



# EU Clean Air Policy

## *- an update -*

February 2020

*European Commission  
Clean Air*

# EU clean air policy framework



## SETTING OBJECTIVES FOR GOOD AIR QUALITY

## REDUCING EMISSIONS OF POLLUTANTS



## Ambient Air Quality (AAQ) Directives

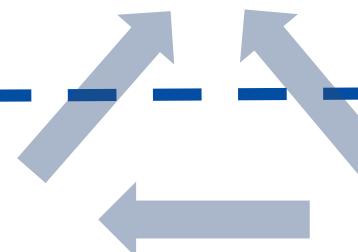
Maximum concentrations of  
air polluting substances

( $\text{PM}_{10}$ ,  $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ ,  $\text{SO}_2$ ,  $\text{NO}_2$ ,  $\text{O}_3$  + 8 more)

**National Emission  
Ceilings Directive**  
National emission totals  
( $\text{SO}_2$ ,  $\text{NO}_x$ , VOC,  $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ ,  $\text{NH}_3$ )

-79%    -63%    -40%    -49%    -19%

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



# 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

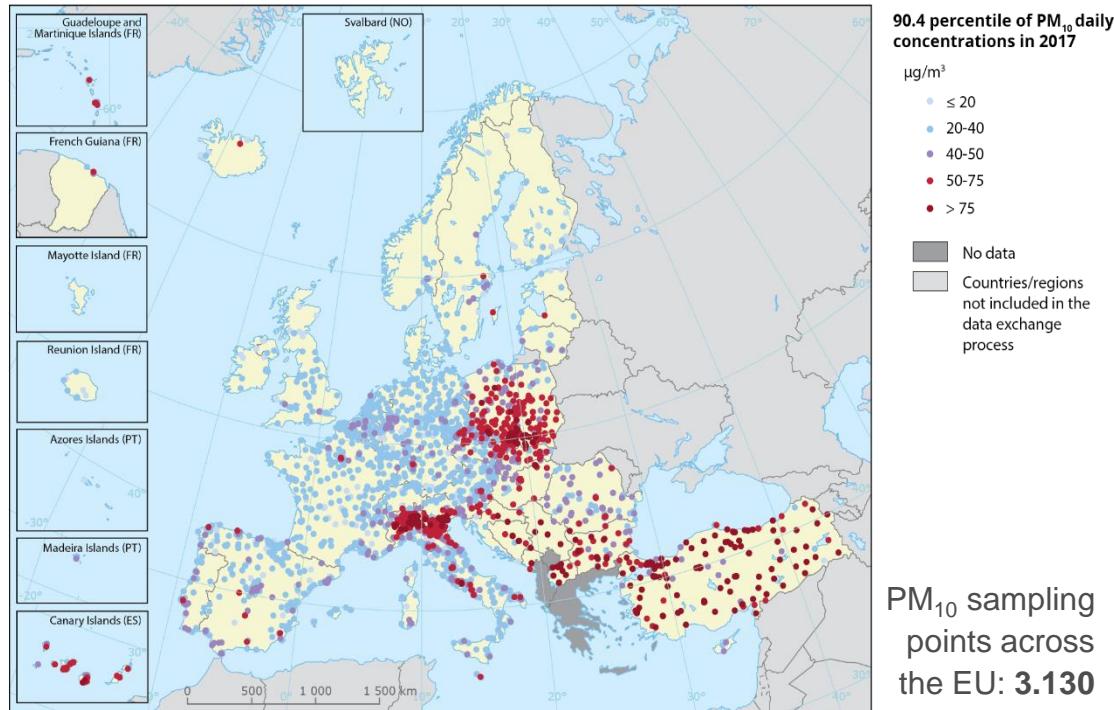
The AAQ Directives are ***broadly fit for purpose*** (with scope for improvements). In particular:

