Directive (EU) 2015/2193 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2015 on the limitation of emissions of certain pollutants into the air from medium combustion plants (Text with EEA relevance)

Article 1

Subject matter

This Directive lays down rules to control emissions of sulphur dioxide (SO_2) , nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and dust into the air from medium combustion plants, and thereby reduce emissions to air and the potential risks to human health and the environment from such emissions.

This Directive also lays down rules to monitor emissions of carbon monoxide (CO).

Article 2

Scope

1 This Directive shall apply to combustion plants with a rated thermal input equal to or greater than 1 MW and less than 50 MW ('medium combustion plants'), irrespective of the type of fuel they use.

2 This Directive shall also apply to a combination formed by new medium combustion plants pursuant to Article 4, including a combination where the total rated thermal input is equal to or greater than 50 MW, unless the combination forms a combustion plant covered by Chapter III of Directive 2010/75/EU.

- 3 This Directive shall not apply to:
 - a combustion plants covered by Chapter III or Chapter IV of Directive 2010/75/EU;
 - b combustion plants covered by Directive 97/68/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council⁽¹⁾;
 - c on-farm combustion plants with a total rated thermal input less than or equal to 5 MW, that exclusively use unprocessed poultry manure, as referred to in Article 9(a) of Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁽²⁾, as a fuel;
 - d combustion plants in which the gaseous products of combustion are used for the direct heating, drying or any other treatment of objects or materials;
 - e combustion plants in which the gaseous products of combustion are used for direct gas-fired heating used to heat indoor spaces for the purpose of improving workplace conditions;
 - f post-combustion plants designed to purify the waste gases from industrial processes by combustion, and which are not operated as independent combustion plants;
 - g any technical apparatus used in the propulsion of a vehicle, ship or aircraft;
 - h gas turbines and gas and diesel engines, when used on offshore platforms;
 - i facilities for the regeneration of catalytic cracking catalysts;
 - j facilities for the conversion of hydrogen sulphide into sulphur;
 - k reactors used in the chemical industry;
 - 1 coke battery furnaces;

- m cowpers;
- n crematoria;
- o combustion plants firing refinery fuels alone or with other fuels for the production of energy within mineral oil and gas refineries;
- p recovery boilers within installations for the production of pulp.

4 This Directive shall not apply to research activities, development activities or testing activities relating to medium combustion plants. Member States may establish specific conditions for the application of this paragraph.

Article 3

Definitions

For the purposes of this Directive, the following definitions apply:

- (1) 'emission' means the discharge of substances from a combustion plant into the air;
- (2) 'emission limit value' means the permissible quantity of a substance contained in the waste gases from a combustion plant which may be discharged into the air during a given period;
- (3) 'nitrogen oxides' (NO_x) means nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide, expressed as nitrogen dioxide (NO₂);
- (4) 'dust' means particles, of any shape, structure or density, dispersed in the gas phase at the sampling point conditions which may be collected by filtration under specified conditions after representative sampling of the gas to be analysed, and which remain upstream of the filter and on the filter after drying under specified conditions;
- (5) 'combustion plant' means any technical apparatus in which fuels are oxidised in order to use the heat thus generated;
- (6) 'existing combustion plant' means a combustion plant put into operation before 20 December 2018 or for which a permit was granted before 19 December 2017 pursuant to national legislation provided that the plant is put into operation no later than 20 December 2018;
- (7) 'new combustion plant' means a combustion plant other than an existing combustion plant;
- (8) 'engine' means a gas engine, diesel engine or dual fuel engine;
- (9) 'gas engine' means an internal combustion engine which operates according to the Otto cycle and uses spark ignition to burn fuel;
- (10) 'diesel engine' means an internal combustion engine which operates according to the Diesel cycle and uses compression ignition to burn fuel;
- (11) 'dual fuel engine' means an internal combustion engine which uses compression ignition and operates according to the Diesel cycle when burning liquid fuels and according to the Otto cycle when burning gaseous fuels;
- (12) 'gas turbine' means any rotating machine which converts thermal energy into mechanical work, consisting mainly of a compressor, a thermal device in which fuel is oxidised in order to heat the working fluid, and a turbine; this includes both open cycle

and combined cycle gas turbines, and gas turbines in cogeneration mode, all with or without supplementary firing;

