



# Procedure file

Basic information		
SYN - Cooperation procedure (historic)	<a href="#">1994/0194(SYN)</a>	Procedure completed
Air quality: improvement of comparability and transparency at European level (reduction of emissions)		
Subject 3.70.02 Atmospheric pollution, motor vehicle pollution		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection	PSE <a href="#">POLLACK Anita Jean</a>	04/11/1994
	Former committee responsible		
	 Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection	PSE <a href="#">POLLACK Anita Jean</a>	04/11/1994
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	<a href="#">Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN</a>	<a href="#">1986</a>	27/01/1997
	<a href="#">Agriculture and Fisheries</a>	<a href="#">1904</a>	26/02/1996
	<a href="#">Environment</a>	<a href="#">1873</a>	06/10/1995

Key events			
05/09/1994	Additional information		Summary
07/09/1994	Legislative proposal published	COM(1994)0345	Summary
24/10/1994	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
23/05/1995	Vote in committee		Summary
23/05/1995	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	<a href="#">A4-0117/1995</a>	
15/06/1995	Debate in Parliament		
16/06/1995	Decision by Parliament	T4-0318/1995	Summary
28/11/1995	Modified legislative proposal published	COM(1995)0468	Summary
26/02/1996	Council position published	<a href="#">12122/2/1995</a>	Summary
	Committee referral announced in		

20/06/1996	Parliament, 2nd reading		
03/09/1996	Vote in committee, 2nd reading		Summary
03/09/1996	Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading	<a href="#">A4-0267/1996</a>	
17/09/1996	Debate in Parliament		Summary
18/09/1996	Decision by Parliament, 2nd reading	T4-0457/1996	Summary
19/11/1996	Modified legislative proposal published	COM(1996)0534	
27/01/1997	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		Summary
27/01/1997	End of procedure in Parliament		
05/02/1997	Final act published in Official Journal		

### Technical information

Procedure reference	1994/0194(SYN)
Procedure type	SYN - Cooperation procedure (historic)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legal basis	EC before Amsterdam E 130S-p1
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/4/07643

### Documentation gateway

Legislative proposal	<a href="#">COM(1994)0345</a> <a href="#">OJ C 281 07.10.1994, p. 0009</a>	07/09/1994	EC	Summary
Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	<a href="#">CES0184/1995</a> <a href="#">OJ C 110 02.05.1995, p. 0003</a>	22/02/1995	ESC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	<a href="#">A4-0117/1995</a> <a href="#">OJ C 166 03.07.1995, p. 0003</a>	23/05/1995	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading	T4-0318/1995 <a href="#">OJ C 166 03.07.1995, p. 0161-0167</a>	16/06/1995	EP	Summary
Modified legislative proposal	<a href="#">COM(1995)0468</a> <a href="#">OJ C 030 03.02.1996, p. 0008</a>	28/11/1995	EC	Summary
Council position	<a href="#">12122/2/1995</a> <a href="#">OJ C 219 27.07.1996, p. 0001</a>	26/02/1996	CSL	Summary
Commission communication on Council's position	SEC(1996)0391	07/03/1996	EC	Summary
Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading	<a href="#">A4-0267/1996</a> <a href="#">OJ C 320 28.10.1996, p. 0004</a>	03/09/1996	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading	T4-0457/1996 <a href="#">OJ C 320 28.10.1996, p. 0064-0074</a>	18/09/1996	EP	Summary
Modified legislative proposal	COM(1996)0534	19/11/1996	EC	

