



Press Release
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THE HEALTH COMMUNITY'S REACTION TO THE RELEASE OF THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSAL ON VEHICLE POLLUTION EMISSION STANDARDS EURO 7/VII – HEALTH MUST BE A PRIORITY

The Commission's proposal on the vehicle pollution emission standards Euro 7/VII is disappointing for the health community and will increase the health burden caused by air pollution from road transport. The European decision-makers must vote for more stringent emissions limits for vehicles.

Today, the European Commission released [its proposal](#) for the *Euro 7/VII vehicle pollution emission standards for cars, vans, and heavy-duty vehicles*. This proposal has been under development since 2018 and was initially expected by December 2021.

The European Public Health Alliance (EPHA), the Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL), the European Academy of Paediatrics (EAP UEMS SP), the European Respiratory Society (ERS), the Hungarian Alliance of Patients' Organisations (BEMOSZ), the Italian Society of Doctors for the Environment (ISDE Italia), the Polish Society for Health Programs, (PTPZ) and the French National Association for the Improvement of Air Quality and the Defense of Victims of Pollution *Respire* are greatly concerned by the lack of ambition on the pollutant limits in the Commission's proposal.

The low level of ambition of Euro 7/VII emission standards undermines the EU's commitments to protecting the health of Europeans. Indeed, Euro 7/VII is a necessary element of the *European Green Deal* and is linked with the revision of the Ambient Air Quality Directives (AAQD).

One million additional polluting cars are placed on EU's roads every month, and they will remain for decades to come. It will be even more difficult for Member States to meet stringent revised World Health Organisation Air Quality Guidelines. They require large reductions in ambient nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter with a diameter of 10 and 2.5 micrometres or less (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) concentrations of which road transport is one of the main sources. The [European Environment Agency \(EEA\) estimates](#) that, in 2019, approximately 307,000 premature deaths were attributable to PM_{2.5} and 40,400 to NO₂ in the 27 EU Member States.

The EU plans for reducing air pollutant emissions from cars are disappointing despite having the potential to improve Europe's outdated vehicle emission legislation. The proposed standards, i.e. low ambition scenario for pollutants for cars, are meaningless: they give a green label to vehicles that perform no better than today's Euro 6d vehicles. If the EU standards are not ambitious enough, they will not improve air quality in our cities.

WHAT CAN THE EUROPEAN UNION DO?

Therefore, it is vital proposing the most ambitious scenario “*policy option 2b – High Zero-Pollution Ambition*”, e.g. cutting NO_x limits by at least 50%, in line with the recommendations of researchers and healthcare professionals. Air pollution is a threat to human health, and it affects already vulnerable people, such as children, pregnant women, older people, patients and the most socio-economically disadvantaged.

Tackling air pollution at its source brings immediate health benefits. Yet, the European Commission’s proposal on Euro 7/VII fails to reduce air pollutants from road transport and thus increases the health burden caused by air pollution.

REACTIONS FROM THE HEALTH COMMUNITY:

“Euro 7/VII vehicle emission standards are a necessary element of the European Green Deal and Zero Pollution Action Plan especially given the devastating impact of polluting vehicles on human health. The low ambition of this proposal, however, is very disappointing and undermines the EU’s commitments to protect the health of Europeans. The health community therefore calls the Members of the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union to vote for more stringent emissions limits for vehicles. We also demand sustainable and urgent actions to tackle transport pollution, with a shift from car-based cities to those in which walking, cycling and efficient and affordable public transport become safe, accessible, and preferred choice for all.”

Dr Milka Sokolović, Director General, European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)



“European Cancer Leagues urge EU institutions to step up Europe’s clean air ambitions. We know that the air we breathe contributes greatly to determine our health, that outdoor air pollution is a leading environmental cause of lung cancer in particular, and that road transport is one of the main sources of cancer-causing pollutants like PM2.5. With stricter standards for vehicle pollution emissions and more ambitious air quality targets, the Commission can effectively decrease the presence of carcinogens in the environment and protect public health. As it stands, the Commission’s proposal on Euro 7 is not enough.”

Dr Wendy Yared, Director General, Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)



“The new Commission’s proposal on Euro 7 will not solve the health issues caused by air pollution from road transport. It will be impossible to achieve full alignment with WHO Global Air Quality Guidelines everywhere in Europe if efforts on reducing vehicle emissions are not sufficient.”

**Prof. Zorana Jovanovic Andersen,
Chair of the Environment and Health Committee, European Respiratory Society (ERS)**



“Air pollution represents the most serious health risk for the most vulnerable people such as pregnant women, children and the elderly. The weak choice that the European Commission is about to undertake risks weighing heavily on the future of European citizens and EAP asks for more courageous choices.”

European Academy of Paediatrics (EAP UEMS SP)



“The date of 2035 for the end of the sale of new internal combustion engine vehicles is a long time to wait. Too long to wait for effort and real changes in ambient air pollution caused by transportation. The need for effective controlling should be also added to the mandatory car maintenance checklist.”

Dr Tadeusz Jędrzejczyk, Polish Society for Health Programs, (PTPZ)



“Air pollution represents the most serious health risk for the most vulnerable people such as pregnant women, children and the elderly. The weak choice that the European Commission is about to undertake risks weighing heavily on the future of European citizens and ISDE Italia demands heavily more courageous choices.”

**Laura Reali, pediatrician, Associazione Italiana Medici per l’Ambiente -
International Society of Doctors for the Environment (ISDE Italia)**



“This is the victory of the automobile lobby against public health. Despite some progress, the proposition does not send the right message to reduce the pollutants emissions.”

Tony Renucci, Executive Director, *Association Nationale pour l'Amélioration de la Qualité de l'Air et la Défense des Victimes de la Pollution* (Respire)



Hungarian Alliance of Patients' Organisations (BEMOSZ)



HAPO
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