Control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances. Seveso II

1994/0014(SYN) - 16/11/2017 - Follow-up document

The Commission presented a report on the application in the Member States of Directive 96/82/EC on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances for the period 2012-2014.

Under the Seveso-II-Directive, Member States shall provide the Commission with a **three-yearly report** on the implementation of the Seveso-II-Directive. The Commission shall publish a summary of this information every three years. The present report primarily provides this summary for the period 2012-2014.

All 28 Member States submitted their triennial reports to the European Commission. They reported a total of 11 297 establishments as falling under the Seveso-II Directive. This constitutes a net increase by 983 establishments compared to 2011 (10 314 establishments). While almost all Member States reported an increase, a significant share of this increase occurred in **Germany** (+859 establishments).

Among 48 activities used to categorise Seveso establishments, four activities account for almost 40% of establishments:

- general chemicals (763 establishments = 12.3%);
- fuel storage (650 establishments = 10.5%);
- wholesale and retail (553 establishments = 8.9%);
- LPG production, bottling and bulk distribution (465 establishments = 7.5%).

Inspections: the Seveso-II- Directive requires Member States to establish an inspection system and a programme of inspections for all establishments. While noteworthy progress has been made compared to earlier reporting periods and the number of inspections is increasing, the situation on inspections is still not fully satisfactory in several Member States. It can nevertheless be assumed that the observed rate of compliance by establishments with the requirements of the Seveso-II Directive is in part a result of the rigorous inspection regime mandated by the Directive.

In order to improve the situation further, clearer inspection requirements have been introduced with the Seveso-III-Directive (Directive 2012/18/EU) establishing amongst other a timeframe also for lower-tier establishments (at least every three years), clarifying the provisions on inspection plans and systematic appraisals and an obligation for non-routine inspections e.g. after serious complaints or near misses.

Conclusions and way forward: the report concludes that considering the very high rate of industrialisation in the European Union, the Seveso-II Directive has contributed to achieving a low frequency of major accidents. It is widely considered as a **benchmark for industrial accident policy** and has been a role model for legislation in many countries world-wide.

The report confirms that the Seveso-II-Directive is working properly. The practical implementation and enforcement of the Seveso-II-Directive has further improved in most areas, and in particular industry operators are complying to a large extent with the requirements regarding safety reports and internal emergency plans.

However, as was observed already for the previous reporting periods, **efforts are still needed in some fields** in a small number of Member States. This concerns in particular the development and testing of external emergency plans, providing information to the public and inspections.

Despite the increase in the number of establishments covered by the Seveso-II-Directive, overall the annual number of major accidents remained stable around 30 per year and there are indications that their impact is decreasing.

The Commission will closely monitor progress on these issues and continue to assist Member States to further improve their level of performance, through various supporting activities and enforcement action as appropriate.

The Commission will also continue working on simplification of reporting process thus reducing administrative burden whilst improving the relevance and quality of the data deducted from the reports. To achieve this, the monitoring systems will be reviewed also with a view to develop indicators to better monitor the implementation and assess the performance of the Seveso-III-Directive.