- (13) 'small isolated system' (SIS) means a small isolated system as defined in point 26 of Article 2 of Directive 2009/72/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council⁽³⁾;
- (14) 'micro isolated system' (MIS) means a micro isolated system as defined in point 27 of Article 2 of Directive 2009/72/EC;
- (15) 'fuel' means any solid, liquid or gaseous combustible material;
- (16) 'refinery fuel' means solid, liquid or gaseous combustible material from the distillation and conversion steps of the refining of crude oil, including refinery fuel gas, syngas, refinery oils and pet coke;
- (17) 'waste' means waste as defined in point 1 of Article 3 of Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council⁽⁴⁾;
- (18) 'biomass' means any of the following:
 - (a) products consisting of any vegetable matter from agriculture or forestry which can be used as a fuel for the purpose of recovering its energy content;
 - (b) the following waste:
 - (i) vegetable waste from agriculture and forestry;
 - (ii) vegetable waste from the food processing industry, if the heat generated is recovered;
 - (iii) fibrous vegetable waste from virgin pulp production and from production of paper from pulp, if it is co-incinerated at the place of production and the heat generated is recovered;
 - (iv) cork waste;
 - (v) wood waste with the exception of wood waste which may contain halogenated organic compounds or heavy metals as a result of treatment with wood preservatives or coating and which includes, in particular, such wood waste originating from construction and demolition waste;
- (19) 'gas oil' means:
 - (a) any petroleum-derived liquid fuel falling within CN codes 2710 19 25, 2710 19 29, 2710 19 47, 2710 19 48, 2710 20 17 or 2710 20 19; or
 - (b) any petroleum-derived liquid fuel of which less than 65 % by volume (including losses) distils at 250 °C and of which at least 85 % by volume (including losses) distils at 350 °C by the ASTM D86 method;
- (20) 'natural gas' means naturally occurring methane with no more than 20 % (by volume) of inerts and other constituents;
- (21) 'heavy fuel oil' means:
 - (a) any petroleum-derived liquid fuel falling within CN codes 2710 19 51 to 2710 19 68, 2710 20 31, 2710 20 35, or 2710 20 39; or

- (b) any petroleum-derived liquid fuel, other than gas oil as defined in point 19, which, by reason of its distillation limits, falls within the category of heavy oils intended for use as fuel and of which less than 65 % by volume (including losses) distils at 250 °C by the ASTM D86 method. If the distillation cannot be determined by the ASTM D86 method, the petroleum product is likewise categorised as a heavy fuel oil;
- (22) 'operating hours' means the time, expressed in hours, during which a combustion plant is operating and discharging emissions into the air, excluding start-up and shut-down periods;
- (23) 'operator' means any natural or legal person who operates or controls the combustion plant, or, where this is provided for in national law, to whom decisive economic power over the technical functioning of the plant has been delegated;
- (24) 'zone' means part of the territory of a Member State, as delimited by that Member State for the purposes of air quality assessment and management, as laid down in Directive 2008/50/EC.

Article 4

Aggregation

A combination formed by two or more new medium combustion plants shall be considered to be a single medium combustion plant for the purposes of this Directive and their rated thermal input shall be added together for the purpose of calculating the total rated thermal input of the plant, where:

- the waste gases of such medium combustion plants are discharged through a common stack, or
- taking into account technical and economic factors, the waste gases of such medium combustion plants could, in the judgement of the competent authority, be discharged through a common stack.

Article 5

Permits and registration

1 Member States shall take the necessary measures to ensure that no new medium combustion plant is operated without a permit or without being registered.

