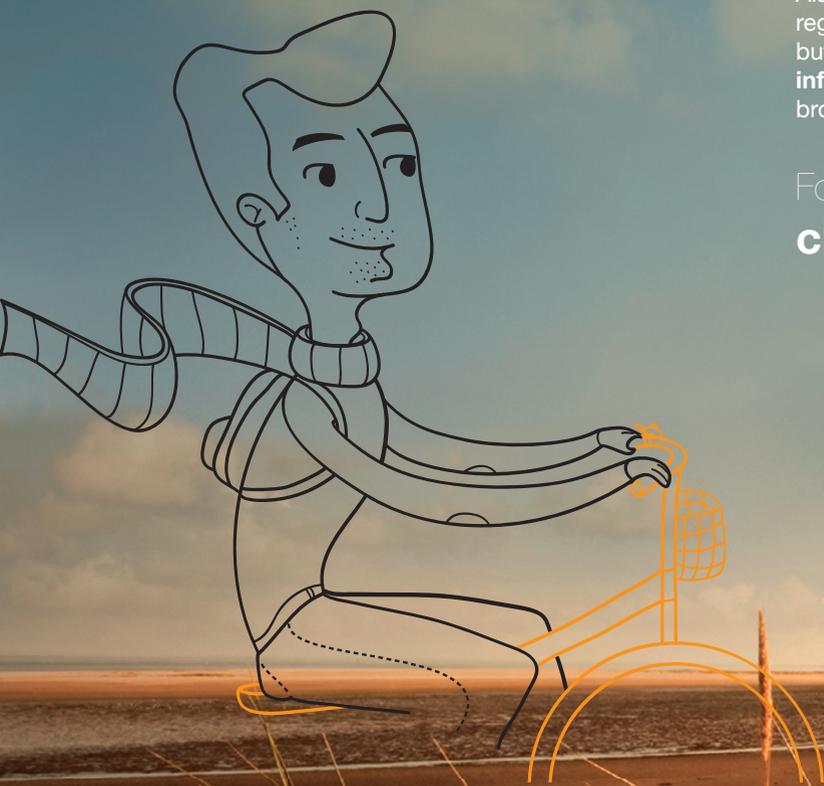


## What is JOAQUIN?

Joaquin (Joint Air Quality Initiative) is a new **EU cooperation project** between several partners from France, Belgium, United Kingdom and the Netherlands supported by the INTERREG IVB North West Europe programme ([www.nweurope.eu](http://www.nweurope.eu)).

The objective of this project is to **support health policy focused on air quality in Europe**.



## What does JOAQUIN DO?

The Joaquin project will carry out measurements on an international level (Northwestern Europe) on 5 locations because this region suffers heavily from air pollution and because the **distribution of pollutants** can be an international phenomenon.

The Joaquin project will also compare the results of regional measurements. A decision matrix of possible measures will be presented to all policy makers, from a local to a European level. This way the policy makers can use this tool to fight air pollution.

Also important during this project is the **communication** regarding air quality, not only towards experts and policymakers but also towards risk groups and the public at large. **Good information** on the health effects of air pollution will lead to broad **social support** for policy measures.

For more info go to  
[cleanerairbetterhealth.co.uk](http://cleanerairbetterhealth.co.uk)

# Cleaner **AIR** Better **HEALTH**



**joaquin**

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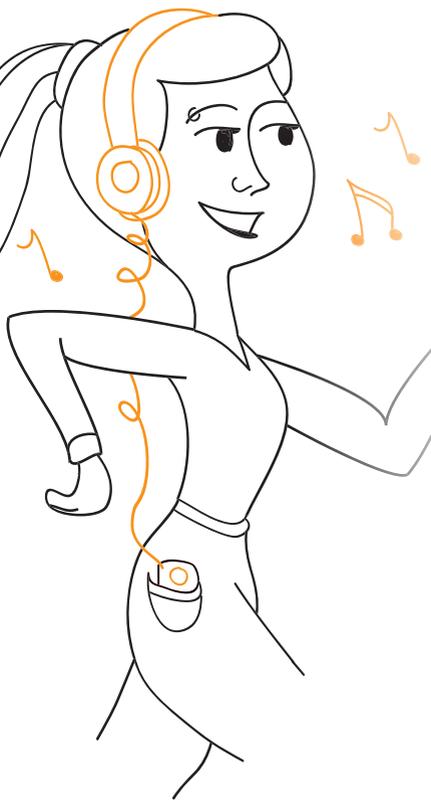
## CLEANER AIR BETTER HEALTH



### What is AIR POLLUTION?

Air pollution occurs when harmful substances derived from **all kinds of sources** end up in the air. Inhaling polluted air can damage our health. These substances are released into the air through the exhaust of cars but also via factories, or from the chimney on the roofs of houses.

Lisa (16) likes running, but wonders if it is actually healthy to exercise in the open air. Although the **air quality** has improved considerably in recent years, we can still do a lot ourselves to eliminate air pollution.



## What is the link BETWEEN AIR POLLUTION AND HEALTH?

Due to years of efforts **across Europe**, today's air quality is much better than it was many years ago, but it still isn't what it should be. Scientific research shows that air pollution has a great **impact on our health**. Thomas (10) was recently diagnosed with a mild form of asthma. He now brings his meds along to athletics and skateboarding practice out of precaution.

### How dangerous is air pollution?

Air pollution consists of a mixture of substances. Not all pollutants are equally harmful to health. It depends chiefly on the **harmfulness** of the substances, the **quantity** in the air and the length of **exposure**.

In the **North West European (NWE) region**, particulates, nitrogen dioxides, soot and ozone chiefly cause health problems. **The smaller the particles, the deeper they penetrate into the lungs** and the more harmful they can be.

### Is air pollution harmful for everyone?

The longer you are exposed to air pollutants and the higher the concentrations, the more harmful it is to your health. However, not everyone will exhibit health problems at the same rate. This is because people **react differently** to air pollution and some people are more vulnerable.

We can make a distinction between **'healthy' people and risk groups**. The risk groups primarily include small children, the elderly, people suffering from chronic pulmonary disease and those with cardiovascular disease.

## What can I DO?

There are various ways in which you can contribute to better air quality, both **indoors** and **outdoors**.

Also, breathing in polluted air is **difficult to avoid** but, in certain circumstances, you can **limit** your own **exposure**.

As a young mother of two, Catherine (42) thinks it's very important for her children to know how precious the **environment** is and what they can do to **preserve** it. She is also keen to **protect** her family from air pollution.

### What can I do to reduce the exposure to pollutants?

- Quit smoking today: The amount of particulates you inhale through cigarette smoke is exponentially higher than the amount of particulates you breathe in through air pollution
- Ventilate your home and workspace: preferably on the side where the least traffic passes and before and after peak hours
- Move smart: best to walk, ride your bike or sport along roads with less traffic

### What can I do to reduce my own emission of pollutants?

- Limit your car use to a minimum
- Cover short distances by bike or by foot
- Go for alternatives like public transportation or car pooling
- Try to limit the use of fireplaces and wood stoves

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