

Air-Quality Initiative of Regions (AIR)

The European Regions of **Baden-Württemberg, Catalunya, Emilia-Romagna, Greater London , Hessen, Lombardia, North Rhine-Westphalia, Piemonte, Randstad, Steiermark, Veneto and Vlaanderen**

RECOGNIZING THAT:

- Good and clean air is essential to human health
- The goal of an ambitious air quality policy is to promote clean air
- Over the past decade air quality has substantially been improved, as a result of regulation at EU level, national efforts and measures at regional level. The EU Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC, and previous legislation), has been a key policy tool substantially contributing to the improvement of the EU's Air Quality.
- Despite considerable efforts in improving air quality at local and regional level and compliance with most of the targets, there are still problems with some of the standards set by the Directive. This is particularly true for AIR, among the EU's most densely populated, and/or industrialised Regions characterised by special geographic, meteorological and/or structural conditions.

AIR (AIR-QUALITY INITIATIVE OF REGIONS):

The 12 Regions, from 7 Member States:

- Represent 22% of European GDP with €2,791billions € and 18% of European population with 87,6 million people;
- Invest in research, innovation and infrastructure, take regulatory measures, develop best practices and stimulate behavioural changes aiming to improve air quality and reach the EU Directive's limit values;
- Started working together on air quality issues, since the challenges in meeting the Air Quality Directive's limit values within the specified timeframe created the need to open a dialogue among different European Regions.

The purpose of this group is to exchange best practices and to contribute to the Air Quality Directive's revision process.

AIR EMPHASISES THAT:

- The revised Directive shall include a degree of flexibility that allows the specific characteristics of our Regions to be taken into account;
- EU instruments shall further assist Regions in their efforts to improve air quality ;
- The EU shall take source-based measures when tackling air quality problems (e.g. Euro standards, realistic test cycles, tyre and brake wear, buildings, industry, clean fuel);
- It is necessary to promote a better integration between EU policies affecting air quality as well as policies at European, national, regional and local level.

AIR COMMIT TO:

- Share information about best practices, scientific research results, and possibly take collaborative action;
- Work together on a position paper aiming to contribute to the wide European debate which has started on the Air Quality issues;
- Weed the specific regional perspectives in the Air Quality Directive's review by proactively working with all European Institutions involved in the revision process.