



Communicating on #Cleanairforhealth: Lessons learnt from the EU policy process

Webinar: Luftkvalitet - Hur kommunicerar vi bäst ett osynligt problem?"

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About HEAL

>80 organisations in 28 countries

- Doctors associations
- Patient groups
- Nurses associations
- Public health institutes
- Research institutes
- Not-for-profit health insurers
- Women's groups
- Youth groups
- Environmental groups



*Working for better health through
a healthier environment*

Presentation Outline

- People in Europe want to be better informed
- Science to policy communication: HEAL toolkit + newsletter
- Communication tools
- Key health messages
- Health messaging: team up with others!

People want to be better informed

Abstract

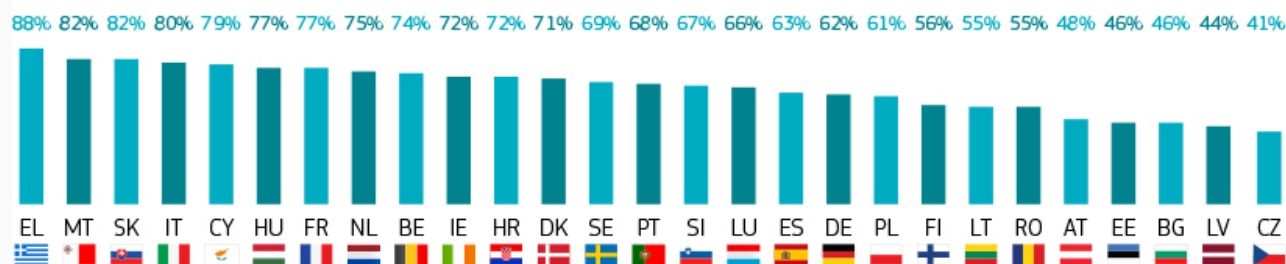
The results of this survey reveal that air quality is still a serious concern for European citizens. While a majority of Europeans do not feel well-informed (60%), nearly half of the respondents hold the view that air quality has deteriorated in the last ten years (47%).

Support for strengthening EU air quality standards

The Eurobarometer reveals that citizens lack information about air quality problems in their country.

Most of Europeans remain poorly informed about the existing EU air quality standards as only a minority of respondents (27%) have heard of them.

Nevertheless, a large majority of the respondents (67%) who are aware of EU air quality standards say that they should be strengthened. This is true in all but five Member States.

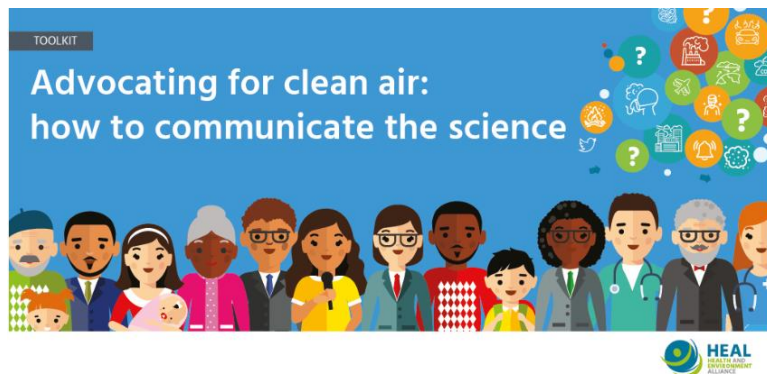


In all but five Member States, more than half of the respondents think the EU Air Quality Standards should be strengthened

<https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2660>

Communicating the science

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Available in English,
German, Italian

<https://www.env-health.org/toolkit-advocating-for-clean-air-how-to-communicate-the-science/>



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Communicating the science

Message crafting - 6 common frames



Health impacts of air pollution



Highlighting inequalities



Economic costs of air pollution



Vulnerable groups



The co-benefits of action



Solutions to air pollution and sharing good practice

<https://www.env-health.org/toolkit-advocating-for-clean-air-how-to-communicate-the-science/>



SCIENCE FOR HEALTHY AIR QUALITY



Recent reports



WHO recommendations to improve risk communication on air pollution

WHO Europe published a new report on how to best communicate on health effects of air pollution, especially through air quality indexes. WHO first notes that the majority of countries in the Region use a country-specific air quality index rather than the uniform



Irish and British-Northern Ireland Heart Foundations concerned about air pollution

A new report by the Irish and the British-Northern Ireland Heart Foundations states that almost 1,000 lives could be saved each year if the WHO guidelines on air quality were met, which is why the report calls for these guidelines to be written into law and binding.

