The Environmental Noise Directive\(^1\) requires Member States to develop strategic noise maps for railways of more than 30 000 trains per year. These shall include squeal noise.

Member States shall moreover draw up action plans for such railways, to address priorities which may be identified by the exceedance of relevant limit values or by other criteria chosen by the Member States. The measures to be included are at the discretion of competent authorities and can, if relevant, include measures to reduce squeal noise.

The Directive does not set limit values, but requires Member States to communicate information on limit values and other measures in force or under preparation to reduce rail-traffic noise, together with explanations about their implementation. Concerning rail vehicles, a Regulation\(^2\) sets technical specifications for rail interoperability on noise establishing maximum noise levels for vehicles. Also, the Regulation introduced measures limiting noise from train operations throughout the Single European rail area, for example, by a system of quieter routes for freight trains.

Beyond this, the Commission’s Zero Pollution Action Plan\(^3\) includes a commitment to reduce by 30% the share of people chronically disturbed by transport noise, by 2030.

The Commission will focus on better tackling noise at source, notably by securing proper implementation on the ground and, where appropriate, improving the EU noise-related regulatory framework on tyres, road vehicles, railways, aircrafts, also at international level.

The Commission will regularly review progress towards the noise reduction for instance in the upcoming Directive implementation report and consider whether there is a need to set noise reduction targets at EU level.

---


\(^3\) https://ec.europa.eu/environment/strategy/zero-pollution-action-plan_en