### Additional information

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## Final act

[Decision 1997/101](#)[OJ L 035 05.02.1997, p. 0014](#) Summary

## Air quality: improvement of comparability and transparency at European level (reduction of emissions)

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PREVIOUS POSITION OF EP: The report on the state of the environment in the European Community (COM(92)23 final Vol. III) reveals numerous shortcomings in the quantity and quality of environmental information. Given the close link between the quality of the directives and that of the available information, the EP stresses the importance of improving comparability and transparency of information at European level. Accordingly, in 1985, the EP supported the launching of the CORINE Programme (Coordination of Information on the Environment - (EP resolution OJ C 337/421, 17 December 1984), an experimental project for gathering, coordinating and ensuring the consistency of information on the state of the environment. One of the priorities of the programme was the registration of discharges into the air, and it brought to light the need to improve comparability of information by means of common definitions and nomenclatures, harmonized measuring methods and exchanges of information. In the light of the conclusions of the CORINE Programme the EP decided to launch the European Environment Agency and the European Environment Monitoring and Information Network. Together with EUROSTAT (Statistical Office of the European Union), the task of the EEA is to supply environmental data with an eye to quality and comparability. On the basis of objective, reliable and comparable information it should be possible to assess more accurately the real impact of the measures taken, particularly those to reduce emissions, and adapt them where necessary so as to ensure that they are as effective as possible. SITUATION IN THE MEMBER STATES: The quality of the information provided by the Member States concerning discharges varies since it is collected by organizations using very different methods of measurement and interpretation.

## Air quality: improvement of comparability and transparency at European level (reduction of emissions)

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The purpose of this proposal is to establish a new exchange of information and data from individual networks and stations measuring ambient air pollution in the Member States. Compared with the old system of exchanges, this system will extend the scope and quality of the data transmitted, while ensuring that a flexible procedure is implemented. The stations used within the framework of the "air quality" directives and additional stations selected by the Member States will participate in the new exchange of information, which covers two areas: - networks and stations: the exchange covers detailed information describing the networks and stations operating in the Member States in order to monitor air pollution; - the results of measurements: the exchange covers individual statistics and results obtained from measurements of air pollution carried out by the stations in the Member States. The proposal makes provision for data to be transferred on 34 pollutants, insofar as they are measured by the Member States. The Commission will be responsible for implementing the reciprocal exchange and will refer to the European Environment Agency any questions which come within its remit.?

## Air quality: improvement of comparability and transparency at European level (reduction of emissions)

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The ESC endorsed this proposal in that it represented an important step both in establishing effective and comparable checks on ambient air quality and in making more information available to the EU citizen. It would, however, like to make a number of observations intended to improve the drafting of the proposal for a decision. Firstly, the list of pollutants in Annex 1 was far longer than that in the proposed directive on air quality, which covered only 14 of these 34 pollutants. Furthermore, the sheer quantity of exchangeable data, especially in those Member States with a dense network of air quality measurement stations, could be enormous and make this exchange unworkable. Consequently, the Member States should operate a 'pyramidal' selection of measuring stations so that the exchange and assessment would be carried out first at local and regional level prior to the Community dimension. On this basis the Member States should facilitate the exchange of data between a sufficient number of stations that were representative of the different geographical situations and regions in that Member State; this would be the most cost-effective way to achieve the objective. By the same token the ESC considered it more advisable to draw up separate annexes. The first would set out those substances that had to be measured under Community Directives; the second the rest of the pollutants not covered by Community Directives on air quality. The ESC considered that the technical committee set up under the Directive on ambient air quality assessment and management should be responsible for approving, jointly with the Commission, the adaptation of the present decision to scientific and technical progress. The European Environment Agency, as part of its remit, would have to assist the Commission in formulating the proposals to be submitted to the technical committee. Finally, the ESC considered that, in the sectoral programmes for 1993-1997 of the Joint Research Centre in Ispra, in the section 'measuring and testing' (1.1.1.), with a budget of ECU 105 million, and in the actual sectoral programme 'Standardisation, measurement and testing?', a specific budget line should be established for improving and standardising the measuring and testing methods for some of those pollutants contained in Annex 1, the measurement of which at the moment was very expensive and in some cases not sufficiently reliable.