Subscribe: <https://env-health.us18.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=a3ec26439a50381fc3a1e9a8f&iid=4afdc9d4a7>

Communication tools

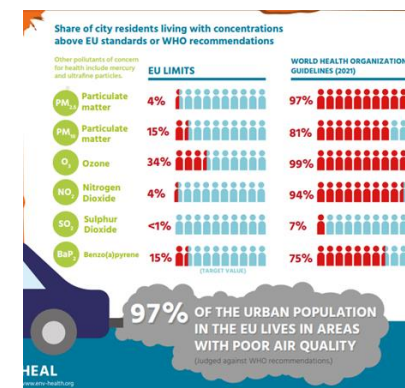
WHO AIR QUALITY GUIDELINES			
NO ₂	2005:	40 µg/m ³ , annual	
	2021:	10 µg/m ³ , annual	
PM _{2.5}	2005:	10 µg/m ³ , annual	
	2021:	5 µg/m ³ , annual	
PM ₁₀	2005:	25 µg/m ³ , annual	
	2021:	15 µg/m ³ , annual	
Ozone	2005:	100 µg/m ³ , 8-hour max	
	2021:	100 µg/m ³ , 8-hour max	



Read HEAL's [position paper](#) on Clean Air for Health Transition in the EU, 2021-2030 (available in EN, FR, DE, IT, PT, CZ, NL, SL, ES, SV, PL).



Q&A available in EN, NL, ES, PL, CZ, BG, IT, PT, SLO, SW, DE



Key health messages

“ We call on the European Union to urgently, finally and fully align EU air quality standards with the latest available science to protect our health.

Air pollution harms our health



Air pollution increases the risk of cardiovascular and heart disease, stroke, asthma, lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and many more.

It leads to hundreds of thousands of premature deaths in Europe, and billions of Euros in health costs.

The burning of fossil fuels is a major cause of air pollution



Harmful air pollutants are released: particulate matter (PM), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), and sulphur dioxide (SO₂).

The burning of fossil fuels also contributes to the formation of ozone (O₃). CO₂ from the burning of fossil fuels fuels climate change.

Everyone is vulnerable to the impacts of air pollution, and some are more at risk



People's level of vulnerability evolves with age, health condition, socio-economic status, as well as where people live, study or work.

The groups most at risk include the elderly, those already ill, pregnant women, children and those facing health inequalities.

Science-based EU air quality standards will lead the way for healthier air, everywhere



The World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines are the gold standard for evidence-based decision-making for health on air quality.

EU air quality standards have to be fully aligned with WHO guidelines and the latest science by 2030, and adopt a strong enabling framework to make these standards work.

Team up with others!

➔ **The goal is to amplify what we do at EU level, combining both a bottom-up and top-down approach**

➔ **Currently, we have national organisations in (member or partner):**

- Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden

➔ **How we work at national level**

- Calls with all national organisations in order to share best practices and combine efforts
- Sharing of template letters, comms packages (FAQ, counter-messages...), that can be translated

Team up with others!



In September 2022, exactly one year after the WHO had published new Global Air Quality Guidelines, [more than 100 organisations in 17 EU countries called](#) on their health and environment ministers to save lives and protect nature from air pollution with legally binding, science-based EU air quality standards.

The letter is available in EN, DE, FR, NL, CRO, HU, IT, PL, PT, SL, ES.

Team up with others!



"Clean air is a question of political will, not an individual or lifestyle choice. Revised clean air standards bring clear added value for everyone, but especially for those most at risk from air pollution, including children, people already suffering from disease and people facing health inequalities."

In view of the 2024 EU elections, we expect national decision-makers to walk the talk on health, and enter into negotiations without delay, to conclude the AAQD revision swiftly."

- Anne Stauffer
Deputy Director
at the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)



Bundesumweltministerium and 9 others

3 25 39 3.4K

Show more replies

Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) @HealthandEnv · Nov 7

Doctors, healthcare professionals, patient organisations and health insurers agree: we need updated [#CleanAir4Health](#) standards in the EU!

There is no safe level of [#AirPollution](#). And exposure to it is not an individual choice.

bit.ly/460Odqe



"Clean air improves lung health, helps prevent new disease and reduces the economic burden of treating respiratory illness. It is vital that environment ministers follow the science and swiftly negotiate revised clean air standards, with health at the center of any agreement."

- Prof. Zorana Jovanovic Andersen
Chair of the Environment and Health Committee
European Respiratory Society (ERS)



"The health of marginalised populations is drastically affected by air pollution and the health of these people is under constant threat from air pollution."

Achieving clean air with revised EU clean air standards is a crucial component for tackling health inequalities across Europe and leaving no one behind."

- Dr Milka Sokolović
EPHA Director



Lessons learnt

- Develop a communications strategy
- Define target audience
- Bring together set of core messages, which you repeat, repeat, repeat
- Translate your messages: from the science to policy, into various languages
- Team up with others



Thank you for your attention

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