Measures to safeguard security of gas supply

2009/0108(COD) - 16/07/2009 - Document attached to the procedure

In order to strengthen the security of gas supply in the internal market, Council Directive 2004/67/EC concerning measures to safeguard security of natural gas supplies was adopted.

The Directive provides that the Commission shall present an evaluation report on the implementation of the Directive by Member States, which is the purpose of this Commission Staff Working Document.

Transposition: most of the Member States have transposed the security of gas supply provisions of the Directive as part of their internal gas market legislation.

Differences in the security of gas supply roles of market players: Member States have defined the roles for their market players in a different way, which has created distortion for security of gas supply in European internal gas markets.

Security of supply standards: Member States have set very heterogeneous security of supply standards and in some Member States the definition of standards has not been made. These differences may create a barrier to the solidarity mechanism and to the finalisation of the internal gas market.

Security of gas supply instruments: the balance of various instruments is essential to enhancing the security of gas supply. The most frequent measures are gas storage, long term contracts, flexibility of production and imports and diversifications of gas supply. The general conclusion is that the level playing field within the EU has not been reached in terms of security of gas supply instruments.

National emergency measures: the two-step approach used by Member States has created a delay in full transposition of this provision and means that the Commission could only assess national emergency measures of 18 Member States. In any event, most of the Member States have defined their national emergency measures in a systematic way creating the national emergency plans. In these plans they also included prevention mechanisms, nominal level of gas market operation and different pre-emergency and emergency levels defined by disruption volume and by the economic impact.

Monitoring and reporting: Member States' reporting obligations are set out in two gas Directives. Member States have not prepared their annual internal market report in a proper way and much of the mandated information is not included in those reports. Therefore, the Commission had to prepare additional questionnaires and data tables to fulfil its monitoring obligation, which created an additional administrative burden. Moreover, the obligation concerning what to monitor is not sufficient to assess either the current long-term and short-term, or any future security of supply situation of the EU and the effectiveness of the mitigation tools. In addition, reporting obligations are limited in frequency and scope and only three Member States provided complete reporting. Greater transparency is therefore needed.