide (N2 O) and methane emissions, and 94 % of ammonia emissions and 40 % of methane emissions come from agricultural activities.

Energy: Members wanted to encourage the uptake of efficient domestic heating solutions based on renewable energy in order to contribute to curbing the release of air pollutants from households across the Union.

Air pollution monitoring: the resolution stressed the need to support research and certification at EU level for innovative smart multi-sensor systems for both indoor and outdoor air quality monitoring. It also invited Member States to set up independent air quality boards to conduct analyses on air quality performance and assess the adequacy of measures adopted.