

2016 report on air pollution in Paris region: an improvement but still unsatisfactory

Concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM₁₀) in the Île-de-France (Paris region) remain problematic, with significant exceedances of European limit values. Despite a major pollution episode in December, 2016 nevertheless confirms a slight decline in levels of chronic pollution for these pollutants. For the fine particles (PM_{2.5}) and ozone (O₃), the great majority of the Île-de-France is, as every year, exceeding the air quality objective.

In 2016, more than 1.4 million regional inhabitants are still exposed to levels of pollution that do not comply with the regulations for nitrogen dioxide. This pollutant is mostly emitted by the road traffic with a proven impact on health. It is the health of the inhabitants of Paris living along the traffic and in the heart of the Paris that is the most affected. In the capital city, this affects nearly 1 out of 2 Parisians.

The first half of 2016 is characterized by temperatures above the normal seasonality, excess rainfall and short sunshine periods. The second half of the year is marked by exceptional anticyclonic conditions in December. This particular meteorology had a major impact on Paris air quality over the year.

Despite an improvement, **the daily and annual limit values for PM₁₀ particles are still exceeded in the vicinity of road traffic. For particulate matter PM_{2.5}, 95% of the inhabitants of the region are potentially affected by the exceedance of the French air quality objective** (set at 10 µg/m³). On background situation (far from the roads), the levels are on average 1.4 times higher than the objective and up to almost twice in proximity to road traffic. **The annual limit value (25 µg/m³) is respected throughout Île-de-France region.**

Despite of a sullen spring weather and a summer without a heat wave, ozone (O₃) quality objectives are still exceeded, particularly in peri-urban and rural areas.

In 2016, five pollutants are still exceeding the regulations, with various degrees: nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), ozone and benzene. PM₁₀ and nitrogen dioxide levels are the subject of disputes between France and the European Commission for non-compliance with the directives on air quality.

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