

EN

E-001519/2026

Answer given by Ms Roswall  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(10.7.2026)

As stated in the reply to written question E-000019/2026, the Environmental Noise Directive (END)<sup>1</sup> remains the main EU legislative instrument for addressing excessive noise pollution. The END is focused on traffic noise and noise from the industrial activities listed in Annex I of the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED)<sup>2</sup>. However, the IED does not cover the generation of electricity from wind turbines. Windfarm projects can nonetheless be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment<sup>3</sup>. In that case noise emissions must be assessed and measures identified to address possible adverse effects.

In 2018, the World Health Organization (WHO) developed guidelines<sup>4</sup> to provide recommendations for protecting human health from exposure to environmental noise originating from various sources, including wind turbines. While the WHO conditionally recommended keeping audible wind turbine noise below 45 decibel day–evening–night noise level to prevent annoyance and sleep disturbance, due to the lack of sufficient scientific evidence, it did not propose specific limits or guidelines regarding infrasound.

At the current stage of scientific and policy development on noise at global and EU level, it therefore remains the primary responsibility of the Member States to secure the protection of citizens affected by the noise produced by wind turbines, by defining and enforcing, where appropriate and taking into account the local circumstances, specific noise requirements which may use the thresholds recommended by the WHO.

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<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> 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>4</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789289053563>.