

BreatheLife is a global campaign led by WHO, the Climate & Clean Air Coalition, The UN Environmental Programme and the World Bank to raise awareness about the health risks of short-lived climate pollutants, which contribute significantly to global warming and air pollution. The campaign advocates action in the areas of knowledge sharing between cities, increasing monitoring, supporting solutions and educating people.

See <https://breathelife2030.org/>

The campaign aims to support the leadership, policy and technical work of the WHO, UN Environment and the Coalition in advancing three core strategic goals:

- Engage city, subnational and national governments to commit to achieving WHO Air Quality Guidelines by 2030
- Halve the number of air pollution related deaths by 2030
- Slow the pace of climate change by 0.5 degrees Celsius by 2050

The BreatheLife campaign stresses both the practical policy measures that cities can implement (such as better housing, transport, waste, and energy systems) and measures people can take as communities or individuals (for example, to stop waste burning, promote green spaces and walking/cycling) to improve our air. Improving vehicle standards, prioritizing clean public and active transit, as well as adopting more efficient stove and fuel alternatives for cooking, lighting and heating are among the actions that can save lives and help save the planet.

It has been estimated that a suite of actions to reduce pollutants could reduce the annual death toll from air pollution. Some 3 million deaths a year are linked to exposure to outdoor air pollution. Indoor air pollution can be just as deadly. In 2012, an estimated 6.5 million deaths (11.6% of all global deaths) were associated with indoor and outdoor air pollution together.

Urban air pollution levels also tend to be higher in many low and middle-income cities and in poor neighbourhoods of high-income cities. This means reductions in pollutants can have particularly large health benefits for lower income groups as well as for children, elderly, and women.

The Breathelife network includes 76 cities, regions, and countries; reaching 295 million citizens.

At city or regional level, members participate by:

- Indicating priority solution areas
- Determining how to measure progress
- Sharing local air pollution data
- Soliciting input from your community
- Publishing success stories
- Attending convenings with members
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In Ireland the EPA reported in 2018 that in relation to particulate pollution monitoring:

PM10 was monitored at 26 monitoring stations in 2018. There were no exceedances of the EU limit values (annual and daily). However, the World Health Organisation (WHO) air quality guideline daily limit value was exceeded at nine monitoring stations for a total of 16 days.

PM2.5 was monitored at 20 monitoring stations in 2018. There were no exceedances of the EU annual limit value. However, the WHO air quality guideline annual limit was exceeded at one monitoring station. The WHO air quality guideline daily limit value was exceeded at 17 monitoring stations for a total of 103 days.

Selected EU standards and the World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines are summarised in the table below. These apply over differing periods of time because the observed health impacts associated with the various pollutants occur over different exposure times.

The WHO guideline values are set for the protection of health, and are generally stricter than the comparable politically agreed EU standards.

EU Air Quality Directive				WHO Guidelines	
Pollutant	Averaging Period	Objective and legal nature and concentration	Comments	Concentration	Comments
PM _{2.5}	Hourly			25 µg/m ³	99th percentile (3 days/year)
PM _{2.5}	Annual	Limit value, 25 µg/m ³		10 µg/m ³	
PM ₁₀	Hourly	Limit value, 50 µg/m ³	Not to be exceeded on more than 35 days per year	50 µg/m ³	99th percentile (3 days/year)
PM ₁₀	Annual	Limit value, 40 µg/m ³		20 µg/m ³	
O ₃	Maximum daily 8-hour mean	Target value, 120 µg/m ³	Not to be exceeded on more than 25 days per year, averaged over three years	100 µg/m ³	
NO ₂	Hourly	Limit value, 200 µg/m ³	Not to be exceeded on more than 18 times a calendar year	200 µg/m ³	
NO ₂	Annual	Limit value, 40 µg/m ³		40 µg/m ³	