

# THE OBSERVATORY

## WORKING TO SUSTAINABLY IMPROVE AIR QUALITY IN THE REGION



Atmo Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes is an observatory approved by the Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development, and Energy to monitor and provide information about air quality in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region.

On 1 July 2016, the air quality monitoring observatories in Auvergne (Atmo Auvergne) and Rhône-Alpes (Air Rhône-Alpes) merged following reforms to the regions resulting from the New Territorial Organisation of the Republic (NOTRe law).

The French Air Quality Monitoring Agencies (AASQA) are organisations that measure and study atmospheric pollution in ambient air. According to ministerial decree, they are required to hold non-profit status (law of 1901 or law of 1908).

There is at least one AASQA for each administrative region in France.

Atmo Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes has a public service mission to serve the general interest, therefore does not engage in any kind of commercial activity.



## REGULATED ACTIVITIES CONSISTENT WITH NATIONAL GUIDELINES

The observatory's work fits into the Regional Air Quality Monitoring Plan (PRSQA), which was drafted to meet a regulatory requirement to create a regional air quality monitoring strategy (decree of 19/04/2017).

This document is itself consistent with the National Air Quality Monitoring Plan (PNSQA), which lays out national guidelines for air quality monitoring for the next 5 years.

Atmo Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes has 5 basic missions:

**OBSERVE** air quality through a monitoring system that produces, collects, and disseminates benchmark data.

**HELP** decision-makers develop and monitor medium- and long-term action plans for air quality and related topics (energy, climate, urban nuisances) as well as emergency situations (pollution episodes, incidents, or industrial accidents).

**INFORM** citizens and encourage them to take action to improve air quality.

**PLAN AHEAD** while integrating emerging issues related to atmospheric pollution and new technologies through partnerships established as part of experiments, innovative initiatives, and European programmes.

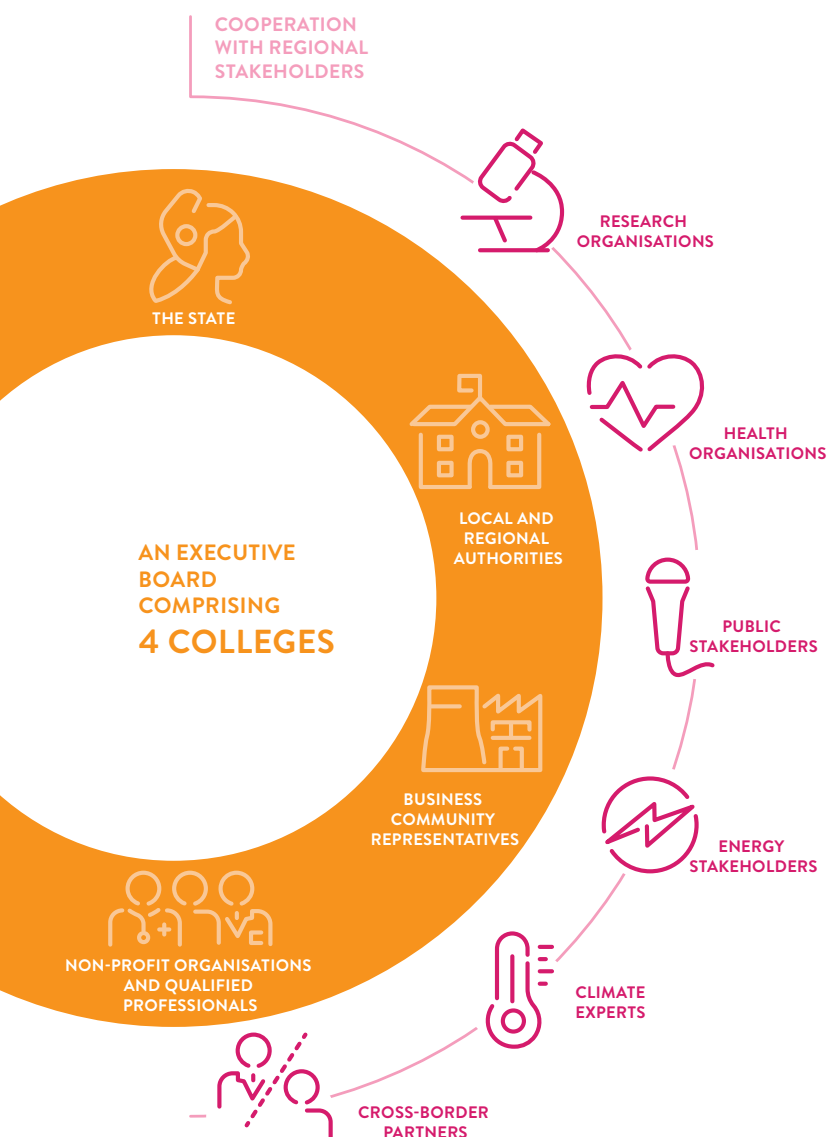
**MANAGE** the organisation's strategy and regional coordination, and share resources to ensure consistency with national guidelines.

