

[Air Pollution Still a Problem for European Cities](#) [1]



[2]

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Ecologic Institute

While policies have improved overall air quality, air pollution remains the main environmental health hazard causing high health care systems costs, unhealthy workers and an estimated 400,000 premature deaths in Europe in 2011. A recent [air quality report](#) [3] shows that almost all city dwellers are exposed to pollutants at levels deemed unsafe by the World Health Organization (WHO). For some pollutants, over 95 % of the urban population is exposed to unsafe levels.

Alongside the report, the EEA published pollution level data for almost 400 European cities. Although many large cities have relatively low levels of pollution, others have pollution levels above EU limits for a significant part of the year.

An increasing body of scientific research indicates that air pollutants may be more harmful than previously thought. In addition to the well known effect of air pollution on respiratory illnesses and heart disease, new studies have shown that it can also affect health in other ways, from foetal development to illnesses late in life. Beyond health, it has detrimental effects on ecosystems and plant life as well. To read more, please click [here](#) [4].

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<http://www.eea.europa.eu/media/newsreleases/europes-cities-still-suffering-from> [4]

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Links

[1] <https://pocacito.eu/blog/2014-11-21/air-pollution-still-problem-european-cities>

[2] <https://pocacito.eu/sites/default/files/AlfedPalmerSmokestacks.jpg>

[3] <http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/air-quality-in-europe-2014>

[4] <http://www.eea.europa.eu/media/newsreleases/europes-cities-still-suffering-from>