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

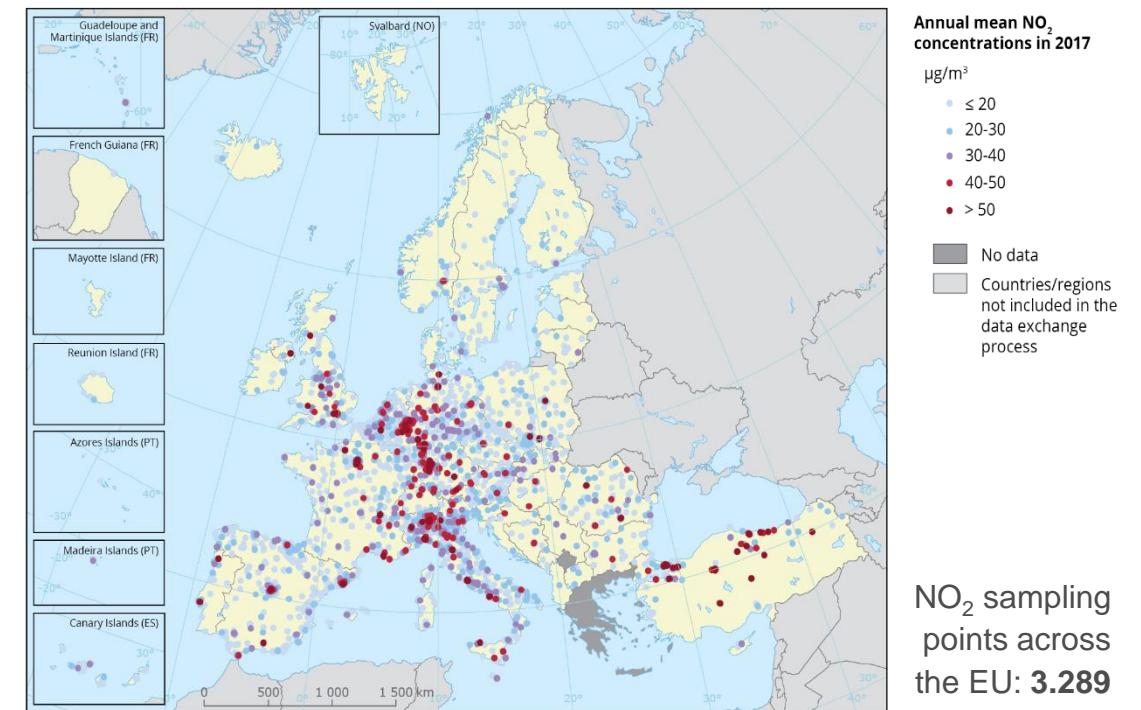


# Reliable air quality monitoring data

**PM<sub>10</sub> exceedances** - often linked to fuel combustion (i.e. heating, transport)



**NO<sub>2</sub> exceedances** - often linked to traffic, in more than 130 cities in EU.

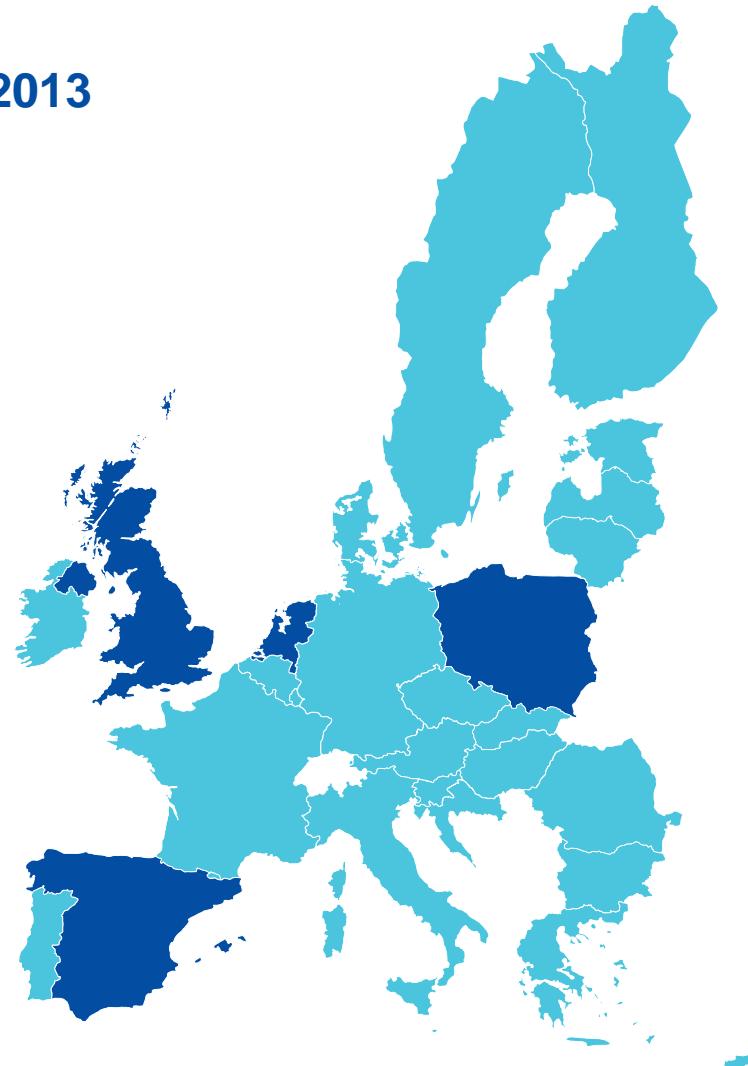


Source(s): EEA Air Quality in Europe (2019)

