



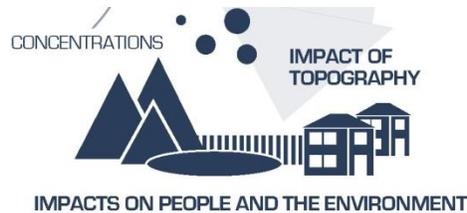
EU Clean Air Policy

XVIII Annual meeting of the EUROSAI Working Group on Environmental Auditing

28 September 2020

*European Commission
Clean Air*

EU clean air policy framework



Ambient Air Quality (AAQ) Directives

Maximum concentrations of air polluting substances (PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, SO₂, NO₂, O₃ + 8 more)

SETTING OBJECTIVES FOR GOOD AIR QUALITY

REDUCING EMISSIONS OF POLLUTANTS



National Emission Ceilings Directive

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



EU-28 reduction targets btw. 2005 and 2030

Source-specific emission standards

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

Examples of measures to reduce air pollution

Transport



Reliable, affordable and clean **public transport** such as electric buses and trams and new Euro VI

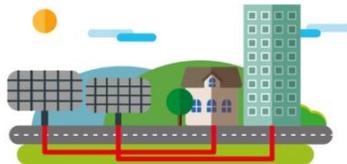


Traffic restrictions such as low-emission zones, reduced speed limits and congestion charges

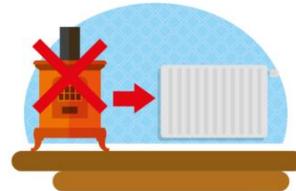


Extensive and safe **cycling networks**, abundant bike-parking facilities with easy access to public transport

Power & heat / Industry



City or district heating, using heat from existing industry or renewable energy sources



Promoting substitution of old, dirty **stoves and boilers** with clean models, and banning **dirty fuels for household heating/cooking**

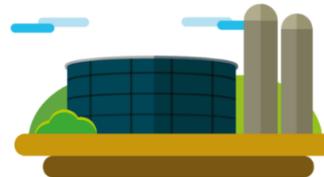


Implementing **cleaner industrial processes**

Agriculture



Replacing urea-based fertilisers with **ammonium nitrate-based ones**



closed manure storage



Improved livestock feeding strategies so that animals produce less ammonia-rich manure



Fitness Check of the AAQ Directives

Scope: Evidence-based, retrospective analysis of whether EU actions are fit for purpose; identify regulatory burdens, overlaps, gaps, inconsistencies

Evidence:

- Literature review with more than 600 sources of evidence;
- Analysis of reported data as reported over the **period 2008 to 2018**;
- An **open public consultation** generated 489 responses;
- Replies to a **targeted questionnaire** from 43 stakeholders;
- Two **stakeholder workshops** (June 2018; January 2019);
- Seven **case studies** (in BG, DE, ES, IE, IT, SE, SK);
- Bespoke modelling and computations (**analysis of costs and benefits**);
- Desk review of **EU and national legislation**, as relevant.

Criteria: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Coherence, EU Value Added



Four key conclusions

The AAQ Directives are ***broadly fit for purpose*** (with scope for improvements). In particular:

- The **monitoring network** benefits from continuous investment to ensure it is well maintained; additional guidance would be useful to address ambiguities.
- EU **air quality standards** have been instrumental in reducing concentrations and exceedance levels albeit subject to, at times considerable, delays.
- **Reliable and comparable information** is available, but with further scope to make use of e-Reporting possibilities, including an acceleration of reporting.
- The **clear requirement to take remedial action** when and where exceedances are observed has been decisive in triggering improvement in air quality.



Seven key lessons learnt

- Air quality remains a major **health and environmental concern**;
- Air quality standards have been instrumental, and **partially effective**, to reduce pollution;
- Current EU standards are **less ambitious than scientific advice**;
- **Limit values** have been more effective than other types of air standards;
- Legal **enforcement action** by European Commission, and civil society, works *(the effectiveness of the latter being linked to the functioning of access to justice at national level and the dynamism of NGOs)*;
- Scope to further harmonise **monitoring, modelling**, and **air quality plans**;
- Not all reported data equally useful, **e-reporting** allows for further efficiency.

