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REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION

Annual Report from the European Commission on the Safety of Offshore Oil and Gas Operations for the Year 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since 2016, the European Commission has published an annual report on the safety of EU offshore oil and gas operations.

The legal basis for this report is Article 25(3 of Directive 2013/30/EU¹ of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 June 2013 on safety of offshore oil and gas operations and amending Directive 2004/35/EC (hereinafter: the ‘Offshore Safety Directive’). The Offshore Safety Directive aims to achieve a high level of safety in offshore oil and gas operations, for the benefit of:

- i. workers;
- ii. the environment;
- iii. offshore platforms and equipment;
- iv. economic activities, such as fishing and tourism.

The Directive, as implemented by Member States, helps to:

- i. prevent major accidents and incidents;
- ii. reduce the number of incidents;
- iii. ensure effective follow-up of accidents and incidents to reduce the severity of their consequences.

As past reports do, this annual report:

- i. gives the number and type of installations in the EU;
- ii. provides information on safety incidents in these installations;
- iii. assesses the safety performance of offshore oil and gas operations.

The report now covers a period of nine years, and it serves as a record of the safety performance in Member States’ offshore oil and gas activities.

This report is based on the annual reports and data submitted by Member States as required by Article 25(3) of, and point 3 of Annex IX to, the Offshore Safety Directive.

There are 164 offshore oil and gas installations located in the Mediterranean Sea, 147 in the North Sea and Atlantic Ocean, 9 in the Black Sea and 4 in the Baltic Sea. In 2024, the competent Member State authorities inspected the safety of 299 offshore installations in their jurisdiction. The competent Member States authorities reported two major accidents in 2024.

The number of incidents increased from 44 in 2023 to 72 in 2024.

¹ OJ L 178, 28 June 2013, p. 66.

2. LEGAL BASIS

In line with Article 25(3) of the Offshore Safety Directive, the Commission must publish an annual report on the safety and environmental impact of offshore oil and gas operations. This report is based on individual annual reports that Member States must submit to the Commission. Point 3 of Annex IX to the Directive sets out the minimum information the annual reports must contain:

- i. the number, age, and location of installations;
- ii. the number and type of inspections and investigations carried out, in addition to any enforcement action or convictions;
- iii. incidents that have occurred;
- iv. any major change in the offshore regulatory framework;
- v. the performance of offshore oil and gas operations.

Pursuant to Article 2(2) of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1112/2014 of 13 October 2014² (hereinafter, the “Implementing Regulation”), the deadline for Member States to publish and submit the required information is 1 June following the reporting period (e.g. 1 June 2025 for 2024).

Member States must submit the information using the templates provided in Annex II to the Implementing Regulation. The templates provide for:

- i. operators and owners of offshore oil and gas installations to share information on major hazard indicators;
- ii. Member States to publish information on major hazard indicators.

A Commission services guidance³ provides competent Member State authorities, operators and owners with supporting information and examples to promote consistent interpretation of the reporting requirements in the Implementing Regulation.

3. METHODOLOGY AND INFORMATION RECEIVED

Member States must submit annual reports on safety incidents in the offshore oil and gas sector using the templates. Those annual reports must include information on the offshore oil and gas installations in the EU, such as number, type, location and age. Reports from Member States must also provide information on the number of (i) offshore inspections, investigations and enforcement actions taken; (ii) incidents by category, according to Article 25(3) of the Offshore Safety Directive; and (iii) injuries, according to Reporting requirement H of the Implementing Regulation No 1112/2014.

For this annual report, the Commission has used information provided by Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania and

² OJ L 302, 22 October 2014, p. 2.

³ Guidance Document on Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No1112/2014 of 13 October 2014.

Spain. All these Member States declared they had submitted all the required information on all installations. Other Member States were not active in the offshore oil and gas sector.

4. THE EU OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS SECTOR

4.1 Installations and production

Member States reported 324 installations in EU waters in 2024 (see Table 1):

- Most offshore installations⁴ were in the Mediterranean Sea. Italy is the most active (with 43% of all installations in EU waters) followed by Croatia.
- In the North Sea and Atlantic, most installations (approximately 42% of all installations in EU waters) were in the exclusive economic zone of the Netherlands in the North Sea.
- In the Black Sea, Romania has a well-established offshore oil and gas industry. Bulgaria has continued offshore hydrocarbon exploration but only had one installation and is producing small quantities of oil and gas.
- In the Baltic Sea, only Poland has offshore installations.

Table 1: Installations on 1 January 2024: type of installation by region and Member State

Region	Country	Type of installation (*)					Change compared to 2023
		FMI	NUI	FNPI	FPI	Total (region/country)	
Baltic Sea		3	1	0	0	4	--
	Poland	3	1	0	0	4	--
Black Sea		5	4	0	0	9	--
	Bulgaria	0	1	0	0	1	--
	Romania	5	3	0	0	8	--
Mediterranean Sea		15	147	0	2	164	--
	Croatia	2	17	0	0	19	--
	Greece	1	1	0	0	2	--
	Italy	11	127	0	2	140	--
	Spain	1	2	0	0	3	--
North Sea and Atlantic		42	100	5	0	147	--
	Denmark	10	19	1	0	30	--
	Germany	1	1	0	0	2	--
	Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	--
	The Netherlands	31	80	4	0	115	--
Total (type of installation)		65	252	5	2	324	--

(*) FMI: Fixed, manned installation; FNPI: Fixed, non-production installation; FPI: Floating production installation; NUI: Normally unattended installation.

