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COUNCIL AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT REACH INFORMAL AGREEMENT ON THE SEVESO III DIRECTIVE

The Committee of Permanent Representatives endorsed today the compromise proposal agreed between the Council and the European Parliament regarding the directive on control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances, thus paving the way towards its formal adoption by the Council.

The Commission proposal ([18257/10](#)) presented on December 2010, aims at replacing, by 1 June 2015, the current Seveso II Directive¹ which applies to around 10 000 establishments in the EU. Its main objectives are:

- align Annex I (defining the substances falling within the scope of the directive) to changes in the EU system of classification of dangerous substances² to which it refers;
- adapt Annex I to deal with situations occurring after the alignment where substances are included/excluded, that do/do not present a major-accident hazard;
- strengthen the provisions relating to public access to safety information, participation in decision-making and access to justice, and improve the way information is collected, managed, made available and shared;
- introduce stricter standards for inspections of installations to ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of safety rules.

¹ OJ L 010, 14.1.1997.

² Regulation 1272/2008 on classification, labelling and packaging of dangerous substances and mixtures (CLP), which will apply from 1 June 2015.

P R E S S

The Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety of the European Parliament (ENVI) voted 145 amendments to the proposal on 4 October 2011¹. The European Economic and Social Committee adopted its opinion on 15 June 2011².

The text as it stands now is the outcome of technical work and extensive and intensive negotiations between the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission ("trilogues"), during the Hungarian, Polish and the current Danish Presidency. Two progress reports were presented to the Council, one in June ([11312/11](#)) and another in December 2011 ([18354/12](#)).

The key issues were the scope of the directive and Annex I (list of substances), the relation with the Convention on Access to Information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters (Aarhus Convention), as well as the use of delegated acts.

After the European Parliament adopts its position on first reading - which is expected for June 2012 - the directive will be officially adopted by the Council in the second half of 2012. A first reading agreement will allow extra-time to operators and competent authorities to adapt to the new provisions by 2015.

¹ A7-0339/2011.

² OJ C 248, 25.8.2011.