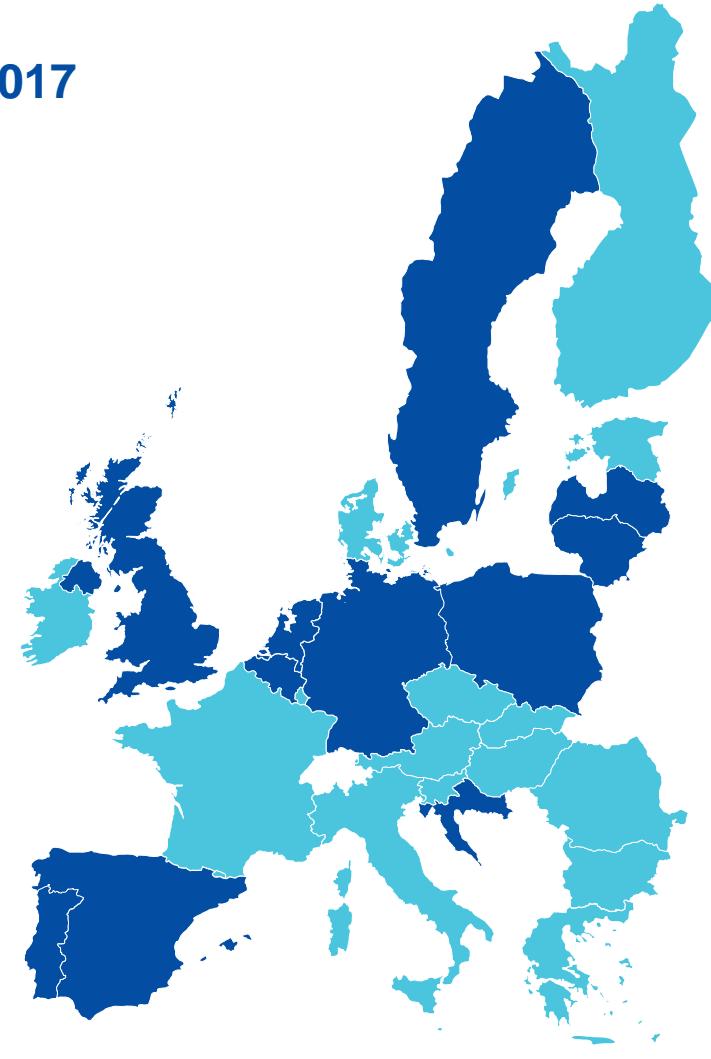


# More air quality modelling reported

2013



2017



