

Sound level of motor vehicles and of replacement silencing systems

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The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the report by Miroslav OUZKÝ (ECR, CZ) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the sound level of motor vehicles.

It recommends that the European Parliament's position at first reading, under the ordinary legislative procedure, should amend the Commission's proposal as follows:

Limit values: in order to increase the health benefits and to enhance legal certainty, **long-term noise limit values** should be established : phase 1 valid from 6 years after publication; phase 2 valid from 8 years after publication.

Differences in categories of vehicles: Members consider that the Regulation should take account of the differences in development and production of passenger cars and heavy duty vehicles. These differences are to be reflected in a different timing of the respective phases to which the noise limit values apply. Accordingly, the committee proposes **different phases for passenger cars and commercial vehicles used for the carriage of goods**.

Transparency: the report stresses that transparency is a key element of responsible consumer policy. Ensuring the availability of clear and transparent **information** on noise emissions of each vehicle to consumers will enable them to base their purchase decision on the noise emission level. The same information to public authorities will empower them to set appropriate incentives to encourage the uptake of quieter vehicles.

In order to provide the necessary information to the customer, the manufacturer should provide information on noise levels of vehicles in accordance with harmonised testing methods at the **point of sale and in technical promotional material**. A **label**, comparable to the labels used for information on CO₂-emissions, fuelconsumption and tyre-noise, should inform the consumers of the noise emission of a vehicle.

Additional sound emission provisions (ASEP): ASEP are tailored for a behaviour typical for sporty retrofit systems and M1 vehicles so to detect unexpected noise emission at high engine speeds. ASEP has been developed and approved by the experts group on noise of UNECE Working Party 29 of which the European Commission is a member. The same experts group has recommended to **exclude N1 delivery vans**. The committee has followed this recommendation.

Market surveillance: for the purpose of good functioning of the internal market and healthy competition among industries, it is important to guarantee a high level of market observance both for products circulating within the Community and products entering from outside the EEA. Therefore, Member States and their respective Market Monitoring bodies are called to check and monitor the fulfilment of requirements set out in this Regulation.

Road surface classification and quality: the Commission shall assess the possibility of introducing a road classification system which characterises the typical rolling sound on every road in the European Union, and if appropriate submit to the European Parliament and the Council a proposal in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure.

Acoustic Vehicle Alerting System (AVAS): an amendment defines ‘Acoustic Vehicle Alerting System’ (AVAS) as a system for hybrid electric and electric road transport vehicles which provide vehicle operation information to pedestrians and vulnerable road users. An amendment stipulates that where manufacturers choose to install AVAS in vehicles, the sound to be generated by the AVAS shall be a continuous sound that provides information to pedestrians and vulnerable road users of a vehicle in operation. The sound shall be easily indicative of vehicle behaviour and could sound similar to the sound of a vehicle of the same category equipped with an internal combustion engine, and operating under the same conditions.

Silent vehicles: Members consider that the Commission should examine the potential of active safety systems in more silent vehicles such as hybrid and electric vehicles to better serve the objective of improving the safety of vulnerable road users in urban areas, such as blind, visually and auditorily challenged pedestrians, cyclists and children.

Revision of noise levels provided in Annex III: for the initial Commission proposal there was no proper impact assessment based on the required new vehicle classification. Therefore, Members call on the Commission to carry out impact assessments prior to further major reduction steps.

Delegated acts: in order to enable the Commission to adapt the technical requirements of this Regulation to technical and scientific developments, the power to adopt acts in accordance with Article 290 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union should be delegated to the Commission to amend the Annexes to this Regulation related to EU type-approval procedures in respect of sound level of vehicle types and of exhaust systems, methods and instruments for measuring the noise made by motor vehicles, silencing systems, compressed air noise, checks on conformity of production, specifications for test sites, measuring methods for additional sound emission provisions, and measures ensuring the audibility of hybrid and electric vehicles.