



Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents – Goals, Scope, Principal Requirements and Stakeholders

UNECE Convention on the
Transboundary Effects of
Industrial Accidents

**Assistance
Programme**





History, rationale and status of the Industrial Accidents Convention

- Industry is never risk free from major accidents
- Flixborough (1974) and Seveso (1976) accidents attracted attention to the industrial safety issue regarding design and management
- Bhopal, Mexico City (1984) and Basel (1982) accidents showed the vulnerability of nearby residents and the environment
- Baia Mare (2000) cyanide spill further showed that disasters recognize no borders





History, rationale and status of the Industrial Accidents Convention

- UNECE focused on prevention of industrial accidents and their transboundary effects in the early 1990s
- Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents:
 - Adopted on 17 March 1992
 - Signed by 26 UNECE member countries and the EU
 - Entered into force on 19 April 2000
 - Currently 41 Parties to the Convention, including EU





Bodies of the Convention

- Conference of the Parties - governing body of the Convention
- Bureau - elected amongst UNECE country representatives (also non-Parties)
- Working groups
 - Working group on implementation
 - Working group on the development
 - Joint expert group





The Convention: Legal framework for protection of man and environment from industrial accidents

Prevention

Civil liability

Work areas

Preparedness

Response





History, rationale and status of the Industrial Accidents Convention

- Goals of the Convention
- Protection of human health and the environment against industrial accidents
- Prevention of major accidents
- Preparedness to major accidents
- Response to major accidents
- Active international cooperation between the contracting Parties, before, during and after an industrial accident





History, rationale and status of the Industrial Accidents Convention

- Part of a pan-European legal environment framework
 - Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and its eight Protocols;
 - Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and its Protocol on Water and Health;
 - Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context; and
 - Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters





Main requirements of the Industrial Accidents Convention

- Identification of HAs capable of causing transboundary effects and notification to potentially affected countries
- Prevention of accidents through technical, organisational and management measures
- Preparedness to IAs through availability of up-to-date and tested emergency plans and procedures
- Response through effective mitigation, cooperation and coordination and notification to affected stakeholders
- Land use planning as part of the major accident prevention and preparedness
- Public awareness, information and participation





... And between Parties

In particular: notification of hazardous activities and accident prevention, response and mutual assistance



Country A

Country B





Transboundary Cooperation and the Convention

Transboundary cooperation is one of the main requirements in Art. 3, defining the general provisions of the Convention

- 1. The Parties shall ... take appropriate measures and cooperate within the framework of this Convention, to protect human beings and the environment against industrial accidents ...
- 2. The Parties shall, by means of exchange of information, consultation and other cooperative measures ... develop and implement policies and strategies for reducing the risks of industrial accidents





Transboundary Cooperation and the Convention

Transboundary cooperation in the area of industrial accident preparedness required in Art. 8

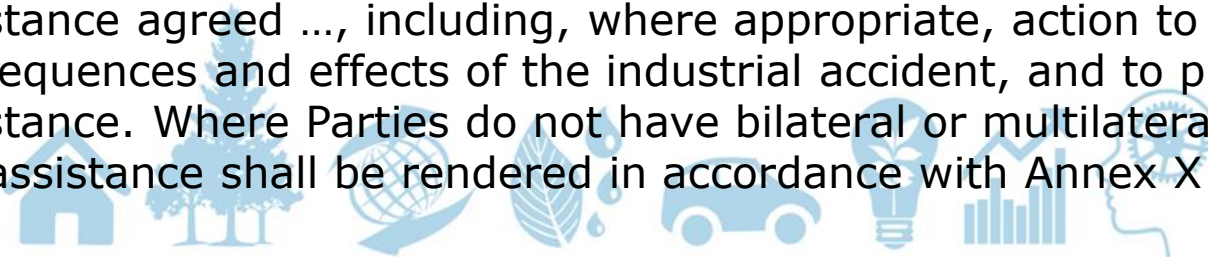
- 1. ... the Parties concerned shall inform each other of their contingency plans.
- 2. ... The Party of origin shall provide to the other Parties concerned the elements it has for the elaboration of contingency plans.
- 3. ... Parties concerned shall endeavour to make such plans compatible. Where appropriate, joint off-site contingency plans shall be drawn up in order to facilitate the adoption of adequate response measures.