## Air quality: improvement of comparability and transparency at European level (reduction of emissions)

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The committee has adopted the report of Mrs. Anita POLLACK (UK, PES) on the proposal for a Council Directive establishing a reciprocal exchange of information and data from networks and individual stations measuring ambient air pollution within the Member States. The rapporteur tabled 11 amendments, most of them concerning the amendments in the annex. In her report, Mrs. POLLACK writes that there has been growing disquiet about the quality of air in the Member States. The Commission has introduced air quality standards for sulphur dioxide, suspended particulate matter, black smoke, lead, nitrogen dioxide and ozone. The Commission proposes to establish a reciprocal change of data covering 34 pollutants. Of these, 6 are covered by existing air quality directives and a further 8 will be covered by the framework directive on Ambient Air Quality (COM(94/0109)). The other pollutants were chosen on the basis of their risk to human health and the environments. Article 2 of the proposal states that the reciprocal exchange shall cover these pollutants only to the extent that they are currently measured in the Member States. Therefore, no new measurement stations are required and no extra costs envisaged. The data gathered by the Member States will be sent to the Commission on a yearly basis. A committee will be set up to administer this transfer of data, to make amendments to the list of pollutants measured and to adapt the decision to scientific and technical progress. But the rapporteur warns that the information should not be seen as "info for info's sake". It must be used as a tool for pollution control and therefore for bettering the lives of Europe's citizens. In this respect, it is essential that the public gain access to the results. The data provided to the Commission should be available by computer link on request and the Proposal should explicitly address the need to ensure this access. Besides the technical reports foreseen, a report should be prepared to provide general information to the public. This should include a summary of the collected data, an analysis of the number of times and days relevant EU guidelines were exceeded for each site and an outline of the underlying trends in the EU for air quality. Article 2 of the Proposal states that "the reciprocal exchange shall cover the pollutants listed in annex 1 of the Proposal to the extent that they are measured in the Member States". Here we have a problems, says the rapporteur, because this would mean that if a pollutant is not measured at present in a certain Member State, there is no compulsion for it to be measured in the future. This seems to contradict one of the aims of the proposal, which should extend the scope and improve the quality of data transmitted. Mrs. POLLACK fears that without some form of mandatory measurement of the pollutants listed in annex 1, the Commission's data bank will remain patchy and the information to the public will remain inadequate. Therefore, she proposes a review of the Proposal in 2 years. This would ascertain whether the information requested was being supplied voluntarily, and if not, whether a more mandatory approach was needed.

## Air quality: improvement of comparability and transparency at European level (reduction of emissions)

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Adopting the report by Mrs Pollack, the European Parliament approved the proposal subject to the following amendments: - the public should have access to the information which the Commission sends the Member States. The data supplied by the Commission should be accessible by computer link on request; - the Commission or the European Environment Agency should draft a report containing general information for the public. This report should include a summary of the data collected, an analysis of the number of times and days EU guidelines were exceeded at each measurement site and an outline of the underlying trends in air quality in the EU; - Member States should make an effort to supply raw data and statistics for all measurement stations; - Annex 1 to the proposal should be divided into two parts, the first part containing a list of substances to be measured under the framework directive on ambient air quality and the second part containing the pollutants not covered by the directive to the extent that they are already being measured in the Member States; - the decision would apply as of 1 October 1995 and would be revised two years later.?

## Air quality: improvement of comparability and transparency at European level (reduction of emissions)

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The Commission's amended proposal incorporates the amendments by the European Parliament concerning: - the introduction of a distinction between pollutants covered by the ambient air quality directives, for which the exchange of information is compulsory, and those which are not covered and for which an exchange of information is only required where measurements are taken by the Member States (the reference to the obligation to measure substances at a later stage has been deleted); - making data and computer programmes for consulting databases available to the public; - changes to the dates of the entry into force of the enacting terms proposed; - the preparation of reports on trends in air quality in Europe and on cases where limit values are exceeded; - an assessment of the system after 5 years (rather than 2). However, the Commission did not include the amendment requiring all measuring stations in the Member States to participate in the exchange of information.?