2 Member States shall take the necessary measures to ensure that, as of 1 January 2024, no existing medium combustion plant with a rated thermal input greater than 5 MW is operated without a permit or without being registered.

Member States shall take the necessary measures to ensure that, as of 1 January 2029, no existing medium combustion plant with a rated thermal input of less than or equal to 5 MW is operated without a permit or without being registered.

3 Member States shall specify the procedure for granting a permit or for registration in respect of medium combustion plants. Those procedures shall include at least an obligation on the operator to inform the competent authority of the operation of, or the intention to operate, a medium combustion plant and to provide at least the information listed in Annex I. 4 The competent authority shall register, or start the procedure for granting a permit to, the medium combustion plant within one month of the operator providing the information referred to in paragraph 3. The competent authority shall inform the operator of such registration or of the start of the procedure for granting a permit.

5 The competent authority shall hold a register with information on each medium combustion plant including the information listed in Annex I and the information obtained pursuant to Article 9. Existing medium combustion plants shall be included in the register from the date of registration or from the date when granted a permit in accordance with this Directive. The competent authority shall make the information contained in the register available to the public, including via the internet, in accordance with Directive 2003/4/EC.

6 Without prejudice to the obligation for medium combustion plants to hold a permit or be registered, Member States may include requirements for certain categories of medium combustion plants in general binding rules. Where general binding rules are adopted, the permit or the registration may simply include a reference to such rules.

7 For medium combustion plants which are part of an installation covered by Chapter II of Directive 2010/75/EU, the requirements of this Article shall be deemed to be fulfilled through compliance with that Directive.

8 Any permit granted or registration carried out pursuant to other national or Union legislation may be combined with the permit or registration required under paragraph 1 to form a single permit or registration provided that that single permit or registration contains the information required under this Article.

Article 6

Emission limit values

1 Without prejudice to Chapter II of Directive 2010/75/EU, where applicable, the emission limit values set out in Annex II to this Directive shall apply to medium combustion plants.

The emission limit values set out in Annex II shall not apply to medium combustion plants located in the Canary Islands, French Overseas Departments, the Azores and Madeira. The Member States concerned shall set emission limit values for those plants in order to reduce their emissions to air and the potential risks to human health and the environment.

2 From 1 January 2025, emissions into the air of SO_2 , NO_x and dust from an existing medium combustion plant with a rated thermal input greater than 5 MW shall not exceed the emission limit values set out in Tables 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Annex II.

From 1 January 2030, emissions into the air of SO_2 , NO_x and dust from an existing medium combustion plant with a rated thermal input of less than or equal to 5 MW shall not exceed the emission limit values set out in Tables 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Annex II.

3 Member States may exempt existing medium combustion plants which do not operate more than 500 operating hours per year, as a rolling average over a period of five years, from compliance with the emission limit values set out in Tables 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Annex II.

Member States may extend the limit referred to in the first subparagraph to 1 000 operating hours in the following cases of emergency or extraordinary circumstances:

- for backup power production in connected islands in the event of an interruption of the main power supply to an island,
- medium combustion plants used for heat production in cases of exceptionally cold weather events.

In all cases set out in this paragraph, an emission limit value for dust of 200 mg/Nm³ shall apply for plants firing solid fuels.

4 Existing medium combustion plants which are part of SIS or MIS shall comply with the emission limit values set out in Tables 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Annex II from 1 January 2030.

5 Until 1 January 2030, Member States may exempt existing medium combustion plants with a rated thermal input greater than 5 MW from compliance with the emission limit values set out in Annex II provided that at least 50 % of the useful heat production of the plant, as a rolling average over a period of five years, is delivered in the form of steam or hot water to a public network for district heating. In the event of such exemption, the emission limit values set by the competent authority shall not exceed 1 100 mg/Nm³ for SO₂ and 150 mg/Nm³ for dust.

