



Meeting of Polis political group
European and local initiatives on noise
and urban transport

Barcelona

26th February 2008

EUROPEAN CITIES AND REGIONS NETWORKING FOR INNOVATIVE TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS

Why noise matters

- Noise kills – ok, not directly, but
 - **Increase risks for high blood pressure and heart attacks**
 - **3% of heart attacks in Germany are due to road traffic noise**
- Noise disturbs sleep
- Noise costs
 - **Health related costs**
 - **Decreasing house prices and rent levels**
 - **Citizens leaving cities reduce tax revenues, which are often linked to n° of inhabitants**



European Noise Policy

Noise exposure

Assessment and Management of Environmental Noise (Directive 2002/49/EC)

- Assessment of noise exposure
- Information to the public
- Noise Action Plans

Noise emission

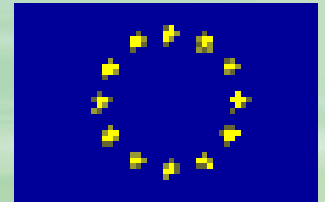
Control of Noise Emission

- Noise Control at Source (by best available technologies)
- Emission-Related Legislation
 - ◆ Further development of existing legislation
 - ◆ New directives / regulations



The European Directive on Environmental Noise

- To guide and steer the activities on noise in Member States
- To develop a long-term EU strategy: including objectives to reduce the number of people affected by noise (limit values?) and providing a framework for developing existing Community policy on noise reduction at source
- Obligations for Member States concerning agglomerations
 - **By June 2007 noise maps (>250,000 inhabitants)**
 - **By July 2008 action plans (>250,000 inhabitants)**
 - **To be revised every 5 years**
 - **From 2012/2013 for all agglomerations > 100,000 inhabitants**
 - **In most Member States: Local or regional authorities are responsible**



Consequences for Urban Transport

- Noise limits suggested by WHO exceeded in large parts of agglomerations
- 80% of noise caused by road traffic
- Necessary to reduce noise significantly:
 - Reducing traffic volume
 - Speed limits and traffic calming
 - Less noisy vehicles
 - Low-noise road surfaces



To be decided

- Balancing between policy objectives, e.g.
 - **Night-time noise and congestion**
 - **Road safety and noise**
 - **Where ranks noise on the local agenda?**

- Targets for noise abatement
 - **Noise reduction for a small n° of people suffering from very high noise levels or noise reduction for a bigger n° of people affected by (too) high noise levels?**
 - **Is an increase in noise for a small n° of people acceptable if a larger n° benefits?**



Handbook for Local Authorities

- SILENCE project – Quieter Surface Transport
- Handbook on Local Noise Action Plans
- Suggests answers on
 - **What are the legal requirements?**
 - **How to set priorities for intervention?**
 - **How to select suitable noise abatement measures?**
 - **Which stakeholders to involve?**
 - **How to consult the public?**
- Handbook available in May 2008



Further questions

- Would common limit values at EU-level be helpful for local authorities?
- Environmental zones as quiet zones – European noise emission standards necessary?
- Are tighter standards for noise emission of tyres, cars, etc. necessary for cities being able to reduce the noise exposure of residents?



Thank you !

Melanie Kloth

mkloth@polis-online.org

+32 2 500 56 78

www.polis-online.org

