

Assessment and management of environmental noise

2000/0194(COD) - 03/10/2001 - Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading

The European Parliament is holding out in its drive to establish an EU-wide policy to reduce noise pollution. It has voted at second reading to repeat its demand at first reading, rejected by the Council, for the draft directive on noise to be beefed up into a Noise Framework Directive, to be followed by proposal for specific directives laying down binding quality standards to be implemented by the Member States. However, Parliament does not specify the types of noise to be covered. An amendment calling for these proposals to be issued within three years of the framework directive's entry into force was passed by 345 votes to 194 with 6 abstentions. Parliament has left in tact all but one of the longer deadlines for implementing the legislation inserted by the Council in its common position, reinstating only the Commission's original deadline of 31 December 2008 by which Member States must inform the Commission of all the agglomerations and all the major roads and major railways in their territories. Partly in the light of the recent terrorist attacks, Parliament is no longer seeking to include noise from military aircraft in the directive and is not opposing a Council amendment that adds a new exemption for 'military activities in military areas'. The House has also tightened up some of the draft directive's provisions, including its stated aim to 'avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health due to exposure to environmental noise, which rapporteur Alexander DE ROO (Greens/EFA, NL) says now affects one third of the inhabitants of the European Union.