



New Ambient Air Quality Directive

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EU clean air policy



Ambient Air Quality (AAQ) Directives

Maximum concentrations of
air polluting substances

(PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, NO₂, O₃, SO₂, CO, C₆H₆, BaP, As, Cd, Ni, Pb)

**SETTING OBJECTIVES
FOR GOOD AIR QUALITY**

**REDUCING EMISSIONS
OF POLLUTANTS**



National Emission reduction Commitments Directive

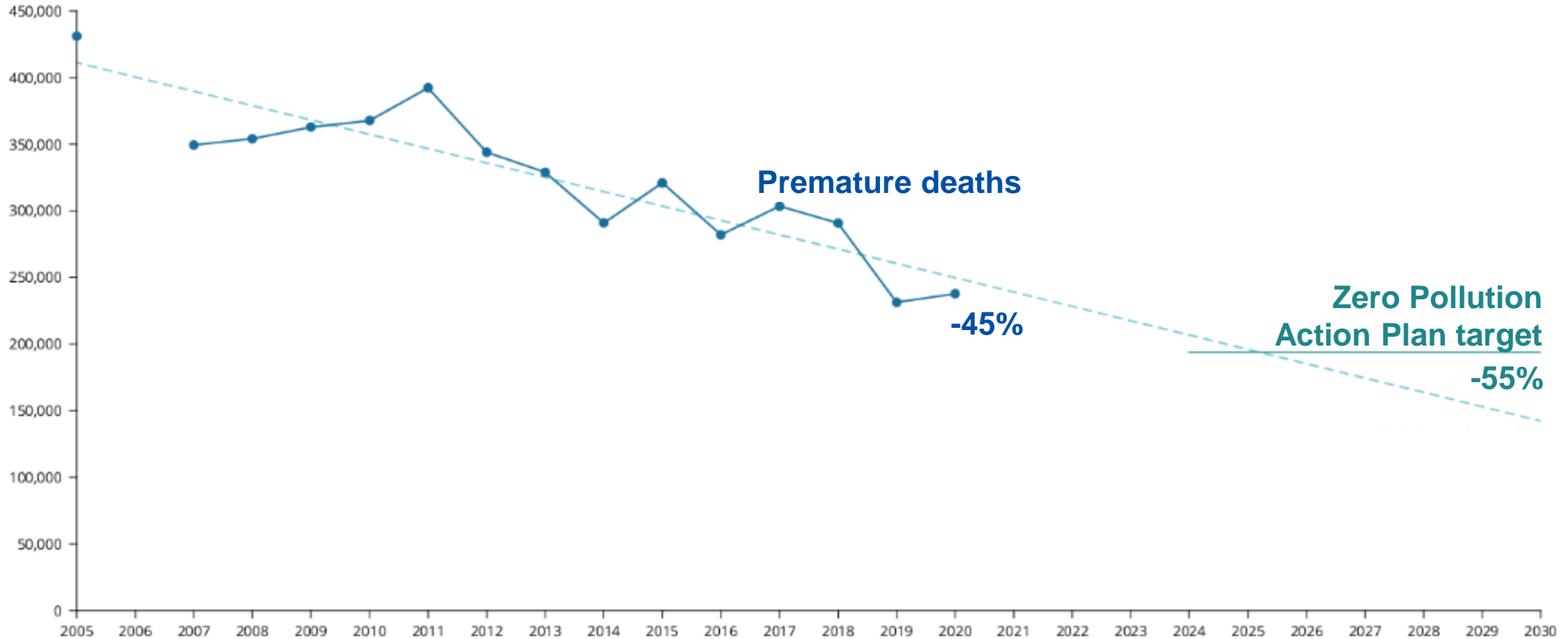
National emission totals
(SO₂, NO_x, NMVOC, PM_{2.5}, NH₃)

Source-specific emission standards

- IE Directive
- MCP Directive
- Eco-design Directive
- Energy efficiency
- Euro and fuel standards

Does EU clean air policy work? Yes ... but ...

Number of premature deaths attributed to fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5})



Why is air pollution (still) a problem in the EU?

- **Health impacts:** Air pollution is the number one environmental cause of health impacts in the EU, with significant morbidity effect and estimates of up to **300 000 premature deaths per year**.
- **Social impacts:** It disproportionately affects **vulnerable groups** - children, elderly, persons with pre-existing conditions, socioeconomically disadvantaged.
- **Environmental impacts:** It causes **eutrophication** (74%) and **acidification** (5%) of ecosystem area exceeding critical loads, + crop and forest damage.
- **Economic impacts:** It causes annual costs at **€231-853 billion (bn)** in health impacts, €8 bn in lost workdays, €4-12 bn in ecosystems damage, €10-11 bn in crop yield loss, €19 bn in forest damage, €1 bn in damage to buildings.
- and **Europeans care about the air they breathe (Eurobarometer 2022)**

Ambient air quality : revision of EU Rules

Adopted on 26 October 2022:

- Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe (recast) - **COM/2022/542 final**
- Commission Staff Working Document Impact Assessment Report - **SWD/2022/545 final** - and the corresponding Executive Summary - **SWD/2022/345 final**