## AQ Modelling

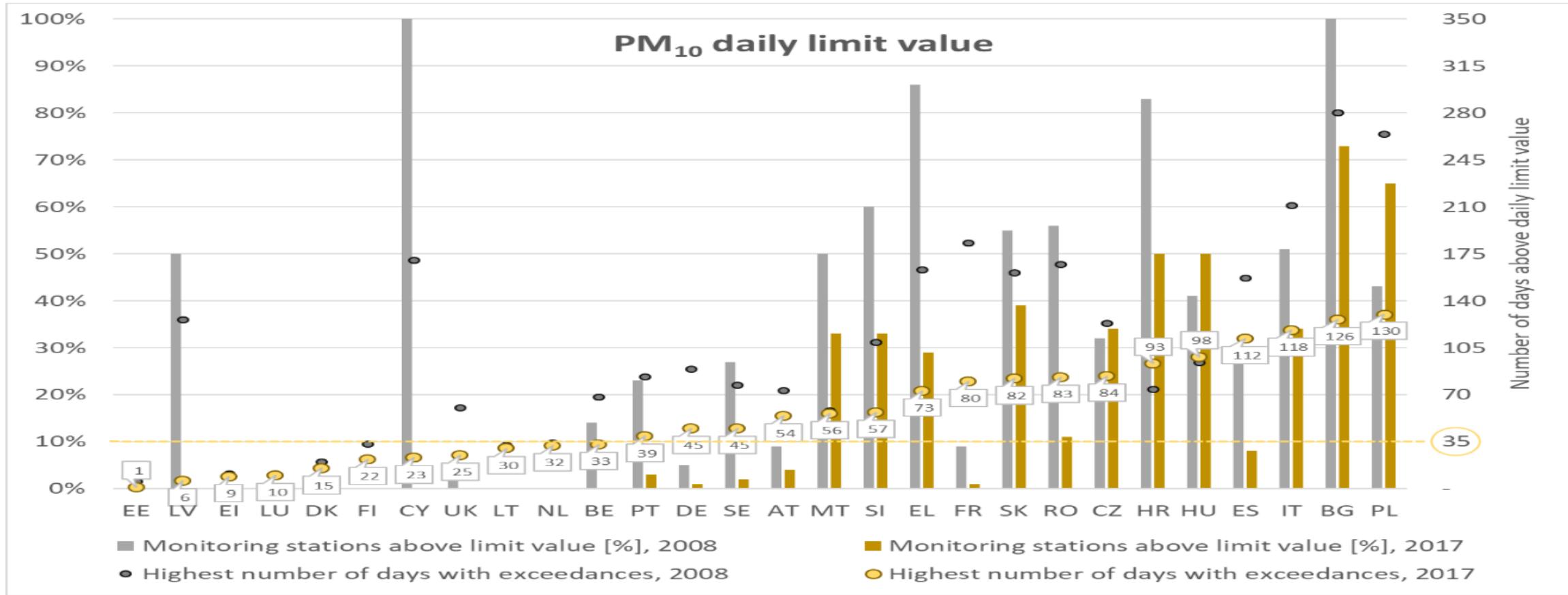
- Reported
- Not reported

## AQ Modelling

- Reported
- Not reported