Until 1 January 2030, Member States may exempt medium combustion plants firing solid biomass as the main fuel, which are situated in zones where, according to assessments under Directive 2008/50/EC, conformity with the limit values of that Directive is ensured, from compliance with the emission limit values for dust set out in Annex II to this Directive. In the event of such exemption, the emission limit values set by the competent authority shall not exceed 150 mg/Nm³ for dust.

The competent authority shall in any case ensure that no significant pollution is caused and that a high level of protection of the environment as a whole is achieved.

6 Until 1 January 2030, Member States may exempt existing medium combustion plants with a rated thermal input greater than 5 MW and which are used to drive gas compressor stations required to ensure the safety and security of a national gas transmission system, from compliance with the emission limit values for NO_x set out in Table 3 of Part 1 of Annex II.

7 From 20 December 2018, emissions into the air of SO_2 , NO_x and dust from a new medium combustion plant shall not exceed the emission limit values set out in Part 2 of Annex II.

8 Member States may exempt new medium combustion plants which do not operate more than 500 operating hours per year, as a rolling average over a period of three years, from compliance with the emission limit values set out in Part 2 of Annex II. In the event of such exemption, an emission limit value for dust of 100 mg/Nm³ shall apply for plants firing solid fuels.

9 In zones or parts of zones not complying with the air quality limit values laid down in Directive 2008/50/EC, Member States shall assess the need to apply, for individual medium combustion plants in those zones or parts of zones, stricter emission limit values than those set out in this Directive, as part of the development of air quality plans referred to in Article 23 of Directive 2008/50/EC, taking into account the results of the information exchange referred to in paragraph 10 of this Article, provided that applying such emission limit values would effectively contribute to a noticeable improvement of air quality.

10 The Commission shall organise an exchange of information with Member States, the industries concerned and non-governmental organisations on the emission levels achievable with best available and emerging technologies and the related costs.

The Commission shall publish the results of the exchange of information.

11 The competent authority may grant a derogation for a maximum period of six months from the obligation to comply with the emission limit values provided for in paragraphs 2 and 7 for SO_2 in respect of a medium combustion plant which normally uses low-sulphur fuel, in cases where the operator is unable to comply with those emission limit values because of an interruption in the supply of low-sulphur fuel resulting from a serious shortage.

Member States shall inform the Commission, within one month, of any derogation granted under the first subparagraph.

12 The competent authority may grant a derogation from the obligation to comply with the emission limit values provided for in paragraphs 2 and 7 in cases where a medium combustion plant using only gaseous fuel has to resort exceptionally to the use of other fuels because of a sudden interruption in the supply of gas and, for this reason, would need to be equipped with secondary abatement equipment. The period for which such a derogation is granted shall not exceed ten days except where the operator demonstrates to the competent authority that a longer period is justified.

Member States shall inform the Commission, within one month, of any derogation granted under the first subparagraph.

13 Where a medium combustion plant simultaneously uses two or more fuels, the emission limit value for each pollutant shall be calculated by:

- a taking the emission limit value relevant for each individual fuel as set out in Annex II;
- b determining the fuel-weighted emission limit value, which is obtained by multiplying the individual emission limit value referred to in point (a) by the thermal input delivered by each fuel, and dividing the product of multiplication by the sum of the thermal inputs delivered by all fuels; and
- c aggregating the fuel-weighted emission limit values.

Article 7

Obligations of the operator

1 Member States shall ensure that the operator carries out monitoring of emissions in accordance with, as a minimum, Part 1 of Annex III.

2 For medium combustion plants using multiple fuels, the monitoring of emissions shall be done while firing a fuel or fuel mix that is likely to result in the highest level of emissions and during a period representing normal operating conditions.

3 The operator shall keep a record of and process all monitoring results in such a way as to enable the verification of compliance with the emission limit values in accordance with the rules set out in Part 2 of Annex III.

4 For medium combustion plants using secondary abatement equipment in order to meet the emission limit values, the operator shall keep a record of, or information proving, the effective continuous operation of that equipment.

