



## Cut industrial emissions further, but more flexibly, say MEPs

**Pollutant emissions from thousands of industrial installations throughout the EU must be further reduced, but more flexibly, said Environment Committee MEPs on 22 January. The committee backed a Commission proposal to update and strengthen existing rules, but inserted new provisions for introducing EU-wide emission limits, greater flexibility in granting permits, excluding small plants, and better informing the public.**

To cut industrial pollution, the integrated pollution prevention and control (IPPC) Directive requires operators of about 52,000 industrial installations across the EU to obtain permits from Member State authorities. Permits may be granted only if environment protection requirements are met.

The proposed overhaul aims to reduce the administrative burden on industry and public authorities, by simplifying and clarifying the current rules. This entails recasting and merging seven EU directives, including IPPC, into one. The MEP guiding this proposal through Parliament is Holger Krahmer (ALDE, DE).

### **New emission limit values**

The committee agreed in principle to more stringent emission limit values proposed by the Commission for specific categories of combustion plants and for pollutants such as SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, dust and CO. However, to improve flexibility, the committee advocates changing the procedure for setting these limits.

MEPs say that to reduce widespread recourse to exemptions, which lead to market distortions, some minimum emission limit values, which cannot be exceeded in any way, must be set by the Commission, using the comitology procedure.

At the same time, to give the authorities that grant permits more flexibility, MEPs say that emission limits laid down for individual installations must be based on best available techniques, but adaptable to take account of local circumstances.

### **Including medium-sized combustion plants, excluding those used least**

The recast legislation (IPPC directive plus six more specific ones) will cover combustion plants, waste incineration plants, waste co-incineration plants and installations producing titanium dioxide. MEPs broadly agree with a Commission proposal to bring medium-sized combustion plants (between 20 and 50 MW), within the rules, but want to exclude installations (below 50 MW) which operate for no more than 500 hours/year.

MEPs also changed the annexes, which set specific permit conditions for types of industrial activity. Amendments seeking to insert more or less stringent values were not

adopted, but several amendments that were adopted make changes affecting specific industries to which emission limits apply.

## **Reducing the administrative burden and better informing the public**

Other amendments inserted by the committee aim to reduce administrative burdens, relax rules on reporting and inspections, and improve the information to the public.

## **Inadmissible amendments on CO<sub>2</sub> Emission Limit Value**

In today's vote, over 100 amendments were deemed non-admissible under the EP rules of procedure (rule 80 a, paragraph III). This decision concerned inter alia amendments, put forward by several MEPs, to introduce a carbon dioxide emission limit value for large combustion installations.

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