Transboundary Cooperation and the Convention

- Transboundary cooperation in the area of industrial accident response required in Art. 11
 - 2. In the event of an industrial accident, or imminent threat thereof, which causes or is capable of causing transboundary effects, the Parties concerned **shall ensure that the effects are assessed--where appropriate, jointly** for the purpose of taking adequate response measures. The Parties concerned shall endeavour
- Mutual assistance promoted in Art. 11
 - 1. If a Party needs assistance in the event of an industrial accident, it may ask for assistance from other Parties, ... A Party to whom a request for assistance is directed shall promptly decide and inform the requesting Party whether it is in a position to render the assistance required and indicate the scope and terms of the assistance that might be rendered.
 - 2. The Parties concerned shall cooperate to facilitate the prompt provision of assistance agreed ..., including, where appropriate, action to minimize the consequences and effects of the industrial accident, and to provide general assistance. Where Parties do not have bilateral or multilateral agreements ..., the assistance shall be rendered in accordance with Annex X hereto...





Major relevant stakeholders

- National Competent Authorities
- Operators of Hazardous Activities
- General Public and NGOs

But also

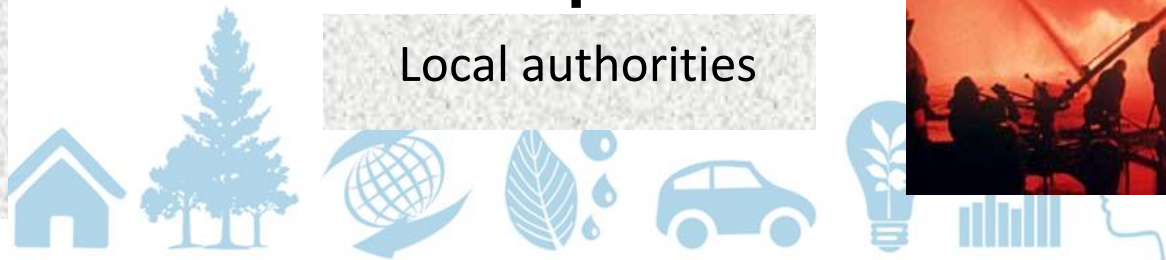
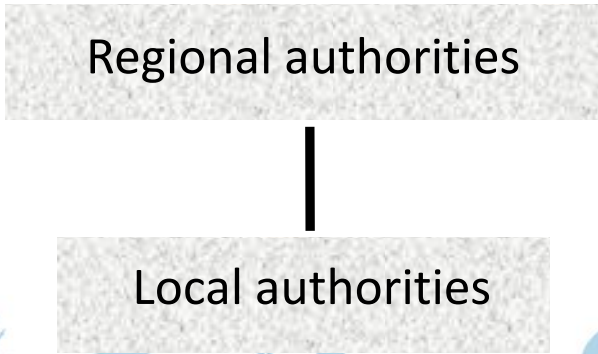
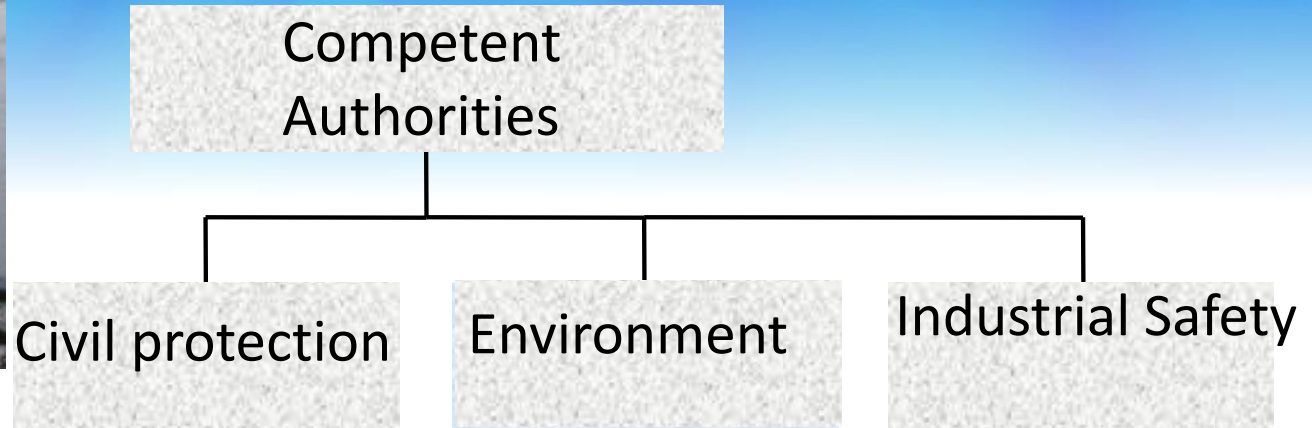
- Regional and local authorities
- Industrial and branch organisations
- Universities and research institutions



In order to achieve high level of protection, one of the most important issues is to ensure horizontal and vertical coordination and cooperation between stakeholders



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Thank you for your attention!

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