- 5 The operator of a medium combustion plant shall keep the following:
 - a the permit or the proof of registration by the competent authority and, if relevant, its updated version and related information;
 - b the monitoring results and information referred to in paragraphs 3 and 4;
 - c where applicable, a record of operating hours as referred to in Article 6(3) and in Article 6(8);

- d a record of the type and quantities of fuels used in the plant and of any malfunctions or breakdown of secondary abatement equipment;
- e a record of the events of non-compliance and the measures taken, as referred to in paragraph 7.

The data and information referred to in points (b) to (e) of the first subparagraph shall be kept for a period of at least six years.

6 The operator shall, without undue delay, make available the data and information listed in paragraph 5 to the competent authority upon request. The competent authority may make such a request in order to allow the check of compliance with the requirements of this Directive. The competent authority shall make such a request if a member of the public requests access to the data or information listed in paragraph 5.

7 In the event of non-compliance with the emission limit values set out in Annex II, the operator shall take the measures necessary to ensure that compliance is restored within the shortest possible time, without prejudice to the measures required under Article 8. Member States shall lay down rules for the type, frequency and format of information concerning events of non-compliance to be provided by operators to the competent authority.

8 The operator shall provide the competent authority with all necessary assistance to enable it to carry out any inspections and site visits, to take samples and to gather any information necessary for the performance of its duties for the purposes of this Directive.

9 The operator shall keep the periods of start-up and shut-down of the medium combustion plant as short as possible.

Article 8

Compliance check

1 Member States shall ensure that valid values for emissions monitored in accordance with Annex III do not exceed the emission limit values set out in Annex II.

2 Member States shall set up an effective system, based on either environmental inspections or other measures, to check compliance with the requirements of this Directive.

3 In the event of non-compliance, in addition to the measures taken by the operator under Article 7(7), Member States shall ensure that the competent authority requires the operator to take any measures necessary to ensure that compliance is restored without undue delay.

Where non-compliance causes a significant degradation of local air quality, the operation of the medium combustion plant shall be suspended until compliance is restored.

Article 9

Changes to medium combustion plants

Member States shall take the necessary measures to ensure that the operator informs the competent authority, without undue delay, of any planned change to the medium combustion plant which would affect the applicable emission limit values.

The competent authority shall update the permit or the registration, as appropriate, accordingly.

Article 10

Competent authorities

Member States shall designate the competent authorities responsible for carrying out the obligations arising from this Directive.

Article 11

Reporting

1 Member States shall, by 1 October 2026 and by 1 October 2031, submit a report to the Commission with qualitative and quantitative information on the implementation of this Directive, on any action taken to verify compliance of the operation of medium combustion plants with this Directive and on any enforcement action for the purposes thereof.

The first report referred to in the first subparagraph shall include an estimate of the total annual emissions of SO_2 , NO_x and dust from medium combustion plants, grouped by plant type, fuel type and capacity class.

2 Member States shall also submit a report to the Commission, by 1 January 2021, with an estimate of the total annual emissions of CO and any information available on the concentration of emissions of CO from medium combustion plants, grouped by fuel type and capacity class.

3 For the purposes of the reporting referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, the Commission shall make an electronic reporting tool available to Member States.

The Commission shall, by way of implementing acts, specify the technical formats for reporting in order to simplify and streamline reporting obligations for the Member States in relation to the information referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article. Those implementing acts shall be adopted in accordance with the examination procedure referred to in Article 15.

4 The Commission shall, within twelve months of the receipt of the reports from Member States in accordance with paragraph 1 of this Article, and taking into account information made available in accordance with Article 6(11) and Article 6(12), submit a summary report to the European Parliament and to the Council.

5 When carrying out its duties under paragraphs 3 and 4, the Commission shall be assisted by the European Environment Agency.

Article 12

Review

1 By 1 January 2020, the Commission shall review progress in relation to the energy efficiency of medium combustion plants and assess the benefits of setting minimum energy efficiency standards in line with best available techniques.

