

Guidance for Completing the European Commission’s Air Quality Fitness Check Questionnaire

The European Commission’s [public consultation](#), part of the Ambient Air Quality Directives ‘Fitness Check’ process is **open until 31 July 2018**. The questionnaire is available in all of the EU’s 23 official languages.

The most important questions start on page 7 of part 1.

In the ‘Suggested Answers’ document, some of the questions are marked as “OPEN”. Please use your own personal views/experience to complete these sections.

The interpretation of question 8.3, and of several of the following questions in section 8, is not straightforward. Responses to these questions are therefore quite subjective.

The final open question (max 2000 characters) is: *“Do you think that the Directives have been fit for purpose to protect citizens’ health and the environment from the harmful effects of air pollution? Why?”*

We suggest you start your answer to this question with **“yes”**.

You can see our sample answer below, which you are free to alter to highlight particular issues or situations in your country.

Please feel free to tell others about this questionnaire and to share our weblink and documents with colleagues, partner organizations and all different stakeholders you have in mind.

Remember that you can submit a response as an organization but also as individual citizens.

If you have any question or if any clarification/assistance is needed, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please scroll to the next page for our sample answer.

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Open question (2000 characters): do you think that the Directives have been fit for purpose to protect citizens' health and the environment from the harmful effects of air pollution? Why?

Yes, the Directives have been fit for purpose to protect citizens' health and the environment from the harmful effects of air pollution, particularly Directive 2008/50/EC because it sets clear and binding objectives (limit values) and defines specific responsibilities for Member States (MS) regarding air quality monitoring, reporting and planning.

The fact that many MS still exceed air quality standards results from lack of proper implementation and enforcement.

To deliver the Directives' objectives, national, regional and local authorities should:

- produce and implement air quality plans with effective measures (e.g. LEZ)
- establish coherent tax systems, removing subsidies for polluting activities
- elaborate consistent national plans and implementing measures to abate air pollutant emissions as required by relevant EU legislation (e.g. AAQD, NECD)
- promote increased public participation and awareness
- enforce relevant source regulations (e.g. IED, EURO standards).

Additional steps should be also taken at the EU level to accelerate compliance. In particular, the Commission should:

- use its implementing powers to improve the requirements for air quality plans and the criteria for monitoring, in particular the minimum number and types of stations, data quality and validation, maintenance of sampling points and harmonised modelling and monitoring systems
- timely pursue infringement procedures

The EU and MS should also develop, adopt and implement ambitious source policies for all sectors to facilitate achievement of the air quality standards.

Following improved compliance with the Directives, a review and revision of the air quality standards would be required to ensure that they are in line with the most recent scientific evidence and knowledge. When updating the Directives, particular consideration should be given to the fact that limit values and the resulting right to clean air have been the main driver for action against air pollution through court enforcement.