EURELECTRIC reacts to European Parliament Air Quality Vote

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Today the Plenary of the European Parliament voted on the European Commission's proposal to revise the Directive concerning national emission reduction commitments of a number of atmospheric pollutants such as SO_2, NOx, PM 2.5 and NH_3. This first reading vote supports the ambition levels set in the Commission's proposal.

While the power sector supports ambitious European air quality policy, EURELECTRIC reiterates its call on co-legislators to consider a cautious and balanced approach with regard to the revision of the Directive. The power sector once again urges policymakers to consider carefully whether the existing policy framework will allow Europe to meet the proposed emission reduction commitments, and whether the burden to achieve this will be shared equitably among all sectors.

Regarding the outcome of today's vote, EURELECTRIC would have preferred a single mandatory target year of 2030 for achieving the national emission reduction commitments as this would ensure alignment with the forthcoming legislation on the EU's 2030 climate and energy framework.

EURELECTRIC stresses that between 1990 and 2012, emissions of SO_2 and NOx by the electricity industry fell by 85% and 55% respectively, while emissions of PM2.5 were reduced by 70%. These impressive reductions took place while electricity generation increased by over 30% over the same period. Our sector intends to continue to pursue and even accelerate these emissions reductions. Additional emission reductions are expected in the next 15 years, driven by the implementation of the EU climate and energy policy as well as the Industrial Emissions Directive.

The European Parliament also approved granting a mandate to the ENVI Committee rapporteur to engage in trilogue negotiations with the Council with a view to reaching agreement on this proposal. EURELECTRIC will to continue to contribute to these discussions in a constructive manner.

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