Supported by

- **Study to support the impact assessment** for a revision of the EU Ambient Air Quality Directives – Final Report & Appendix + Robustness checks and Sensitivity Analysis
- Study on systematic assessment of **monitoring of other air pollutants** not covered under Directives 2004/107/EC and 2008/50/EC

EU policy making cycle (key elements, stylised)

- Evaluation / fitness check
- Monitor, and report on implementation
- Regularly garner stakeholder input / reflections
- If needed: enforcement action by the Commission
- Implementation and compliance support



- Implementation by Member States
- Establish monitoring system
- Implementation strategy by the Commission
- Transposition / conformity check by Com.
- Transposition by Member States



**Adoption
in Q4
2024!**

- Roadmap and inception impact assessment
- Stakeholder consultation
- Impact assessment
- Draft legislative proposal
- Adoption by College of Commissioners



- Position by the European Parliament
- Position by the Council
- Negotiation between co-legislators
- Agreement on final legislative act and adoption**
- Publication in the Official Journal
Directive - EU - 2024/2881 - EN - EUR-Lex

the agreement

What does ~~our proposal~~ improve?

Environment & health

- ✓ Zero pollution objective at the latest by 2050
- ✓ Intermediate 2030 EU air quality standards
- ✓ Update of **other air quality metrics**, including more refined average exposure obligations
- ✓ Regular review mechanism

Monitoring & assessment

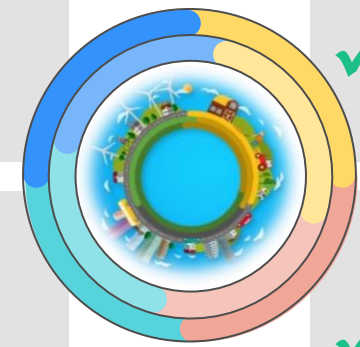
- ✓ Refined approach to **air quality monitoring**, increased use of **air quality modelling**
- ✓ Additional information on representativeness of **sampling points**, better inform air quality action
- ✓ Monitoring **pollutants of emerging concern** (e.g. ultrafine particles, black carbon, ammonia)

Governance & enforcement

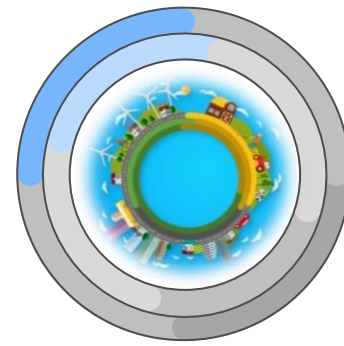
- ✓ Air quality plans to be more effective in **ending** and **preventing exceedances** of EU standards
- ✓ **Improved enforceability**: new provisions on access to justice, compensation and penalties
- ✓ More **transboundary cooperation** on air quality

Information & communication

- ✓ More **up-to-date air quality information**
- ✓ Requirements for **air quality indices** to provide hourly reporting of available air quality data
- ✓ **Informing the public** about possible health impacts and provide recommendations



Environment & health: 'air quality standards'



EU air quality standards – 'long-term' averages (Annex I)

Pollutant	Period	Until 2030	As of 2030		WHO 'Guideline'
PM _{2.5}	(calendar year)	25 µg/m ³	10 µg/m³		5 µg/m ³
PM ₁₀	(calendar year)	40 µg/m ³	20 µg/m³		15 µg/m ³
NO ₂	(calendar year)	40 µg/m ³	20 µg/m³		10 µg/m ³
SO ₂	(calendar year)	-	20 µg/m³		-
Benzene	(calendar year)	5 µg/m ³	3.4 µg/m³		1.7 µg/m ³
Pb (lead)	(calendar year)	0.5 µg/m ³	0.5 µg/m³		0.5 µg/m ³
As (arsenic)	(calendar year)	6 ng/m ³	6.0 ng/m³		6.6 ng/m ³
Cd (cadmium)	(calendar year)	5 ng/m ³	5.0 ng/m³		5 ng/m ³
Ni (Nickel)	(calendar year)	20 ng/m ³	20 ng/m³		25 ng/m ³
Benzo(a)Pyrene	(calendar year)	1 ng/m ³	1.0 ng/m³		0.12 ng/m ³
Ozone	(5yr avg AOT 40)	18.000 µg/m ³ x h	18.000 µg/m³ x h	(target value)	-
Ozone	(5yr avg AOT 40)	6.000 µg/m ³ x h	6.000 µg/m³ x h	(long-term obj.)	-

Air quality roadmaps, plans & short-term action plans

- In cases where a limit or target value is exceeded or there is a concrete risk of exceeding the alert or information thresholds for certain pollutants, the text requires member states to establish:
 - an **air quality roadmap** ahead of the deadline if between 2026 and 2029 the level of pollutants exceeds the limit or target value to be attained by 2030
 - **air quality plans** for areas where the levels of pollutants exceed the limit and target values set out in the directive after the deadline
 - **short-term action plans** setting out emergency measures (e.g. restricting the circulation of vehicles, suspending construction works, etc.) to reduce the immediate risk to human health in areas where the alert thresholds will be exceeded
- The co-legislators agreed to include softer requirements for establishing air quality and short-term action plans in cases where the potential to reduce certain pollutant concentrations is severely limited due to local geographical and meteorological conditions.
- When it comes to **ozone**, in cases where there is no significant potential to reduce ozone concentrations at local or regional level, the co-legislators agreed to exempt member states from establishing air quality plans, on the condition that they provide the Commission and the public with a detailed justification for such exemption.