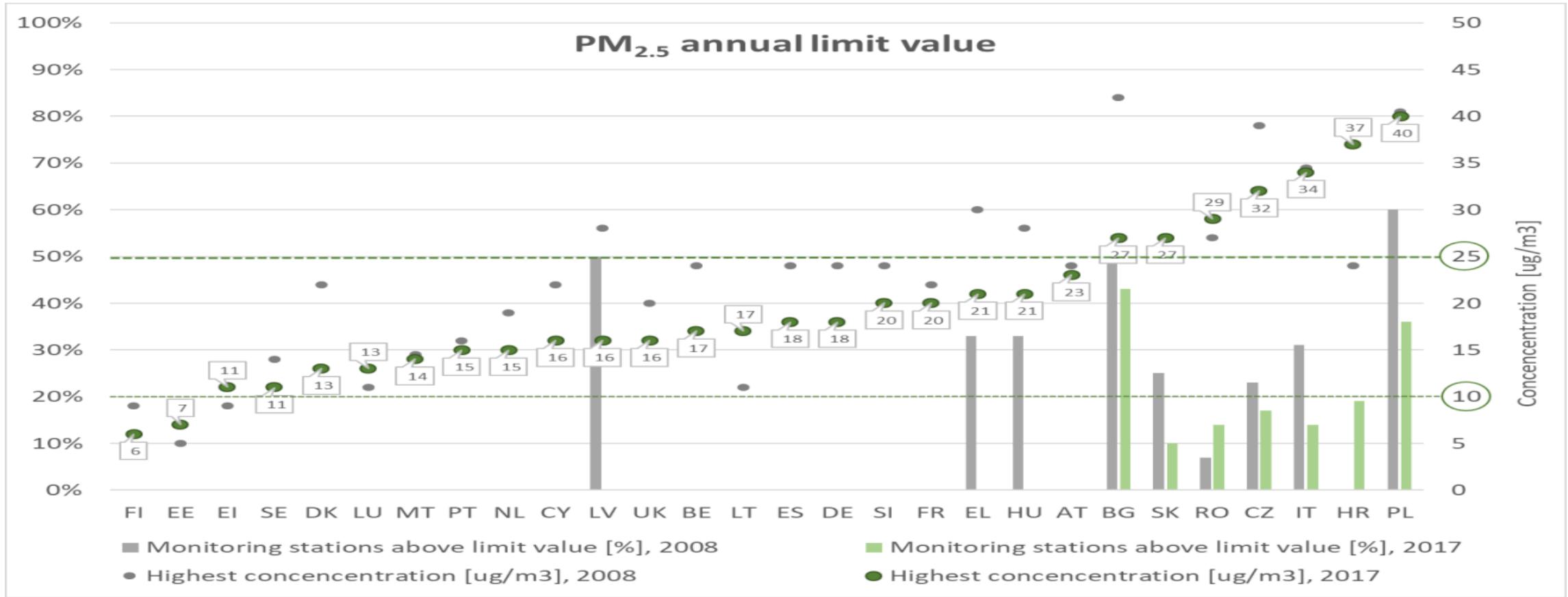
# Number and magnitude of exceedances



Source(s): SWD (2019) 427