# **40 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE** IN THE HEART OF THE REGIONS

## **CONSULTATION AND INVOLVEMENT AT THE LOCAL LEVEL**

The air quality observatory has more than 200 members split into four colleges: State representatives, local and regional authorities, local economic and institutional actors, and non-profit organisations and qualified professionals. This mode of operation ensures transparency and independence in how air quality information is processed and shared.

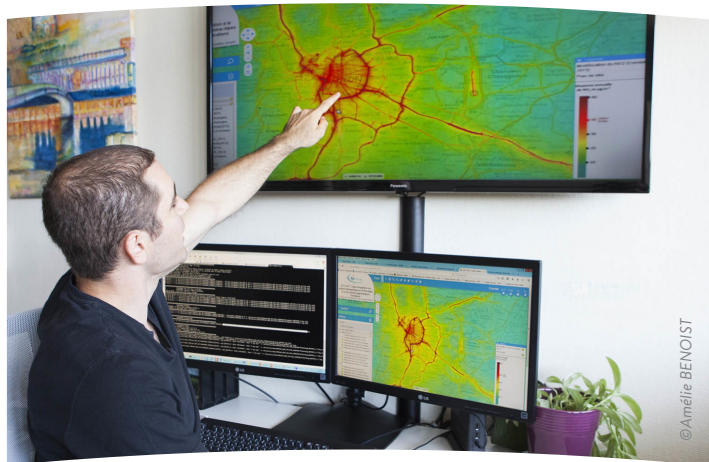
The members are split into 6 territorial committees, each led by its own coordinator, with a territorial director providing oversight. These committees provide opportunities for consultation, programme development, and communication that are relevant to territorial stakeholders. Its members thus help build strong connections throughout the region and relay information about local needs and expectations.



## **EXPERTISE**

The observatory has 80 employees who specialise in air pollution and monitoring technologies: meteorologists, chemists, technicians, research officers, modellers, inventory counters, IT technicians, forecast analysts, quality technicians, and territorial advisors.

The observatory has state-of-the-art tools to monitor, plan, characterise, and analyse atmospheric phenomena with an inventory of pollution sources that includes more than 50 compounds, high spatio-temporal resolution models, and now a network of 90 fixed monitoring stations.



## **Key figures**

Close to **250** members

**80** employees working in **6** divisions

A budget of more than **€10 M**

**90** fixed stations  
et **20** mobile stations

**11** urban areas covered  
by fine-scale mapping



## AIR QUALITY A CHALLENGE FOR THE REGION

Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes is one of the top regions in Europe based on its size, population, and economy.

- A surface area of **70,000 km<sup>2</sup>** (13% of mainland France)
- Close to **8 million inhabitants**

