Noise-related operating restrictions at Community airports

2001/0282(COD) - 13/03/2002 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted the report by Mr Georg JARZEMBOWSKI (EPP-ED, D) by 476 votes in favour, 43 against and 12 abstentions. One of the important implications of this proposal is that the so-called hushkits regulation 925/99 can be repealed by 1 April 2002. Its replacement with this directive at the same consequence will be the resolution of the existing dispute with the United States on the hushkits (aircraft retrospectively fitted with noise-suppression capability). The use of third-country hushkitted aircraft would otherwise have been frozen as at 1 April 2002. This implies that the vote in Parliament was just in time to enable the entry into force of the new directive by the end of this March. It should be noted that in individual cases, member States may authorise, at airports situated in their territory, individual operations of marginally compliant aeroplanes on the basis of the provisions of this Directive. This exemption is limited to: - aeroplanes whose individual operations are of such an exceptional nature that it would be unreasonable to withhold a temporary exemption; - aeroplanes on non-revenue flights for the purpose alterations, repair or maintenance. There was also an agreement on a new definition for airports under the scope of the directive: airports within the EU which had more than 50 000 movements of civil subsonic jet aeroplanes per calendar year, taking into consideration the average of the last three calendar years before the application of the directive at hand. It was also agreed that marginally compliant aeroplanes registered in developing countries should be exempted from the provisions in the directive, but only for a period of ten years after its entry into force. Moreover, Annex 3 to the directive, a list of marginally compliant aeroplanes from developing countries by geographical region was deleted. Lastly, there was an agreement on a new stricter definition for city airports. City airports shall mean an airport in the centre of a large conurbation, of which no runway has a maximum take-off run available, of more than 2000 metres and which provides only point-to-point services between or within European states. It was felt that a significant number of people living around these airports were objectively affected by aircraft noise. Any incremental increase in aircraft here would represent a particularly high annoyance in the light of the extreme noise situation already present.