



NOISE

Opportunities

- Decreasing noise levels of rail operations may increase public support of new rail projects.

Challenges

- From an operational perspective, non-retrofitted (noisy) wagons could still be re-routed to "quieter sections";
- A line defined as a "quieter route" may become a normal line again when the amount of freight traffic is lowered. Therefore, due to national legislation, noise barriers may still be needed for such lines.

Objective

Noise pollution is one of the most widespread public health threats in industrialised countries and the second largest environmental cause of health problems in the EU, impacting the railway sector and rail operations. The EU is taking several actions on noise exposure, one of which is reducing noise emissions from rail freight at night time. [Regulation \(EU\) 1304/2014 on the Technical Specification for Interoperability related to Rolling stock - Noise \(NOI TSI\)](#) establishes the framework for noise emitted by rolling stock (locomotives as well as passenger and freight wagons). Due to the fact that the TSIs only apply to new or renewed rolling stock and that the process for upgrading old freight wagons may take time, the European Commission has proposed actions to retrofit the conventional braking blocks of freight rolling stock with less noisy brakes, reducing perceived noise emissions by up to 50%.

Involvement of Infrastructure Managers

Infrastructure Managers (IMs) ensure that the network is compliant with the NOI TSI, especially where the railways are close to a populated area. IMs are also affected by the implementation of the European Commission's "quieter routes" initiative. From December 2024, only wagons complying with the limits set in the NOI TSI can operate on those lines of the IMs networks that have been identified as "quieter routes".

EIM in action

- EIM's Noise Working Group is active in the EU Agency for Railways (ERA) task force dealing with the application of the TSI Noise to existing freight wagons;
- EIM advocates the importance of tackling the issue at the source by speeding-up the process for freight wagons to become quieter, as well as the availability of cost-efficient noise reduction solutions;
- EIM advocates the introduction of the concept "once a quieter route always a quieter route", in order to maintain a long-term low noise perspective for railway lines.

EC Regulation (EU) 1304/2014 INTEROPERABILITY OF ROLLING STOCK - NOISE