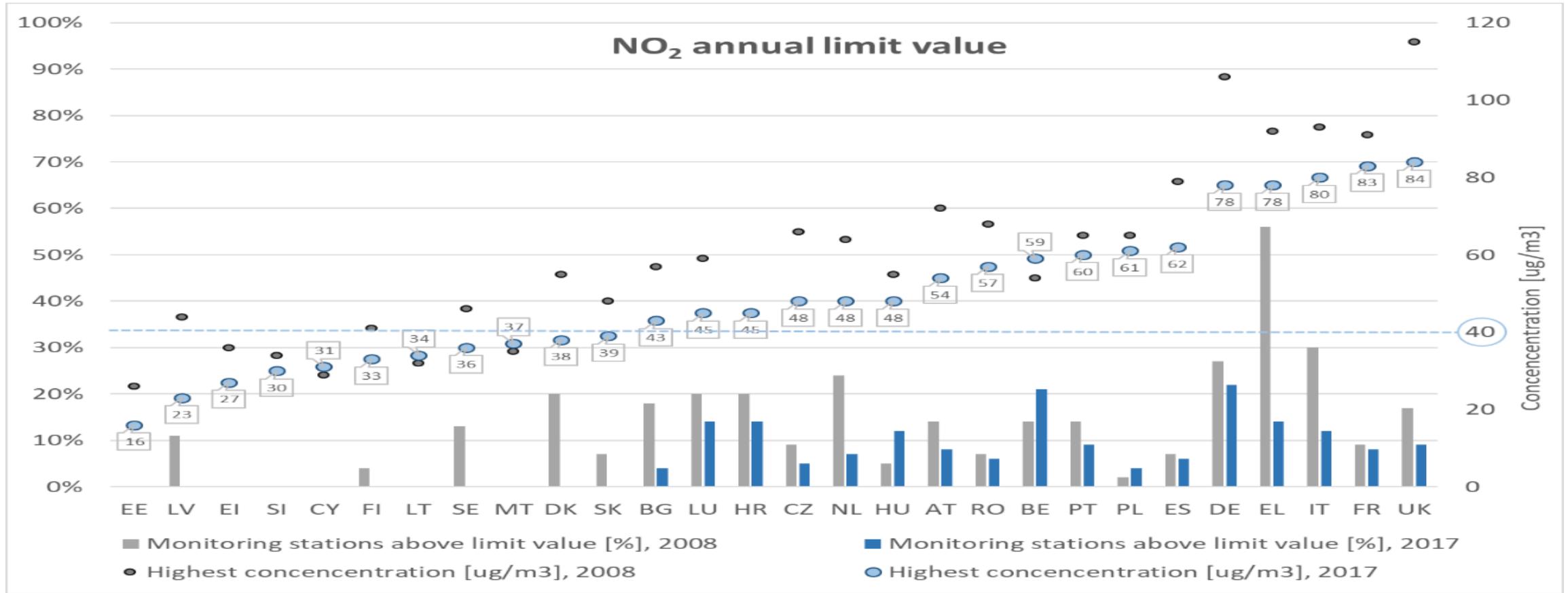
# Number and magnitude of exceedances



Source(s): SWD (2019) 427