⁴ Mobile offshore drilling units are not part of the data in Section 4.1.

More than half of offshore installations came into operation between 1980 and 2000. In 2024, five new fixed installations came into operation⁵. Since 2010, the development of new production installations has dropped noticeably in the North Sea and Atlantic.

Approximately 76% of the oil and gas produced in the European Union (12 254 kilotons of oil equivalent - hereinafter: “ktoe”) is produced in the North Sea and Atlantic (see Table 2). The biggest producers in the North Sea and Atlantic are the Netherlands and Denmark. Italy and Croatia are the biggest producers in the Mediterranean Sea, followed by Greece. Spain had no production. In the Black Sea, only Romania’s production is significant.

Table 2: Offshore oil and gas production in the EU in ktoe in 2024

Region	Country	ktoe	% of EU total	% change compared to 2023
Baltic Sea		301.29	1.87%	6.09%
	Poland	301.29	1.87%	6.09%
Black Sea		1709.131	10.63%	-4.30%
	Bulgaria	4.667	0.03%	-33.33%
	Romania	1704.464	10.60%	-4.14%
Mediterranean Sea		1817.17	11.30%	-4.21%
	Croatia	157.53	0.98%	-18.38%
	Greece	53.64	0.33%	-10.60%
	Italy	1606	9.99%	-2.37%
	Spain	0	0.0%	--
North Sea and Atlantic		12254	76.20%	6.08%
	Denmark	4534	28.19%	-3.53%
	Germany	730	4.54%	3.40%
	The Netherlands	6990	43.47%	13.73%
Total		16081.591	100.00%	3.63%

At the EU level, production of gas and oil in 2024 increased by 3.63% (cca. 563.6 ktoe), compared with 2023. While production declined in most countries, the overall increase is mainly due to a +13.8% production increase in the Netherlands, the major producer in the EU.

In 2024, 69 % of overall production in the EU measured in ktoe was gas and 31 % was oil. Denmark (3143 ktoe) remained the most important producer of oil, followed by Germany (719 ktoe), Italy (389 ktoe), the Netherlands (298 ktoe), Poland (275 ktoe), and Greece (51 ktoe). For gas, the

⁵ Four in Italy, one in the Netherlands.

Netherlands remained the most important producer (6692 ktoe), followed by Romania (1613 ktoe), Denmark (1391 ktoe) and Italy (1217 ktoe).

4.2 Offshore inspections, investigations, enforcement actions and regulatory framework

The competent Member State authorities regularly inspected the offshore installations under their jurisdiction in 2024 (see Table 3). The more installations a country had, the more inspections it usually carried out.

Compared to 2023, the overall number of inspections in the EU decreased (from 435 to 371). In most Member States, the number declined.

Table 3: Offshore inspections by region and Member State in 2024

Region	Country	Inspections	Working days spent on installation (travel time not included)	Number of installations inspected
Baltic Sea		2	4	3
	Poland	2	4	3
Black Sea		28	204	11
	Bulgaria	0	0	0
	Romania	28	204	11
Mediterranean Sea		216	280	202
	Croatia	23	40	9
	Cyprus	0	0	0
	Greece	2	20	2
	Italy	189	219	189
	Spain	2	1	2
North Sea and Atlantic		125	254.5	83
	Denmark	24	94.5	24
	Germany	3	4	1
	The Netherlands	98	156	58
Total		371	742.5	299⁶

Article 18 of the Offshore Safety Directive requires Member States to ensure that the competent Member State authorities have certain rights and powers regarding operations and installations under their jurisdiction. These powers include the right to prohibit the operation of installations, the right to require operators to take measures ensuring risk management compliance and the right to take measures ensuring the continuing safety of operations.

⁶ An installation could be inspected more than once during a reporting year; therefore the 'number of inspections' (371) is different from that of 'total installations' (299), due to the number of facilities decommissioned during the year and the number of facilities that start operation during the year.

In 2024, there were three investigations regarding major accidents. Of these, two are finalised (Italy and Denmark), and one is still ongoing (Croatia).

No enforcement actions were taken during 2024.

5. INCIDENTS AND SAFETY PERFORMANCE

Operators and owners of installations and competent Member State authorities must report an accident or situation of serious danger (referred to as an ‘event’). However, a single event can be categorised by one or more incidents. For example, two incident categories must be notified for the same event if there was an (a) unintended release of gas that (b) also required the evacuation of staff.

Member States reported 72 events⁷ in 2024 compared to 44 in 2023:

- Denmark – 21 events, one major accident⁸ (12 events in 2023).⁹
- Croatia – 8 events, no major accidents (8 events in 2023).¹⁰
- The Netherlands – 45 events, no major accidents¹¹ (24 events in 2023).¹²
- Greece - 4 events¹³, no major accidents (0 events in 2023).
- Italy - 1 major accident¹⁴ (0 in 2023, and 0 events).

