

THE ESPOO CONVENTION



Mag. Kurt NEMEC
Vienna, 17.12.2015

Dynamik mit Verantwortung

- The Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, elaborated under the auspices of the UNECE, adopted in Espoo, Finland, 25th of February 1991
- Signed by practically all countries on the European Continent
- Transposed into EU Law through an amendment to the EIA Directive in 1997
- Ratified by Austria on the 28th of November 1997

- Planned activity listed in Appendix I of the Convention: such activities as refineries, nuclear power stations, chemical plants, pipelines, infrastructure projects (motorways, long distance railway lines, airports, seaports etc.)
- Notification by the country of origin to any other member state that is considered to be affected as early as possible
- Notification has to include a description of the project and indicate a time frame for response of a possibly affected member state

- Definition of „impact“: effect on the environment including human health and safety, flora, fauna, soil, air, water, climate, landscape, historical monuments
- Definition of „transboundary impact“: any impact originating within the area of one member state in another member state
- The transboundary EIA should describe and evaluate the likely effect on the environment and must enter the official decision in the member country of origin
- Communication of member countries via liaison offices
- Information of the public in the affected member state through the national authorities

- In the same way as in the country of origin the public of the affected country has the right to submit comments to the project
- The comments of the affected country must be dealt with in the same way as the comments of the country of origin
- Weak side of the Convention: no translation regime
- As a result: bilateral agreements to be signed with neighbouring countries

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