

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000019/26  
to the Commission  
Virginie Joron (PFE)  
(6 January 2026)**

**Subject:** Impact of wind turbine noise on health: a blind spot in EU green policy

Until now, accurately measuring the noise generated by wind turbines has been difficult. However, on 12 November 2025, a study carried out by Uppsala University in Sweden presented a high-fidelity simulation tool for more accurate acoustic modelling <sup>(1)</sup>. The results show that ‘modern, large-scale wind turbines generate infrasound levels significantly higher than those reported for older, smaller turbines.’

However, the current legal framework, and especially Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise, does not take into account this new scientific data <sup>(2)</sup>.

1. In light of these new scientific findings, does the Commission intend to revise Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise in order to include the effects of infrasound emitted by wind turbines?
2. Does the Commission plan to support research, including through EU-funded programmes, aimed at developing instruments allowing noise and infrasound pollution linked to wind turbines to be measured and proven?
3. Does the Commission intend to impose harmonised thresholds at EU level for noise and infrasound emissions, given the potential impact of these emissions on public health among people living nearby?

Submitted: 6.1.2026

**Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission  
(18 February 2026)**

The Environmental Noise Directive (END) <sup>(1)</sup> is the main EU legislative instrument for addressing excessive noise pollution mainly caused by transport traffic, as well as from industrial activities listed in Annex I of the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) <sup>(2)</sup>.

As electricity generation from wind turbines is not listed in the Annex I of IED, there are no specific noise requirements for them under the END.

Wind projects <sup>(3)</sup> are subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment <sup>(4)</sup> before authorisation, which includes a description of the emission of noise, and of the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any adverse effect.

Member States are required, every five years, to adopt strategic noise maps showing noise exposure from major sources <sup>(5)</sup>. In this process, the END refers to the use of A-weighted equivalent sound levels as primary regulatory metrics in line with the guidelines of the World Health Organisation (WHO) <sup>(6)</sup>.

It is however noted that wind turbines generate infrasound or lower frequencies of sound than traffic sources which may not be fully addressed by standard noise metrics.

As outlined in 2023 Implementation Report <sup>(7)</sup> and the Zero Pollution Mid-Term Review <sup>(8)</sup>, the Commission is committed to improving the implementation of the END.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0003682X25006280?via%3Dihub>

<sup>2</sup> Directive 2002/49/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 June 2002 relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise — Declaration by the Commission in the Conciliation Committee on the directive relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise.

<sup>(1)</sup> Directive 2002/49/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 June 2002 relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise, OJ L 189 18.7.2002, p. 12.

<sup>(2)</sup> Directive (EU) 2024/1785 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 April 2024 amending Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on industrial emissions (integrated pollution prevention and control) and Council Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste, OJ L, 2024/1785, 15.7.2024.

<sup>(3)</sup> Annex II, point 3(i) of the directive 2011/92/EU.

<sup>(4)</sup> In accordance with Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU. Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, OJ L 124, 25.4.2014.

<sup>(5)</sup> Articles 3 and 7 of the Environmental Noise Directive.

<sup>(6)</sup> <https://www.who.int/europe/publications/i/item/9789289053563>.

<sup>(7)</sup> Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the Implementation of the Environmental Noise Directive in accordance with Article 11 of Directive 2002/49/EC, 20.3.2023, COM(2023) 139 final.

<sup>(8)</sup> [https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/mid-term-review-zero-pollution-action-plan\\_en](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/mid-term-review-zero-pollution-action-plan_en).

In the EU programme for the environment and climate action <sup>(9)</sup>, noise and vibrations from wind turbines is a priority topic <sup>(10)</sup> and in Horizon Europe <sup>(11)</sup> several projects have investigated noise from wind turbines <sup>(12)</sup>. The Commission has also accepted the recommendations of the European Court of Auditors <sup>(13)</sup> to assess the feasibility of introducing EU noise-reduction targets and noise limits in the END, and of aligning the noise exposure reporting thresholds as closely as possible with those recommended by the WHO.

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<sup>(9)</sup> LIFE, [https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life\\_en](https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life_en).

<sup>(10)</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/life/wp-call/2025/call-fiche\\_life-2025-sap-env\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/life/wp-call/2025/call-fiche_life-2025-sap-env_en.pdf), para.2.4 noise.

<sup>(11)</sup> [https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe\\_en](https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en).

<sup>(12)</sup> Examples: Wind In My Backyard: Using holistic modelling tools to advance social awareness and engagement on large wind power installations in the EU (<https://doi.org/10.3030/101083460>); Understanding of the Physics of Wind Turbine and Rotor Dynamics through an Integrated Simulation Framework (<https://doi.org/10.3030/763990>); Closed-Loop Flow Control to Enhance Aerodynamic and Aeroacoustic Performance of Wind-Turbine Blades (<https://doi.org/10.3030/658846>).

<sup>(13)</sup> <https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/publications/SR-2025-02>.