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Press release | 13.09.2023

MEPs vote to strengthen citizens rights to clean and healthy air

Today, Members of the European Parliament voted to strengthen the Air Pollution Directive proposed by the Commission. This brings the directive in line with WHO recommendations for clean and breathable air. Every year 300 000 people die a premature death due to air pollution in the EU. The Greens/EFA Group has been instrumental in strengthening the Parliament's position for the upcoming trilogue negotiations with the Council and Commission. Meanwhile the EPP have yet again joined forces with the far right and tried and failed to water down this Green Deal directive.

Nicolae Ștefănuță MEP, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur on the Air Pollution Directive in the Environment committee, comments:

"Today's vote was another narrow victory for the progressive forces within the European Parliament fighting for a sustainable and green Europe. At the same time, the fact that the EPP again tried to align with the far right in this house to water down environmental legislation is shameful. If it was not clear before it should now be to all that the EPP is blurring the lines towards the far right and are strategically working to make cooperation with racist and fascist forces legitimate.

“Breathing clean air is a fundamental human right. Air pollution is the number one environmental threat to human health. Every year, air pollution kills 300 000 people in Europe. In addition, air pollution threatens the environment through acidification, eutrophication, and ozone damage, causing damage to forests, ecosystems and crops. Today MEPs voted to update the EU’s obsolete pollution limits, aligning them with the scientific recommendations from the World Health Organisation and with the Zero Pollution objective.”

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Responsible MEPs



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