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Published in:
Proceedings of Abstracts 9th International Conference on Air Quality

Publication date:
2014

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Citation (APA):
OUTDOOR AIR DOMINATES BURDEN OF DISEASE FROM INDOOR EXPOSURES

O. Hänninen (1), A. Asikainen (1), P. Carrer (2), S. Kephalopoulos (3), E. de Oliveira Fernandes (4), P. Wargocki (5)

(1) National Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland, POB 95, 70701 Kuopio, Finland; (2) University of Milan, Italy, (3) EC Joint Reasearch Centre, Ispra, Italy; (4) University of Porto, Portugal; (5) Technical University of Denmark

Presenting author email: otto.hanninen@thl.fi

Summary
Both indoor and outdoor sources of air pollution have significant public health impacts in Europe. Based on quantitative modelling of the burden of disease the outdoor sources dominate the impacts by a clear margin.

Introduction
Ambient air pollution has been suggested to be the dominating source of environmental burden of diseases in Europe (Hänninen & Knol, 2011, 2013). However, indoor sources can generate extremely high exposure levels in poorly ventilated conditions. Globally it has been estimated that indoor PM exposures, especially due to combustion of solid fuels, dominate the burden of disease caused by air pollution (Lim et al., 2012). The aim of this work is to compare the magnitude of indoor and outdoor air pollution in European countries and further to evaluate their control potentials using ventilation, filtration and source elimination.

Methods
Burden of disease model developed in the IAIAQ-study (Jantunen et al., 2011) was complemented with a mass-balance component (Hänninen et al., 2004). Exposure data for PM2.5, VOCs, radon, CO, second hand smoke and dampness and mould were collected for 26 European coutries (EU27 except Malta). Burden of disease for the baseline at 2010 and for alternative control scenarios were evaluated.

Results and discussion
Total burden of disease from indoor exposures is estimated to be 2.1 million DALY in EU26. The burden is dominated by outdoor PM2.5 (62%) followed by indoor PM2.5, radon (8%) and dampness and mould (5%). PM2.5 burden is further dominated by cardiovascular diseases followed by respiratory diseases.

Outdoor air burden can be controlled by either limiting ventilation or by filtration. However, the former approach increases the burden from indoor sources if they are not specifically controlled first. Most efficient reduction can be achieved by combining these strategies, providing an almost 50% reduction. As the energy efficiency demands are shaping the future building stocks strongly, it is essential to account for also for the indoor source control to protect public health.

Conclusions
Outdoor air remains the dominating source of burden of disease from indoor exposures. Improvement of outdoor air quality has the largest potential for public health improvements.

Acknowledgement
This work was funded by the EU Health Programme projects HEALTHVENT, Grant Nr. 2009 12 08, and IAIAQ, Grant Nr. 2009 62 02, EU FP6 project EnVIE, SSPE-CT-2004-502671, and Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and intramural funding for project EBoDE.

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