



28.11.2024

## NOTICE TO MEMBERS

**Subject: Petition No 0687/2024 by Ionut Tiru (Romanian) on the noise assessment of vehicles' exhaust systems and the use of sound level meters, in the context of the transposition into national legislation of Directive 2014/45/EU on periodic roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles**

### 1. Summary of petition

The petitioner raises the issue of the discomfort caused by the noise of vehicle exhaust systems, which contributes significantly to noise pollution. He explains that the unit in which he works has received a significant number of petitions from citizens complaining about the use of exhaust modifications on vehicles, which affect the noise reduction system and cause increased discomfort, especially at night and among vulnerable groups (children, the elderly). He emphasises that he has studied the relevant European legislation, the legislation of other EU Member States, as well as the relevant national legislation, and as a result, the county police inspectorate has purchased a sound level meter and developed a methodology for its use based on the ISO 5130 standard. The device has been used consistently at county level, but the number of noisy vehicles hasn't decreased significantly. He also refers to Directive 2014/45/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 3 April 2014 on periodic roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles and their trailers, establishing minimum requirements for the system of periodic tests for vehicles circulating on public roads. He draws attention to the provision on noise assessment, which provides for the subjective evaluation as the standard method, unless the inspector considers that the noise level may be borderline, in which case a measurement of the noise emitted by the stationary vehicle may be carried out using a sound level meter. In that regard, the petitioner points out that the Romanian legislation transposing the provisions of the Directive allegedly provides only for subjective evaluation as a method of assessing noise levels, which has many limitations. The petitioner therefore considers that there is a need to revise the abovementioned directive in order to introduce the obligation to use a sound level meter. He would also like to know whether there is a European strategy to combat the discomfort caused by vehicles with modified exhaust systems, in which Member States the

police uses sound level meters to assess the level of noise and the relevant legislation in this area, and would like to receive information about the possibilities for exchanging best practices.

## **2. Admissibility**

Declared admissible on 14 October 2024. Information requested from Commission under Rule 233(5).

## **3. Commission reply, received on 28 November 2024**

### *The Commission's observations*

The petitioner has correctly identified the relevant provisions of Directive 2014/45/EU on periodic roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles and their trailers (the Directive), notably as regards the assessment of noise suppression systems. Based on the minimum requirements set out in that Directive, Member States may indeed choose to implement sound level measurement to assess the noise emitted by vehicles or not. However, as also pointed out by the petitioner, Romania has opted not to use sound level meters at periodic roadworthiness tests, which is not contrary to the Directive. More specifically, the Directive requires that testing centres are equipped with a class II sound level meter “if sound level is measured” (Annex III, point (9)).

The petitioner considers that there is a need to revise the Directive in order to introduce the obligation to use a sound level meter. This issue is being considered by the Commission in the context of a planned review of the Roadworthiness Package, including Directives 2014/45/EU, and 2014/47/EU on the technical roadside inspection of the roadworthiness of commercial vehicles circulating in the Union.

The petitioner would also like to receive information, if available, on the use of sound meters in other Member States, and the national legislation governing their use. Such information is not held by the Commission. This request should be addressed directly to the Member States concerned either by the petitioner or by the competent authority in Romania.

### *Conclusion*

The Commission takes note of the petitioner's suggestion and is considering addressing the issue raised as part of a possible revision of the Directive.