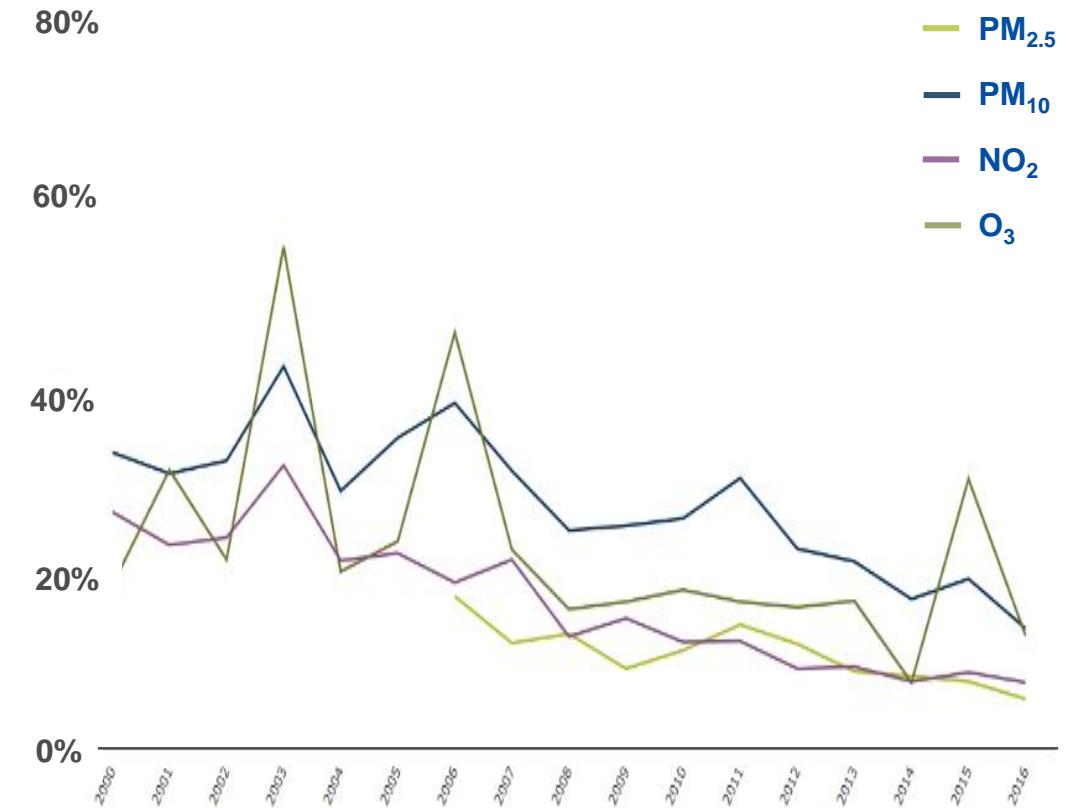
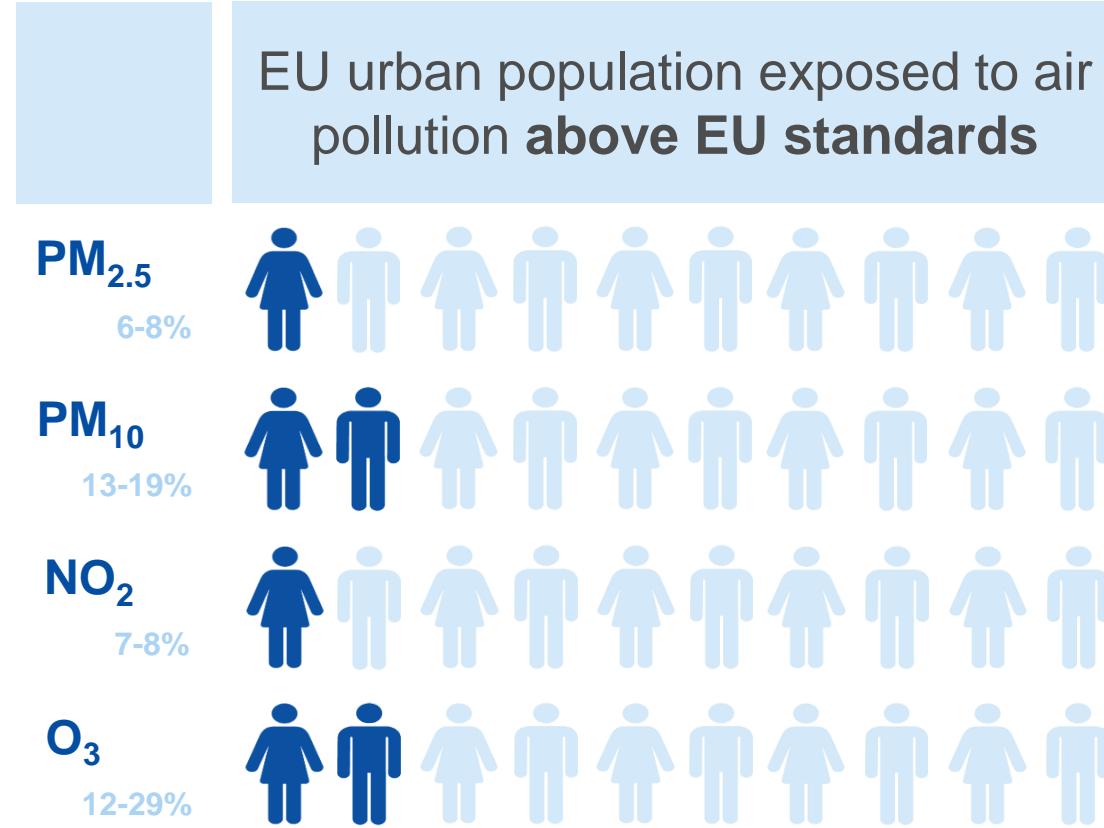
# Number and magnitude of exceedances



