



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Brussels, 8 November 2010  
15965/10  
PRESSE 296

## **Council acts to reduce industrial emissions**

The Council today approved a revised directive on industrial emissions so as to reduce emissions of pollutants that are harmful to the environment and associated with cancer, asthma and acid rain ([31/10](#); [15400/10](#) + [ADD1](#)).

The industrial emissions directive seeks to prevent and control air, water and soil pollution by industrial installations. It regulates emissions of a wide range of pollutants, including sulphur and nitrogen compounds, dust particles, asbestos and heavy metals. The directive is aimed at improving local air, water and soil quality, not at mitigating the global warming effects of some of these substances.

Currently, around 52 000 installations are covered by this act in sectors like metal production, chemical manufacture, poultry and pig farming, waste incineration and fuel combustion in large installations. The review integrates seven directives into a single legal framework so as to reduce administrative burdens.

The revision provides for a more harmonised and rigorous implementation of emissions limits associated with the cleanest available technology, so-called best available techniques, across the EU. Deviations from this standard are only permitted where local and technical characteristics would make it disproportionately costly. Key parts of the necessary technical documents ("BAT conclusions") will be available in all official EU languages.

The recast also tightens emission limits for nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide and dust from power plants and large combustion installations in oil refineries and the metal industry. At the request of the Council, new plants must apply the cleanest available technology from 2012, four years earlier than initially proposed. Existing plants have to comply with this standard from 2016, though a transition period is foreseen: Until 30 June 2020, member states may define transitional plans with declining annual caps for NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub> or dust emissions. Where installations are already scheduled to close by the end of 2023 or operate less than 17 500 hours after 2016, they may not need to upgrade.

# **P R E S S**

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The revised directive will enter into force shortly after its publication in the Official Journal of the EU and must be transposed into national law.

The Commission presented the proposal for the revised directive in December 2007. In accepting all amendments the European Parliament voted at second reading on 7 July 2010, the Council has now ensured the adoption of this law.