



Recommendation of the Council on Strengthening Noise Abatement Policies

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Background Information

The Recommendation on Strengthening Noise Abatement Policies was adopted by the OECD Council on 20 June 1985 on the proposal of the Environment Committee (now called Environment Policy Committee). The Recommendation advises Adherents to implement more effective enforcement of noise abatement regulations and to complement them with other measures such as economic incentives for the production and use of quieter products, better land-use planning and traffic management. The Recommendation was abrogated on 8 November 2023.

THE COUNCIL,

HAVING REGARD to Article 5 b) of the Convention on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development of 14 December 1960;

HAVING REGARD to its Recommendations of 14 November 1974 and 3 July 1978 on noise prevention and abatement [C(74)217] and on noise abatement policies [C(78)73(Final)];

AWARE of the need to continue international co-operation on noise abatement policies;

AWARE that environmental noise is mainly caused by products, notably motor vehicles and aircraft, which enter international trade;

CONSIDERING the conclusions of the OECD Conference on Noise Abatement Policies which took place in May 1980, in particular conclusions regarding noise emission limits on motor vehicles - 75 dB(A) for cars and 80 dB(A) for commercial vehicles - and aircraft;

CONSIDERING the Second Report on the State of the Environment in OECD countries showing that the quality of the acoustic environment as a whole has not improved over the last decade;

CONSIDERING that noise remains one of the most important sources of environmental nuisance, particularly in urban areas, and that unacceptable noise levels are liable to extend in space and time;

CONSIDERING that noise abatement policies are generally compatible with other policies, such as air pollution abatement and energy savings;

CONSIDERING that regulations and/or enforcement are not at present sufficient to provide inhabitants of OECD countries with a satisfactory acoustic environment and that complementary instruments are therefore necessary;

On the proposal of the Environment Committee;

I. RECOMMENDS that Member countries undertake a significant improvement in their noise abatement policies by:

1. Ensuring a more effective enforcement of existing noise abatement regulations;
2. Progressively strengthening noise control regulations, and in particular noise emission limits on products which form important items in international trade, such as motor vehicles and aircraft, along the lines of the conclusions of the OECD Conference on Noise Abatement Policies (1980);
3. Complementing existing regulations with incentives and measures designed to promote the production and use of quieter products, such as economic instruments, education and information, product labelling, favourable treatment of quieter products and in-use control of products and vehicles;
4. Developing measures to finance noise abatement policies, which would limit pressure on public expenditure; and
5. Protecting the most exposed members of the population by means such as traffic management, the construction of noise barriers, the insulation of buildings; and preventing the creation of new noise situations by appropriate land use planning, especially in urban areas.

II. INSTRUCTS the Environment Committee:

To continue the exchange of information between Member countries in the field of noise abatement policies and to assess the policies adopted by Member countries pursuant to this Recommendation.

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