European Court of Auditors Special Report



Recommendations to the Commission:

1. Act more effectively on the implementation of the AAQ Directive
2. Consider a higher level of ambition of the Directive
3. Aim to align other EU policies with air quality objectives
4. Contribute to improve air quality information to EU citizens

What's next?

The European Green Deal announces that the Commission will adopt a **zero pollution action plan** for air, water and soil in 2021.

The Commission will draw on the **lessons learnt from the evaluation** of the current air quality legislation.

The Commission will also propose to strengthen provisions on **monitoring, modelling** and **air quality plans** to help local authorities achieve cleaner air.

The Commission will notably propose to revise **air quality standards** to align them more closely with the World Health Organization recommendations.





Other immediate priorities

Exceedances gap persists – continued push towards **full implementation** of existing clean air legislation (see also COM (2018) 330 ‘Cleaner Air for All’).

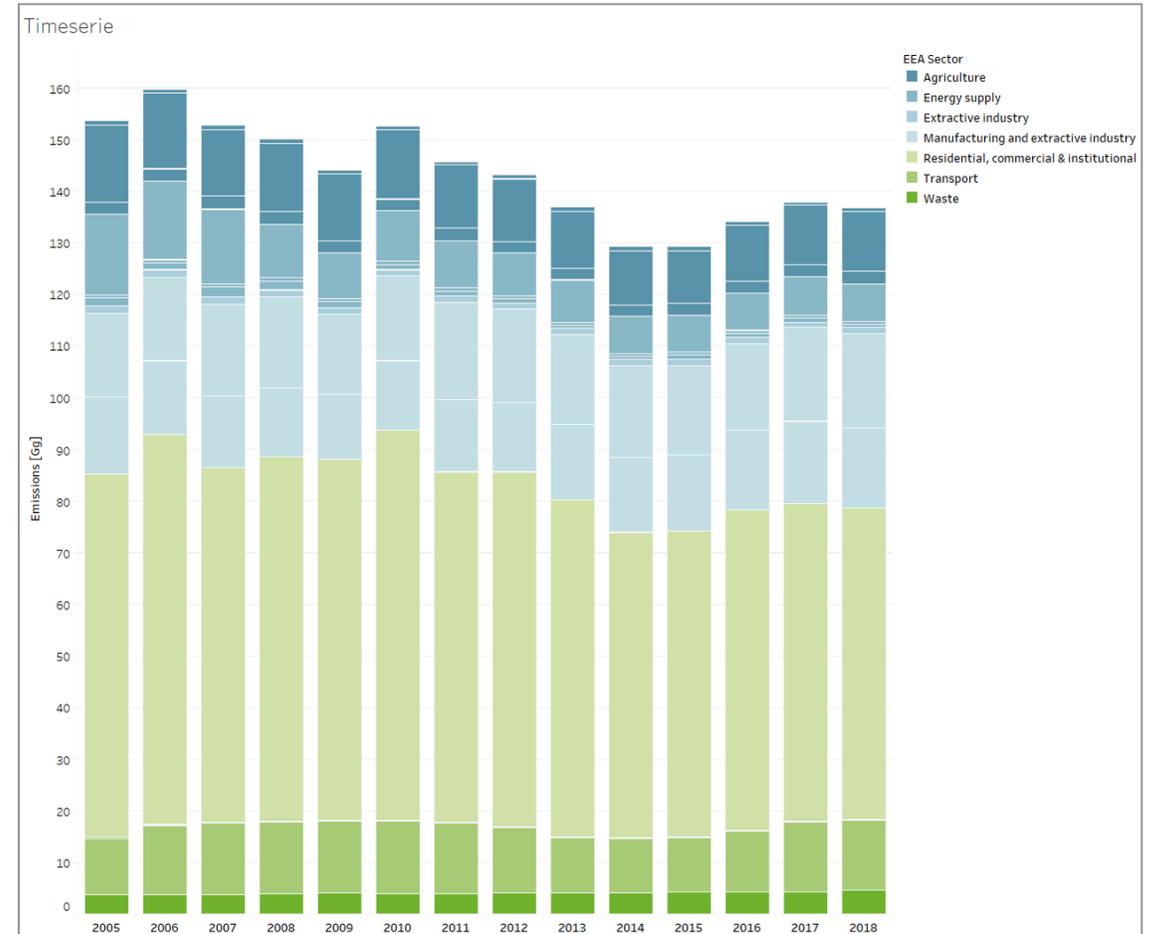
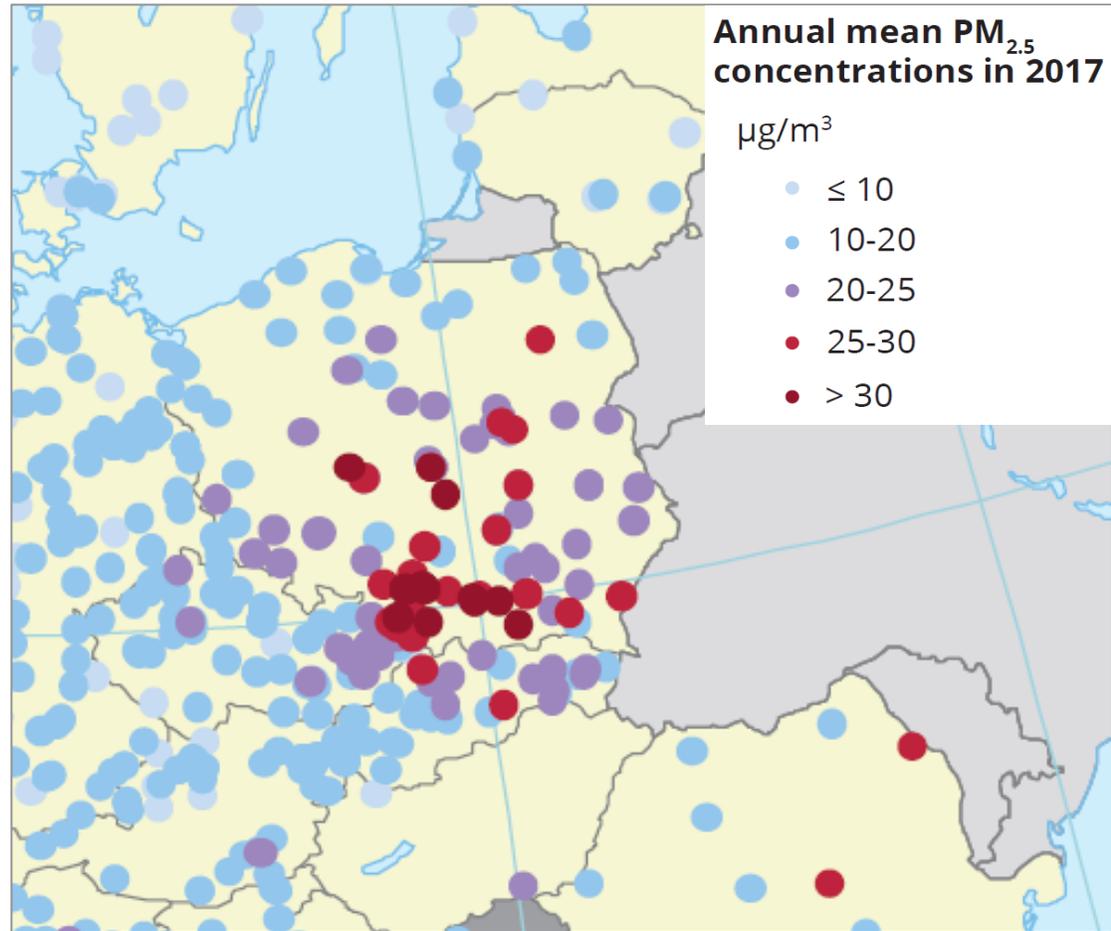
Continued enforcement action: currently, 31 cases addressing 17 Member States (+ UK) as relates PM₁₀, NO₂, and SO₂ exceedances, as well as monitoring gaps

EU funding for clean air: specific allocations for air quality of EUR 2 billion (2014-2020)
plus substantial indirect contributions, under cohesion policy (related to energy, transport, ...) and CAP (agriculture)
plus LIFE projects, Horizon 2020, EFSI funding, CEF funding, Urban Innovation Actions, ...
plus funds allocated in the recovery efforts have scope to improve air quality further, ...

