

Emissions from medium combustion plants: Member states confirm agreement with the Parliament

The Committee of Permanent Representatives (Coreper) of the Council confirmed the agreement with the European Parliament on a new directive to **limit the emissions of certain pollutants** from medium combustion plants. These new rules are part of the **clean air** legislative package, which aims at improving air quality in the EU.

The new directive sets emission limit values for certain pollutants, namely sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and dust. These limits will be applied for **new and existing combustion plants of medium size** (between 1 and 50 MW).

"To improve the quality of the air we breathe we need to tackle air pollution at source. With this directive we complete the regulatory framework for the emissions from the combustion sector. This is a key piece that was missing and that will help to significantly reduce the potential risks to human health and the environment", said Latvian Minister Kaspars Gerhards, president of the Environment Council under Latvian presidency.

[Commission proposal for a directive on emissions from medium combustion plants](#)

Deadlines

Compared to the initial proposal from the European Commission, the agreed text introduces **differentiated regimes** for existing combustion plants, based on their size. This aims at reducing costs for the smallest plants whilst maintaining a high level of environmental protection.

Limits will be applied to bigger existing plants (5-50 MW) from 2025 and as from 2030 to smaller ones (1-5 MW). New plants will need to comply with the limits after a transposition period of two years following entry into force.

Extended compliance deadlines until 2030 may be granted to some plants, in particular to:

- district heating systems
- plants firing biomass as their main fuel
- plants being part of small isolated systems (for instance, on islands)
- specific plants linked to a national gas transmission system

Other changes to the proposal

In zones not complying with EU air quality limit values, member states shall assess the need to apply **stricter limits** for individual plants.

The agreed text includes rules to monitor the emissions of another pollutant: **carbon monoxide**. The Commission will take the relevant results into account in a future review.

Moreover, the Commission is called to assess in a review the benefits of setting minimum **energy efficiency** standards in line with best available techniques.

Closing a gap

While smaller and bigger plants are already covered by respective EU directives, the emissions from medium combustion plants are **not yet regulated at EU level**. The new rules aim at **filling that gap** to complete the regulatory framework for the combustion sector, as an important source of certain pollutants.

Background and next steps

The Commission submitted its proposal to the Council and the European Parliament on 18 December 2013 as part of the

'Clean Air Programme for Europe'. The presidency of the Council and the Parliament reached a provisional agreement in a trilogue meeting on 23 June 2015 which has now been confirmed by the Coreper.

The new piece of legislation will now be submitted to the European Parliament for a vote at first reading and then to the Council for final adoption.

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