Commission Staff Working Document on rail freight noise reduction

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Why the problem of rail noise is important?

- **WHO:** noise - second source of **premature deaths** in the EU
- **EEA: 14 million** people affected by rail noise
- **Eurobarometer:** 29% of the population disturbed by traffic noise (of these 13% by rail noise)
- **Growing public opposition** against this nuisance versus projected increase in rail freight **by 50% by 2030**
- The **EC is aware** of the importance of the rail noise and takes it very seriously
- **A number of initiatives** have been already adopted at EU level in order to reduce noise exposure

What has been done so far at the EU level? (1)

- **Environmental Noise Directive** 2002/49/EC obliges national authorities:
  - to draw up strategic **noise maps** concerning major infrastructures, **including rail**
  - and on their basis elaborate **action plans** with a view to reducing noise exposure
- Drawbacks:
  - **no binding limit values**
  - measures taken are usually **infrastructure-related**

What has been done so far at the EU level (2)

- Under the **railway interoperability directive** (Directive 2008/57/EC), a Technical Specification for Interoperability **on Noise** (TSI Noise) was adopted in 2005
- Amended several times afterwards - current version – Regulation 1304/2014 – in force since 1/1/2015
- It sets out specific **noise limit values** applicable to rolling stock introduced **after entry into force of the TSI Noise**

What has been done so far at the EU level?(3)

- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/429 sets out the modalities for **charging for the cost of noise effects (NDTAC)**
- Main elements:
  - **Voluntary** introduction of NDTAC
  - If introduced, **bonus as a mandatory element** with a minimum harmonised value
  - **Non-mandatory malus** that cannot exceed the bonus
  - Additional bonuses possible for **very quiet rolling stock or silent trains**

What has been done so far at the EU level?(4)

- Regulation 1316/2013 on the **Connecting Europe Facility** (CEF) allows co-funding of retrofitting costs of existing freight wagons:
  - "Actions to reduce rail freight noise, including by **retrofitting existing rolling stock**" (Article 7)
  - **20% of eligible costs** related to retrofitting freight wagons with composite blocks
  - First call in 2014, second call in autumn 2016 (indicative amount of EUR 20 million)

Main issues

- **Freight wagons** not in line with TSI-Noise limits are the most important source of rail noise
- **Retrofitting** is the most efficient way to reduce noise (up to 10 dB = ½ less in terms of human perception)
- **50% of rail freight transport is international**
- Risk of **unilateral national measures** (speed/night restrictions) leading to barriers to railway interoperability and internal market
- Piecemeal approach creates **risk of a modal shift** from rail to road
- **Existing measures are not sufficient – business as usual** will result in **no significant progress until 2030**

Options considered

1. Status quo ["**baseline scenario**"]
2. Subsidies for retrofitting ["**incentives approach**"]
3. Noise-differentiated track access charges ["**NDTAC approach**"]
4. Application of TSI-Noise limits to all wagons ["**TSI Noise approach**"]
5. Introduction of a noise limit along the TEN-T railway Network ["**TEN-T approach**"]
6. Introduction of noise limits in relation to density of population ["**Density approach**"]
7. Track management in relation to noise ["**Maintenance approach**"]

Additional option: 8. Introduction of a general maximum transport-related **cumulative noise exposure** ["**Environmental health approach**"]

Packages

- Different packages analysed
- In the short- to medium term the most preferable approach:
  - application of harmonised **noise-charging principles (NDTAC)**;
  - **financial support (EC + national)**;
  - **noise-related standards** of railway infrastructure (acoustic rail grinding + track maintenance);
  - **revision of TSI Noise -** gradual application of **TSI Noise limit values to all wagons**

Gradual application of TSI Noise limit values to all wagons

- **Main elements:**
  - Transitional period: supporting mechanisms
  - First stage: Application of TSI Noise limit values to **international freight wagons (certain opt outs possible)**
  - Second stage: **applicability of TSI Noise to all existing wagons**

Thank you for your attention!

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Further information on EU rail policy:
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/rail/index_en.htm