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ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE: HEALTH AND POLICY - AN UP TO DATE MINIREVIEW

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Abstract

Noise is considered as an “unpleasant sound”. Since ancient times noise was perceived like a disruptive element. In the last three centuries, particularly in industrialized countries, the noise became a major public health issue, especially for the hearing system. The harmful effects of noise are felt not only by the hearing system, but also by other systems (cardiovascular, central nervous system by affecting sleep and cognition) and it was recently pinpointed that the immune system and the fetus are affected. Studies conducted in several large cities from Romania, starting with the year 2000 show that a significant percent of population living in urban areas is exposed to over 55 dB noise during the day and above 50dB at night, the situation being identical with the one existing in other EU countries. There are more than two decades since the EU has been working on developing a harmonized noise policy. Until 2020, the EU policy’s main objective is to ensure that “noise pollution in the Union will significantly decrease, moving closer to WHO-recommended levels”.

Keywords: environment, health, noise, policy, urban area

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