Of the incidents that occurred in 2024, 81,94 % concerned the unintended releases of gas and/or oil and/or hazardous substances, 16,67 % concerned a safety and environmental critical element failure, and 1,39% concerned vessel collisions. None of those incidents led to the loss of life. No loss of well or helicopter accidents were reported.

Table 4: Incidents by category (set out in Annex IX to the Offshore Safety Directive) in 2024

Category	Total	Share of category total	Share of total incidents	Rel growth vs 2023
(a) Unintended releases – total	59	100%	81.94%	+55%
Fires caused by ignited oil/gas	0	0%	0.00%	--
Explosions caused by ignited oil/gas	0	0%	0.00%	--
Unignited gas	20	34%	27.78%	+43%
Unignited oil	8	14%	11.11%	+14%

⁷ The reporting obligation does not cover certain events (e.g. those not related to operations).

⁸ Gas spill on the Tyra East platform in connection with the start of production following a disruption of operations.

⁹ For Denmark, 14 incidents consisted in Unintended releases. 7 incidents fell under no category in Section 4.2. Annex IX Incident Categories.

¹⁰ For Croatia, out of the 8 events, 5 were due to Unintended releases, and 3 due to Failures of safety and environmental critical elements (SECE).

¹¹ Major accidents include incidents that could cause fatalities or serious injuries (even if none occurred).

¹² For the Netherlands, the incidents consisted in 5 Failure of SECE, and 40 Unintended releases.

¹³ For Greece, all 4 incidents were Failures of SECE.

¹⁴ Italy reported 1 vessel collision incident.

	Hazardous substance	31	52%	43.06%	+82%
(b)	Loss of wells – total	0	0%	0.00%	-100%
	Blowouts	0	0%	0.00%	--
	Blowout/diverter activation	0	0%	0.00%	-100%
	Well barrier failure	0	0%	0.00%	--
(c)	Safety and environmental critical element failure	12	100%	16.67%	300%
(d)	Loss of structural integrity – total	0	0%	0.00%	--
	Loss of structural integrity	0	--	0.00%	--
	Loss of stability/buoyancy	0	--	0.00%	--
	Loss of station keeping	0	--	0.00%	--
(e)	Vessel collisions	1	100%	1.39%	NEW
(f)	Helicopter accidents	0	--	0.00%	--
(g)	Fatal accidents (*)	0	--	0.00%	--
(h)	Serious injuries of five or more people in the same accident	0	--	0.00%	--
(i)	Evacuation of personnel	0	--	0.00%	--
(j)	Environmental accidents	0	--	0.00%	--
	Total	72		100.00%	+64%
<i>(*) Only if related to a major accident.</i>					

In the EU, the total number of incidents increased from 44 in 2023 to 72 in 2024 (+64%). This difference mainly comes from the rise in unintended releases from 38 to 59 (+55%) and safety and environmental critical element failures, from 3 to 12 (300%). No incidents involving loss of wells were reported (compared to three in 2023). One vessel collision was reported (none in 2023).

The unintended releases were hazardous substances (17 incidents, 45%), gas (14 incidents, 37%) and oil (7 incidents, 18%).

Two incidents were classified as major accidents during 2024. The competent Member States authorities assessed, together with the operators, the causes of the incidents to determine if investigations or enforcement actions were needed. The authorities did not require enforcement actions.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In 2024, there were 324 offshore oil and gas installations in the EU.

Oil and gas production increased from 15 518 ktoe in 2023 to 16 082 ktoe in 2024 (3.6% gain of production, compared to a 4.6% decrease in 2023 compared to 2022). Denmark and the Netherlands produced 72% of the EU's total offshore oil and gas.

The Commission has assessed the safety of the EU's offshore oil and gas operations based on the information provided by Member States, according to the Implementing Regulation. The accuracy of the Commission's assessment therefore depends on the accuracy of this information.

In 2024, the competent Member State authorities kept up their efforts to ensure a high level of safety in offshore oil and gas operations by inspecting 299 installations (compared to 388 in 2023). No enforcement actions were reported during 2024.

The total number of incidents increased from 44 in 2023 to 72 in 2024. In 2024 there were two major accidents, compared to none in 2023. No fatality was reported. The competent authorities did not take any enforcement action. 39 injuries¹⁵ and 13 serious injuries¹⁶ occurred.

In conclusion, due to the obligatory inspections and actions taken, as stipulated by the Offshore Safety Directive, the work of the competent Member State authorities has once more resulted in safe offshore oil and gas operations.

To maintain the level of safety, the Commission continues to work closely with the European Union Offshore Authorities Group (EUOAG). The EUOAG promotes best practices for carrying out safely all operations, and assists competent Member State authorities represented in the group.

¹⁵ Italy 3, Romania 1, Denmark 24 and the Netherlands 11.

¹⁶ Italy 8, the Netherlands 1, Denmark 4.