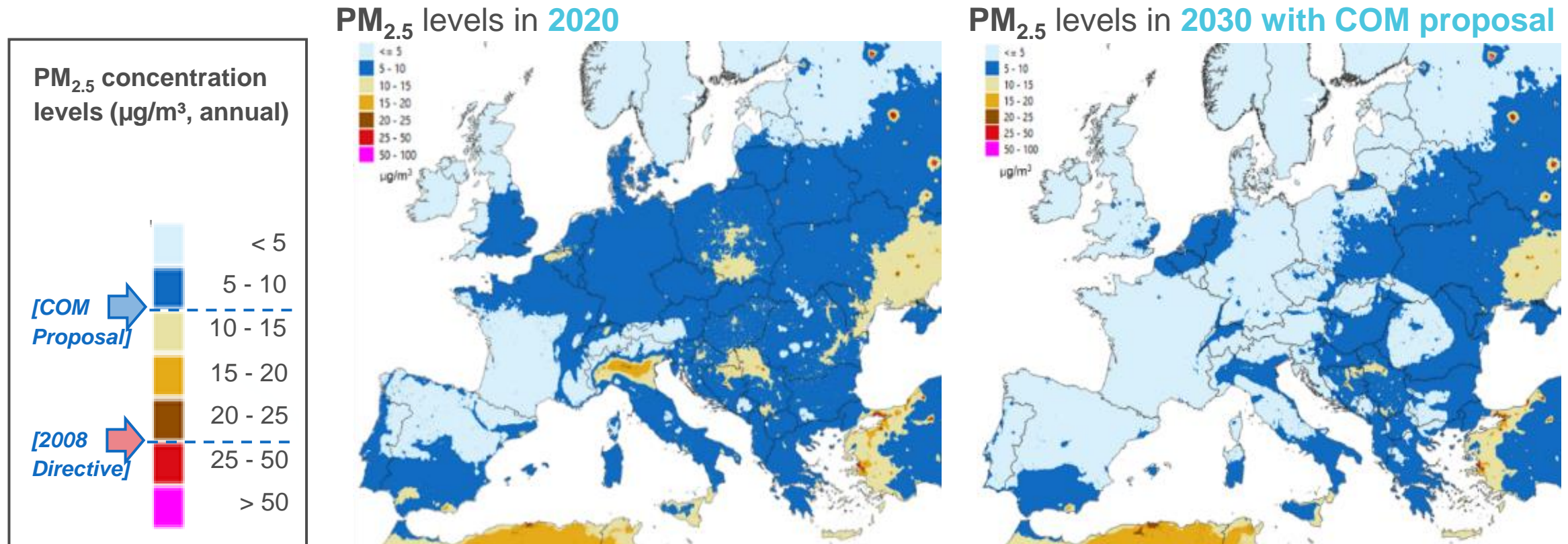
Implementing acts in the political agreement

The Commission will be tasked with providing further technical details on:

- **Modelling applications** (including how results from modelling applications and indicative measurements shall be taken into account when assessing air quality and how potential exceedances that are identified by those assessment methods can be verified) + determining the **spatial representativeness** of sampling points;
- Demonstration and subtraction of exceedances attributable to **natural sources** (including information to be provided by MS);
- Methodology for determining contributions from the re-suspension of particulates following **winter-sanding or winter-salting** of roads (including information to be provided by MS);
- Requirements for **projections** performed for the purposes of postponement of attainment deadlines + information to be included in **implementation reports**;
- **Reporting** of air quality information to the Commission.

What will the new Directive achieve?

First and foremost, the air quality will improve across the European Union.



Based on GAINS/EMEP/ μ EMEP. Note that these maps show the total concentration levels, and include also contributions from natural sources of wind blown dust and sea salt.

What will the new Directive achieve?

- **Health benefits:** Reduces **annual mortality** (premature deaths) linked to air pollution by more than 75% (and by 50% more than without this policy)⁽¹⁾
 - also reduces **related morbidity** (illnesses) by 50% more than without this policy.
- **Social benefits:** Stricter limit values particularly protect sensitive populations and vulnerable groups; Directive requires additional health impact information.
- **Environmental benefits:** Decreases in **eutrophication (-22%)** and **acidification (-63%)** of ecosystems; less crop losses and damage to forests.
- **Economic benefits:** Benefits far outweigh the costs, with annual total gross **benefits estimated at €42 bn** (and up to €121 bn depending on the valuation method) in 2030, compared to measures that costs less than €6 bn annually.

Funding programmes in the European Union

[New Guide for EU Funding Programmes for the environment - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

[EU funding programmes - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)



Contact us:

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Thank you

