

Industrial emissions

Too many loopholes in new EU rules on industrial emissions

The European parliament today adopted new rules on industrial emissions aimed at curbing environmental pollution. Commenting on the vote Green MEP **Bas Eickhout** (Netherlands), said:

"Today's vote on industrial emissions legislation is a step in the right direction for limiting the damage to our environment from industrial pollutants but it is regrettable that the final outcome falls short in key areas. Though the new legislation brings some improvement, it still allows for too many exemptions. I am still dissatisfied by the final outcome which gives the all clear to more air pollution by the oldest and dirtiest power plants. These power plants will be able to escape the rules for up to twelve more years. Instead of rewarding good behaviour, we are rewarding pollution with European citizens paying the price.

The aim of this directive is to ensure better protection of European citizens and the environment by obliging industries to limit their environmental pollution. I am disappointed that this weak compromise plays into the hands of those Member States that rely on the most ancient large combustion plants. The eco-industry already employs more people than the car-industry and this Directive could have further promoted innovative, green industries. Instead, the interests of the most polluting, out-of-date industries that have no real future were put first by a blocking minority in the Council.

While large combustion plants can delay meeting the best environment standards for up to 12 years, the scope to deviate from the so-called "Best Available Techniques" (BATs) after this time has been reduced. Although dissatisfied by the overall outcome on large combustion plants, I am pleased that in the future it will be more difficult for installations to deviate from the rules. This will bring an end to the widespread derogations witnessed in the past. A delayed push towards greening the EU economy, but a push nevertheless."

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Bas Eickhout

Co-President

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