Implementation support: bringing together Member States, regions and cities, incl. Environmental Implementation Review, Clean Air Dialogues, Clean Air Forum

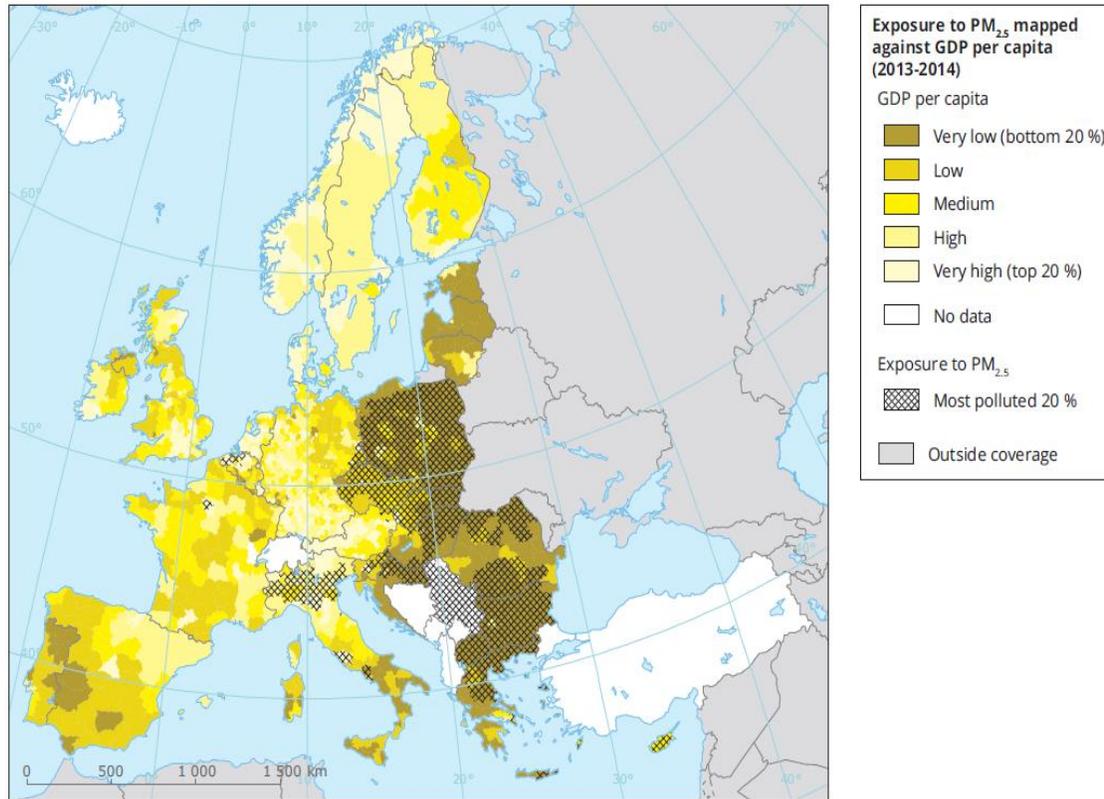
National Air Pollution Control Programmes: to set a 2030 clean air trajectory, with link to key emission sources, which will reduce exceedances above WHO Guidelines

Particulate matter - PM_{2.5} in Poland



Source(s): EEA Report – Air quality in Europe 2019 (left); EEA National Emission Ceilings Directive emissions data viewer 1990-2018 (right)

Exposure to PM_{2.5} & GDP per capita



- 43 100 premature deaths

- 517 700 years of life lost

... attributable to PM_{2.5} in Poland in 2016

- Fuel & energy poverty linked to air pollution

Thank you

env-air@ec.europa.eu