## Air quality: improvement of comparability and transparency at European level (reduction of emissions)

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The Council's common position incorporates 5 of the 10 amendments accepted by the Commission in its amended proposal, viz.: - a distinction between pollutants covered by the ambient air quality directives, for which the exchange of information is compulsory, and those which are not covered and for which an exchange of information is only required where measurements are taken by the Member States; - changes to Annex I made necessary by the amendment as a whole; - changes to the dates of entry into force of the enacting terms proposed (1 January 1997); - assessment of the system 5 years after the entry into force of the directive. The Council also made various changes to the amended proposal with a view to: - clarifying the quantities on which information is to be exchanged (data calculated) and stipulating that responsibility for implementing the decision is to be shared between the Commission and the bodies designated by the Member States; - clarifying the timetable for the exchange of information on networks and stations between the Member States and the Commission and adopting a more realistic time limit for first transmission, taking account of the time needed to set up the network of stations; - deleting the provision under which the list of pollutants covered by the directive could be amended under a comitology procedure; - simplifying Annexes 2 to 4, particularly as regards the details of some of the information to be supplied. The common position did not incorporate Parliament's amendments concerning: - changes to the title of the proposal; - making information available to the public; - the inclusion of a fourth category for traffic in Annex II.?

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On balance, the Commission considered that the common position represented a good compromise, given that the amendments by the European Parliament which were not incorporated by the Council were not essential to the implementation of the enacting terms proposed. ?

## Air quality: improvement of comparability and transparency at European level (reduction of emissions)

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Data collected by the Commission on air pollution in the Member States must be made available to the public on request, the Environment Committee decided today. It also called on the Commission to prepare a general report for public consumption summarizing the data collected and outlining the underlying trends in air quality in the European Union. Moreover, should the data supplied by Member States prove inadequate, the Commission should consider whether the measurement of certain pollutants should be made compulsory. This was the nub of the amendments tabled by the committee under the cooperation procedure to the common position adopted by the Council on a proposal for a Council Decision on the measurement and exchange of information on ambient air pollution in Member States. The Commission believes that the question of compulsory measurement should be dealt with in a different text. ?

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Stating that the proposal concerned the mutual exchange of data relating to 34 pollutants measured in the Member States, the rapporteur, Mrs Pollack (PSE, UK), said that it was important to give the public access to this information; in order to do this the data in question had to be published in a clear and comprehensible manner; she also insisted on the introduction of a stricter review procedure in order to improve the quality of the data transmitted to the Commission. Commissioner Bjerregaard stated that he supported those amendments that were aimed at simplifying the title of the proposal and at facilitating the disclosure of the data. The Commission, on the other hand, indicated that it was not in a position to accept the request, which consisted of bringing forward the deadline for submitting the report from five years to three.

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In adopting the recommendation for second reading by Mrs Anita POLLACK (PSE, UK) on the common position establishing a reciprocal exchange of information and data measuring ambient air pollution within the Member States, Parliament considered that the data collected by the Commission on ambient air pollution within the Member States should be made available to the public on request. It also called on the Commission to prepare a general report for public consumption summarizing the collected data and outlining the underlying trends in air quality in the European Union. ?

## Air quality: improvement of comparability and transparency at European level (reduction of emissions)

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The Council formally adopted the Decision ?

## Air quality: improvement of comparability and transparency at European level (reduction of emissions)

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**OBJECTIVE:** to establish a reciprocal exchange of information and data measuring ambient air pollution within the Member States.  
**COMMUNITY MEASURE:** Council Decision 97/101/EC establishing a reciprocal exchange of information and data from networks and individual stations measuring ambient air pollution within the Member States. **SUBSTANCE:** the decision establishes a reciprocal exchange of information and data from networks and individual stations measuring ambient air pollution. This reciprocal exchange covers: a) networks and stations and b) measurements of air quality obtained from the stations. The decision makes a distinction between pollutants covered by the directives on ambient air quality for which the exchange of information is compulsory and those which are not covered and for which the exchange of information is not required to the extent that they are measured by the Member States. The information gathered will be accessible to the public via an information system set up by the European Environment Agency; it may also be supplied by the Agency on request. The Commission will prepare a general report intended for the public each year, summarizing the collected data and giving an overview of the trends in air quality in the European Union. At the latest five years after the entry into force of the decision the Commission will submit to the Council a report on its implementation. **ENTRY INTO FORCE:** the decision is applicable with effect from 01/01/1997. ?