

Factsheet 3.01 - Describing the context for inspections

Identifying the scope

Relevant factors are (in random order):

- Geographical area for which the inspecting authority is competent
- Mission and goals (in general) of the inspecting authority
- The environmental outcome the inspecting authority is trying to achieve
- Statutory tasks, competences and measures to enforce of the inspecting authority
- Applicable legislation, either originated from a EU-, national- or regional level, against which the inspecting authority is competent to inspect
- Obligations to inspect, laid down in specific (EU-)legislation
- Established environmental (national) policy and priorities
- Interests of stakeholders (e.g. NGO's, branches of industries)
- Public opinions
- Register of activities and installations for which the inspecting authority is competent to inspect (the level of detail needs to be tailored for the Member State):
 - Sectors of industries
 - Types and sizes
 - Numbers and geographical distribution of installations
- Relevant environmental issues (water, air, safety, etc) for which the inspecting authority is competent to inspect
- The inspection resources (financial and human) that are available for the inspecting authority
- Types of inspection activities (control, compliance promotion, information transfer etc) to be covered

Gathering Information

Information on the following issues may be relevant in this respect:

Environment

- Environmental issues (environment, safety, public health, nature) particularly relevant for the area concerned
- Information on the state of and trends in the (ambient) environment (e.g. data from national or regional networks of pollution control sampling stations or monitoring devices)

Installations

- Sector-specific issues/needs, e.g. expertise, attitude, culture, compliance behaviour and economics of (industrial) target groups
- Information on the numbers, location and the branches of small and medium sized enterprises in the area that are regulated and falling under the scope of the inspection plan
- (Minimum) frequency of inspections based upon (national) legislation or national or local goals.
- Information on individual controlled activities/installations, such as information on:

- Legal requirements and permit situation
- Emissions/discharges (results from emission monitoring), environmental impact, risk, accidents/incidents
- Complexity of installation
- Location of installation
- Compliance record / behaviour (inspection history)
- Performance record (e.g. Environmental management systems, self monitoring and reporting, safety management systems, audits, experiences of inspection authorities)
- Relevant complaints

General

- Changes in legislation that need to be implemented
- Quality and enforceability of the requirements in legislation or permits
- Research on types of industry, objects and spatial planning done by third parties (e.g. Universities, Statistical boards or other Inspectorates)
- Coordination and cooperation with other (inspection) authorities
 - Feedback and evaluation of past inspections
 - Likelihood of offences (e.g. is there a big financial profit for not complying to legislation)

To gather, store and use all this information the inspecting authority should have an effective data management system. Software applications are a useful tool in this regard. It is important to keep these information systems updated. For example after every inspection, when installations have been changed or when complaints are received or accidents have occurred.