Source(s): SWD (2019) 427



# Air quality has improved ...

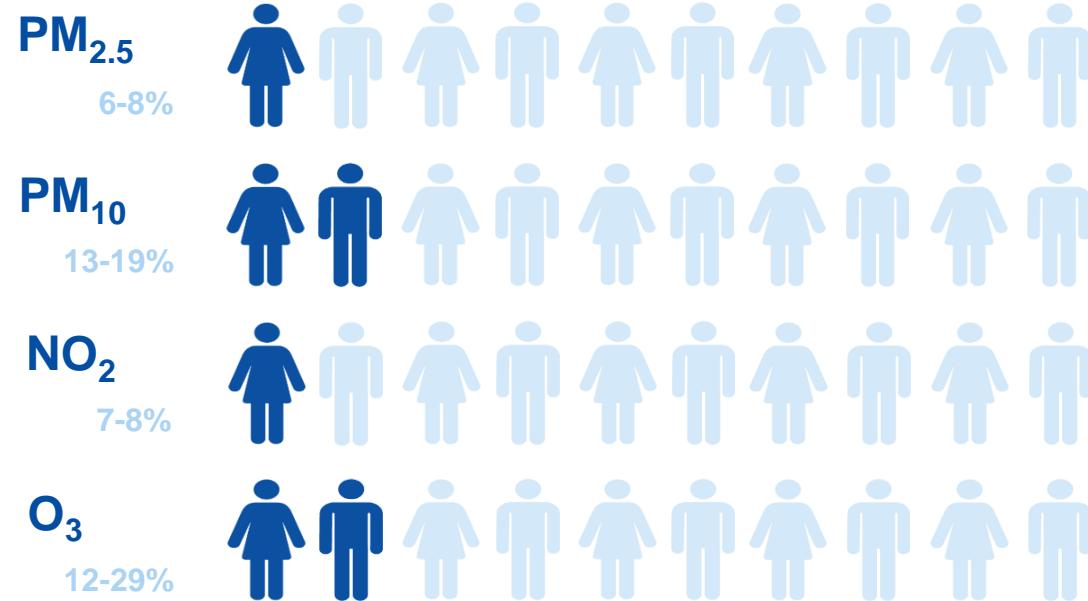


Source(s): For 2015-2017; EEA Air Quality in Europe (2019)



# .... but remains a health challenge

## EU urban population exposed to air pollution **above EU standards**



## EU urban population exposed to air pollution **above WHO Guidelines**



Source(s): For 2015-2017; EEA Air Quality in Europe (2019)



# Seven key lessons learnt

- Air quality remains a major **health and environmental concern**;
- Air quality standards 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, information**, and **air quality plans**;
- Not all reported data equally useful, **e-reporting** allows for further efficiency.

# EU clean air policy priorities

COM (2018) 330

**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 18 Member States (+ UK) as relates PM<sub>10</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, and SO<sub>2</sub> 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, ...) *plus* LIFE projects, Horizon 2020, EFSI funding, Urban Innovation Actions, ...
- **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

# 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.



# And what does all this mean for FAIRMODE?

Over the past five years, the use and reporting of **air quality modelling** to complement data from fixed monitoring station has increased: from 4 (in 2013) to 10 (in 2017) Member States.

Stakeholders, and especially local and regional authorities, noted a lack of clear provisions on air quality modelling and pointed to a **need to further improve guidance**.

We will want to make sure we make full use of the experience of **FAIRMODE**:



*Which aspects of air quality modelling need stronger provisions (incl. air quality data, exposure, spatial representativeness, source apportionment, measures & plans, projections, ‘format’ ...)?*

*How best to make use of the expertise available (incl. via Expert Group and/or other channels of consultations, good practice examples, peer to peer exchanges ...)?*

# Thank you

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