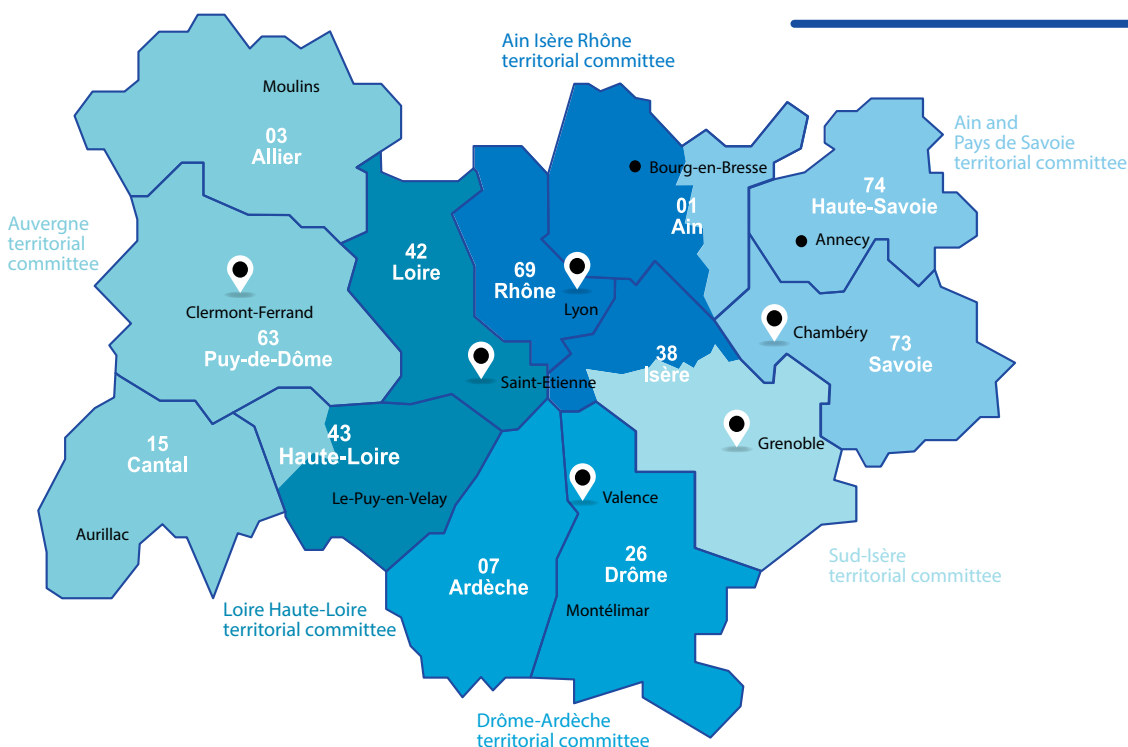
The new region is densely populated with a higher than average degree of urbanization. Yet there are also many natural areas that must be protected, as a third of the region comprises sparsely populated rural and mountain areas.

- **85% of the population** lives under the influence of a major urban centre.
- **22% of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region** falls within one of the nine Natural Parks.

It is also a dynamic region that is highly industrialised, is strongly committed to research and training, and has great tourist appeal.

- **No. 1 industrial region** in France
- **2nd largest tourist region** after Ile-de-France.
- **15% of engineers** educated in France study in Lyon, Grenoble, Clermont-Ferrand or Saint-Étienne
- **Close to 3% of the regional GDP** is invested in research each year.

**Air quality is a major issue for the region, and the promotion of areas with good air quality will be a major advantage in the future. Improving air quality in over-exposed areas (large urban centres and major trunk roads), rehabilitating sensitive zones, and maintaining protected natural areas will sustain the region's continued economic and tourist appeal, as well as protect the health and well-being of residents.**







## « INSPIRING THE FUTURE »: THE OBSERVATORY'S VISION TO BREATHE NEW LIFE INTO THE REGION

The observatory has identified five strategic and cross-cutting priorities for the next five years :

### Support territorial stakeholders

The observatory will rely on the quadripartite governance system and consultation with citizens to prepare and support actions to improve air quality, in keeping with a multi-disciplinary approach to Air/Climate/Energy.

### Communicate to promote action

Since the observatory's communication must make it easier for people to take action, it will place greater and greater emphasis on digital technology and personalised, local services. The goal is to facilitate individual experimentation and provide citizens with the opportunity to take part in monitoring activities.

### Improve and diversify assessment tools by taking advantage of technological and digital innovations

Improve regulatory metrology to augment decision-making tools: diagnostics, predictions, and forecasts. The observatory is committed to experimenting with new monitoring technologies such as micro-sensors to refine its forecasting and diagnostic tools (finer spatio-temporal scales).

### Enhance and develop employee expertise in order to contribute to regional transformations

Air monitoring professions are changing, from metrology to emissions inventories to modelling. The observatory is an important producer of public data. In order to ensure that the greatest number of people can make use of this data, the organisation must maintain its level of expertise to serve the region's needs.

### Encourage resource sharing and partnerships to meet new needs

The observatory can count on a network of scientific and technical partners to gain a better understanding in all fields related to air quality: health, economics, energy, climate, etc. It also participates in various cross-border research projects - primarily in Italy and Switzerland. The observatory intends to keep expanding its knowledge, anticipate emerging topics such as pesticides, and monitor air-related nuisances (odours and pollens in particular).



## TO LEARN MORE

### Visit [www.atmo-auvergnerhonealpes.fr](http://www.atmo-auvergnerhonealpes.fr)

Continuous real-time air quality information for the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region.

Subscribe to receive air quality news by e-mail: a newsletter, daily or weekly updates, alerts about pollution episodes or incidents.

By telephone: **0 810 800 710**  
(cost of a local call from a landline)



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