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Agriculture and transport pose problems in meeting agreed air pollution limits

Emissions from agriculture and transport continue to pose problems for European Union Member States in meeting EU and United Nations air pollution limits, according to updated data published by the European Environment Agency (EEA) today. While emissions of most air pollutants remain on a downward trend, ammonia emissions continued to rise in 2016.

The EEA briefing, "National Emission Ceilings (NEC) Directive reporting status 2018" presents progress made by the EU and its Member States in meeting the emission ceilings that are applicable since 2010 set out in the NEC Directive. The EU legislation restricts emissions from 2010 onward; NO_x, NMVOCs/SO₂, and ammonia (NH₃), and from 2020 also for PM_{2.5}. Six EU Member States exceeded ceilings for one or more pollutants in 2016. Austria and Ireland exceeded NO_x and NH₃, Croatia, Germany and Spain exceeded NH₃. Hungary exceeded NMVOCs.

A separate EEA report on updated data from the annual European Union emission inventory report 1990-2016 under the UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP) shows that for the third consecutive year, ammonia emissions have increased. The majority of NH₃ emissions come from Europe's agriculture sector. Emissions increased in 15 EU Member States with Italy, the United Kingdom and Ireland reporting the highest increases.

In general, the road transport sector is the largest contributor to total NO₂ emissions in the EU, while fuel combustion in the commercial, institutional and households sector is the largest contributor to total primary particulate matter emissions, particularly in some eastern European countries.

Source/ read more: EEA <https://www.eea.europa.eu/highlights/air-pollution-agriculture-and-transport>