

Court faults France in key air pollution case

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The Paris ring road, the peripherique, is regularly clogged with vehicles churning out polluting emissions

A court on Tuesday found the French state had failed to take sufficient steps to limit air pollution around Paris, following a complaint by a mother and daughter that their health had been harmed.

The case before the administrative [court](#) in Montreuil outside Paris, backed by NGOs, was the first brought by individuals against the French state over health problems caused by air [pollution](#).

"The state committed a fault by taking insufficient measures concerning the quality of air," the court said in a statement.

It said that between 2012 and 2016, the state had failed to take measures needed to reduce concentrations of certain polluting gases exceeding the allowed limits.

"For victims of pollution, this is a first," the plaintiffs' lawyer Francois Lafforgue told AFP. "From now, the state will have to take effective measures in the fight against pollution."

However the court rejected the pair's demand for 160,000 euros (\$182,000) in damages, saying it could not find a direct link between their [health problems](#) and the state's failings.

The mother and daughter said the authorities did not take effective steps against atmospheric pollution, in particular during a bad period in December 2016.

They argued that this affected their health, especially as they were living at the time in the northern Paris suburb of Saint-Ouen, just outside the clogged peripherique ring road.

The court's ruling comes as concern grows over pollution in Paris as the capital and other parts of France swelter in a heatwave.

In France, [air pollution](#) is responsible for 48,000 [premature deaths](#) every year, according to the Public Health France agency.

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