

Love is in the Air!

Improving Air Quality in Europe through Citizen Action

14 February, 10.00- 13.00 CET

Venue: BeCentral - Cantersteen 12, Brussels, 1000 Belgium **Language:** English

Background: According to the United Nations everyone on the planet has a right to a healthy environment, including clean air. Still, air pollution continues to negatively impact human health, Europe's nature and biodiversity, damaging agricultural crops, natural vegetation, historical buildings and monuments.

Each year in the EU over 400,000 people die prematurely as a result of breathing toxic air.

In 2022 ECAS and partners crowdsourced the ideas of thousands of citizens from 10 European cities on how to improve air.

Our event "Love is in the Air! Improving Air Quality in Europe through Citizen Action" will present the main problems with air quality identified by citizens in their cities, their proposals for solutions and top priorities for environmental action on local, national and European level.

This event will start by welcoming Minister Alain Maron to explain his upcoming environmental and democratic plans for Brussels. We will hand over to him the citizens' top priorities for the improvement of air quality.

The following two panels will provide a forum to experts on air quality issues and campaigners in the European cities to discuss how citizens' recommendations could become a reality and what are the lessons learnt on ensuring a more collaborative decision-making.

This event is being organised in the framework of the "Digital Democratic Empowerment and Mobilisation for a Stronger EU (DigiDEM)" project, under the Europe for Citizens programme of the European Commission.

Agenda and Speakers

10.00 Welcome from Gilles Pelayo, Head of Unit, EACEA, European Commission

10.10 Alain Maron, Minister of the Government of the Brussels-Capital Region, responsible for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Participatory Democracy

10.20 Citizen Handover of Air Quality Proposals to Minister Alain Maron

10.30 Panel 1: **Enhancing Air Quality in Brussels and Europe – What is the state of play and what are the plans for the future?**

Moderated by: Elisa Lironi, Programme Director-European Democracy, ECAS

- Prof. Dr. Catherine Bouland, Présidente de l'Ecole de Santé Publique de l'ULB and Directrice du centre de recherche en santé environnementale et santé au travail
- Pierre Dornier, President, Chercheurs d'Air
- Geoffrey Usé, Conseiller politique mobilités, Ecolo
- Lieselotte Gevens, Mobilité & Environnement, BRAL - Brussels' urban movement, Co-initiator of CurieuzenAir.

Q&A with participants

11.30 Coffee Break

11.45 Panel 2: **Can Citizen Participation Improve Policy-Making in Europe? – Lessons Learnt from Crowdsourcing Solutions for Tackling Air Pollution in Cities.**

Moderated by: Andreas Müller, Managing Director, Democracy International, Germany

- Petko Georgiev, Director, ProInfo, Bulgaria
- Liia Hanni, Senior Expert on e-Democracy, E-Governance Academy, Estonia
- Amina Murić, Deputy Director, Civic Alliance, Montenegro
- Tessel Renzenbrink, Co-Director, NetDem, The Netherlands

Q&A with participants

12.55 Concluding remarks

13.00 Lunch Buffet