

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3662/09

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to the Commission

Subject: Breaches of limit values for fine particulates in Krefeld

For many years the port at Krefeld has been recording some of the highest levels of fine particulates in Germany. In 2006, 75 breaches of limit values were recorded. As a result, a clean air plan for the Krefeld port area came into operation that same year, but regrettably it has not brought about any lasting improvements.

Fine particulate levels are also too high in the rest of the city, including the city centre. In 2008 the Land government announced a clean air plan for the entire city of Krefeld. To date, this announcement has not resulted in any action, and no plan has been implemented.

Five approval procedures are currently under way for industrial projects in the Krefeld urban area: a cement works, a coal-fired power station in Krefeld-Uerdingen, a waste incineration plant and two industrial plants. All these plants can be expected to produce additional emissions of fine particulates. Approval would therefore appear highly questionable and hardly compatible with the aim of reducing particulate emissions.

As a result of breaches of limit values for fine particulates in several cities, the Commission has launched infringement proceedings against Germany, among others. In order for the deadlines to be extended (notification), evidence must be provided of the specific conditions which make it impossible to comply with the limit values. A corresponding application was made for Krefeld. Given that, up to now, few measures have been taken that might have failed to produce significant effects in terms of reducing levels of particulates, this application does not appear credible.

1. What steps will the Commission take to ensure that limit values for fine particulates are complied with in Krefeld in the future?
2. Will the Commission approve an extension of the deadline for compliance with limit values (notification) for the Krefeld port area?
3. If so, what particular circumstances in Krefeld justify extending the deadline?
4. How will ongoing procedures (notification and breaches of the limit values for fine particulates) be taken into account in the pending approval procedures?