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Poor air quality is responsible for increased risk of mortality which global cost in 2019 was associated with 4.1 million premature deaths globally. The Western Balkans were selected for this study because the levels of particulate matter and ozone are frequently above the EU Air Quality Directive guidelines. Air pollution health impact (mortality and morbidity) assessment was carried out using the attributable fraction approach based on different relative risk attribution methodologies: concentration response functions (CRF) and integrated exposure responses (IER). Air pollution costs were estimated using the value of statistical life (VSL) and the value of life year (VOLY) attributable to air pollution obtained with the benefit transfer method (BT) from a global database of non-market welfare-based unit costs. The health impact and related external costs attributable to air pollution in 2019 were assessed in 30 urban areas of the Western Balkans region, one of Europe's air pollution hot spots. The evaluation was based on PM_{2.5}, O₃ and NO₂ concentrations in 2019. The average cost of mortality attributable to PM_{2.5} in 26 urban areas was above 200 million Euro per city while the ones of O₃ and NO₂ were 4 times lower than PM_{2.5}. The study results suggest that the economic burden of air pollution per capita and compared to the GDP in the Western Balkans is higher than the one observed in EU27 in the same time window.

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Air pollution costs in Western Balkans' cities

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