

Methane emissions reduction in the energy sector

2021/0423(COD) - 15/07/2024 - Final act

PURPOSE: to establish rules for the accurate measurement, quantification, monitoring, reporting and verification of methane emissions, as well as for the reduction of such emissions in the EU energy sector.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Regulation (EU) 2024/1787 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the reduction of methane emissions in the energy sector and amending Regulation (EU) 2019/942.

CONTENT: this regulation is part of the 'Fit for 55' package. It lays down rules for the accurate measurement, quantification, monitoring, reporting and verification of methane emissions in the energy sector in the Union, as well as the reduction of those emissions, including through leak detection and repair surveys, repair obligations and restrictions on venting and flaring. This regulation also lays down rules on tools ensuring transparency as regards methane emissions.

This regulation applies to:

- oil and fossil gas exploration and production, and fossil gas gathering and processing;
- inactive wells, temporarily plugged wells and permanently plugged and abandoned wells;
- natural gas transmission and distribution, excluding metering systems at final consumption points and the parts of service lines between the distribution network and the metering system located on the property of final customers, as well as underground storage and operations in LNG facilities; and
- active underground coal mines and surface coal mines, closed underground coal mines and abandoned underground coal mines.

Stricter rules on monitoring and reporting

Operators will **measure methane emissions at source level** and **draw up monitoring reports** that will be checked by independent accredited verifiers. By 5 August 2025, operators will submit a report to the competent authorities containing the quantification of source-level methane emissions estimated using at least generic emission factors for all sources.

Member States will maintain and regularly update an inventory of all wells, as well as mitigation plans for **inactive wells**, to prevent any public health and environmental risks from methane emissions. They will also measure and monitor emissions from **coalmines** which have been closed or abandoned for less than 70 years.

National authorities will carry out **periodic inspections** to check and ensure operators' compliance with the requirements of the regulation, including the taking of follow-up remedial measures. The first routine inspection will be completed by 5 May 2026.

The period between inspections will not exceed 3 years. Where an inspection has identified a serious breach of this Regulation, the subsequent inspection shall take place within 10 months.

Prevention and mitigation measures

Operators will be required to take all appropriate mitigation measures to prevent and minimise methane emissions from their activities. By 5 May 2025 for existing sites and within 6 months from the date of start of operations for new sites, operators will submit a **leak detection and repair programme** ('LDAR programme') to the competent authorities. Under the new rules, operators will need to carry out surveys of methane leaks in different types of infrastructures at set intervals.

Under the new rules, operators will have to detect and repair methane leaks. Operators will then need to **repair or replace** all components above certain methane leak levels **immediately** after detection, and no later than five days thereafter. The set deadline for a full repair under the new rules is 30 days.

Restrictions on venting and flaring

The regulation **bans venting and flaring** methane from drainage stations by 2025 and from ventilation shafts by 2027, unless it is strictly necessary or the event of an emergency or malfunction. Venting of methane through ventilation shafts in coal mines emitting more than 3 tonnes of methane per kilotonne of coal mined, other than coking coal mines, will be prohibited from 1 January 2031, except in the case of an emergency. From 1 January 2030, the venting and flaring of closed and abandoned mines will be banned.

Requirements for oil, gas and coal imports

The regulation provides for data collection and the creation of a **methane emitters global monitoring tool** and a super emitter rapid reaction mechanism. In addition, **equivalent monitoring, reporting and verification measures should be applied by exporters to the EU by 1 January 2027**, and maximum methane intensity values by 2030. The competent authorities of each Member State will have the power to impose administrative penalties if these provisions are not respected.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 4.8.2024.