

## Environment Minister: Taxation can be a solution to curb pollution, full pledge decision needed

**Taxation can be a solution for curbing pollution, and I believe that starting from 2022 we must commit to an unequivocal decision in this regard, Environment Minister Tanczos Barna said on Monday evening on broadcaster B1TV.**

"If we want to curb pollution we need to see what we can do about traffic, industrial and residential pollution, and about illegal, uncontrolled incineration. Taxation can be a solution, as it is in Europe, but this is not a decision to be taken at this moment by me or the government alone. That's why I said that at least one year is necessary for a public debate with scientists, with EU experts who should tell us which are the options that have worked in Europe, which are legitimate and have yielded results helping reduce pollution in certain centers. The general or local specifics need to be discussed and this decision, which has to be legal and implementable, needs to be broadly committed to. This is a discussion that has begun and will continue. This year there will definitely be no additional tax, but starting with 2022 I believe we must have an unequivocal and full pledge decision," said the Environment Minister.

He explained that in 24 EU countries the polluter is taxed one way or another and the general 'the polluter pays principle' enshrined in EU law is applied.

Minister Barna added that it is difficult to quantify who pollutes the most: a homeowner who burns wood or fossil fuel for heating, a thermal power plant that delivers heat to three neighborhoods, or one million cars.

"We need to discuss with the Association of Communes and Cities, the Association of Municipalities, of Counties, the government, the Parliament, NGOs, with the citizens represented by various organizations, etc. It is a difficult decision, but it must be taken. We may go without taxing at all, but then we should come up with alternative solutions," the Minister pointed out.