2 By 1 January 2023, the Commission shall assess the need to review the provisions concerning plants which are part of SIS or MIS, as well as Part 2 of Annex II, on the basis of state-of-the-art technologies.

As part of this review, the Commission shall also assess whether for certain or all types of medium combustion plants there is a need to regulate CO emissions.

Thereafter, a review shall take place every ten years and shall include an assessment of whether it is appropriate to set stricter emission limit values in particular for new medium combustion plants.

3 The Commission shall submit a report on the results of the reviews referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 to the European Parliament and to the Council accompanied by a legislative proposal where appropriate.

Article 13

Amendment of Annexes

The Commission shall be empowered to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 14 in order to adapt point 2 of Part 2 of Annex III to technical and scientific progress.

Article 14

Exercise of the delegation

1 The power to adopt delegated acts is conferred on the Commission subject to the conditions laid down in this Article.

2 The power to adopt delegated acts referred to in Article 13 shall be conferred on the Commission for a period of five years from 18 December 2015. The Commission shall draw up a report in respect of the delegation of power not later than nine months before the end of the five-year period. The delegation of power shall be tacitly extended for periods of an identical duration, unless the European Parliament or the Council opposes such extension not later than three months before the end of each period.

3 The delegation of power referred to in Article 13 may be revoked at any time by the European Parliament or by the Council. A decision to revoke shall put an end to the delegation of the power specified in that decision. It shall take effect the day following the publication of the decision in the *Official Journal of the European Union* or at a later date specified therein. It shall not affect the validity of any delegated acts already in force.

4 As soon as it adopts a delegated act, the Commission shall notify it simultaneously to the European Parliament and to the Council.

5 A delegated act adopted pursuant to Article 13 shall enter into force only if no objection has been expressed either by the European Parliament or the Council within a period of two months of notification of that act to the European Parliament and the Council or if, before the expiry of that period, the European Parliament and the Council have both informed the Commission that they will not object. That period shall be extended by two months at the initiative of the European Parliament or of the Council.

Article 15

Committee procedure

1 The Commission shall be assisted by the committee established by Article 75(1) of Directive 2010/75/EU. That committee shall be a committee within the meaning of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011.

2 Where reference is made to this paragraph, Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 shall apply.

3 Where the committee delivers no opinion, the Commission shall not adopt the draft implementing act and the third subparagraph of Article 5(4) of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 shall apply.

Article 16

Penalties

Member States shall lay down the rules on penalties applicable to infringements of the national provisions adopted pursuant to this Directive and shall take all measures necessary to ensure that they are implemented. The penalties provided for shall be effective, proportionate and dissuasive. Member States shall notify those provisions to the Commission by 19 December 2017 at the latest and shall notify it without delay of any subsequent amendment affecting them.

Article 17

Transposition

1 Member States shall bring into force the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with this Directive by 19 December 2017. They shall immediately inform the Commission thereof.

When Member States adopt those measures, they shall contain a reference to this Directive or shall be accompanied by such reference on the occasion of their official publication. The methods of making such reference shall be laid down by Member States.

2 Member States shall communicate to the Commission the text of the main measures of national law which they adopt in the field covered by this Directive.

Article 18

Entry into force

This Directive shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

Article 19

Addressees

This Directive is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Strasbourg, 25 November 2015.

For the European Parliament The President M. SCHULZ For the Council The President N. SCHMIT

- (1) Directive 97/68/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 1997 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to measures against the emission of gaseous and particulate pollutants from internal combustion engines to be installed in non-road mobile machinery (OJ L 59, 27.2.1998, p. 1).
- (2) Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 laying down health rules as regards animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 (Animal by-products Regulation) (OJ L 300, 14.11.2009, p. 1).
- (3) Directive 2009/72/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity and repealing Directive 2003/54/EC (OJ L 211, 14.8.2009, p. 55).
- (4) Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain Directives (OJ L 312, 22.11.2008, p. 3).