

Improving leverage of existing Global PRTR portal websites

*Analysis and proposals for the improvement and
synergies of the global PRTR webs*

Prepared by the Chair of ICG in consultation with ECE, OECD and UNITAR

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1.- Introduction

PRTRs have become over the years one of the most useful tools in evaluating the environmental management and the sustainable development on a global scale. In this context, not only the development of criteria which enable the comparability and the common understanding across the existing PRTR systems but also ensuring a proper awareness and ease of use of information provided is still a great challenge. This fact is recognised by different stakeholders, decision-makers and international organizations, and has led to numerous works dealing with these issues so far.

Despite work carried out by the international organizations related to PRTRs; mainly UNECE, OECD, UNITAR, the available resources and the insights gained by countries which have already implemented PRTRs, another challenge that can be addressed also through global web portals is the basics of correct interpretation of data provided through PRTR systems, making them more understandable for users and comparing what is comparable.

The present document wants to be a first exercise of discussion focusing on how to enhance the current international resources of information in PRTR with the aim of avoiding overlaps and getting comprehensive online tools in this regards, to the extent possible.

1.1. Goals

Following-up the discussion and the mandate given by participants during the 11th ICG meeting, held on New York in 2017, this is a first paper prepared by the Chair on how to improve leverage of the existing online sources of information related to PRTRs. The aim of this paper is to improve the usefulness of the existing network of informative PRTR websites.

The following portals have been analysed in this document:

- **[PRTR.net](#)**: (Global portal on PRTR), managed by UNECE and OECD.
- **[OECD PRTR](#)**: OECD website on PRTR, including the [Centre for PRTR Data](#) (managed with the support of the Japanese Government) and the [Resource Centre for Release Emission Techniques \(RETs\)](#) (supported by the Finnish Government).
- **[UNITAR PRTR Platform](#)**: United Nations: website of PRTR UNITAR (United Nations Institute for Training and Research).
- **[IOMC Toolbox for Decision Making in Chemical Management \(PRTR\)](#)**: managed by the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals.

2.-Methodology

A straightforward, intuitive methodology has been tailored to compare these different websites identifying their common and unique features. It is based on the following elements:

- Asking simple questions about the websites' content and how it is provided.
- Establishing a colour code highlighting the characteristic per each element assessed.

These elements are explained in more detail in the sections below.

2.1. Questions to be answered

Because the aims and target audience of each website analysed are different and, therefore, their designs, contents, sections and viewing do not have necessarily to follow the same criteria, an attempt has been made to identify possible common and differentiating website features by raising the following key questions:

1. Which topics are covered by the website?	<i>What PRTR is; goals, aims, benefits, uses, why PRTRs, key/core elements, data/statistics' of user/visits/queries, etc...</i>
2. What type of information is shown?	<i>Technical data, search options, documentary background... (legal, guidelines/guidance's, technical/training documents,...)</i>
3. How is the information provided?	<i>Is it understandable? well organised?, user-friendly?,... On-line, download options, formats, aggregated/disaggregated....</i>
4. Is the site available in different world languages?	<i>Only one?, two? More than three? Which ones?, the whole site?, only some/part of the information?...</i>
5. What organizations/institutions are in charge of the website?	<i>Public/private, are they international, global?,</i>

2.2. Color code

In order to carry out an exhaustive analysis of these web portals, all and each one of the corresponding pages and sections have been systematically visualised. In addition to answering the key questions indicated above, for the different websites identifying their key features. A colour code has been developed to classify them in the following way:

COLOR USED	MEANING
Green	<u>Common part</u> Green means: the section/content discussed is a common aspect in all websites, even though not necessarily descriptions verbatim match.
Black	<u>Description part</u> Text in black, without color, means: descriptive information on the respective section/content.
Red	<u>The most specific information</u> Red means: specific sections/contents of the analysed web portal. From the point of view of the study carried out, the information offered in these sections is what is deemed to be of "greatest interest" or "most relevant" and what, where appropriate, should be particularly visualised as the "most specialised and distinctive information" of the website.

3.- Global PRTR web sites assessed

3.1. OECD PRTR Portal

The OECD's PRTR Web Portal is posted as a specific section in the area of Chemical Safety and Biosafety.

- > Biodiversity, water and natural resource management
- > **Chemical safety and biosafety**
 - > Testing of chemicals
 - > Assessment of chemicals
 - > Risk management of chemicals
 - > Chemical accident prevention, preparedness and response
 - > **Pollutant release and transfer register**
 - > Safety of manufactured nanomaterials
 - > Agricultural pesticides and biocides

Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR)

In recent years, the public's "right to know" has moved to the forefront of environmental policy making. PRTR is a key tool for governments to provide the public with data regarding the amount of hazardous chemicals and pollutants released to air, water and soil and transferred off-site for treatment or disposal.

OECD has been supporting development and implementation of PRTR systems in member countries by developing several guidance manuals and technical documents. The OECD is also managing a few web-based databases in order to encourage governments and other stakeholders to share PRTR data and technical information.

The Project

- [Introduction to PRTRs](#)
- [OECD and PRTRs](#)
- [More about OECD activities](#)

Products

- [Publications on PRTRs](#)

Web-based resources



- [Centre for PRTR Data](#)
- [Resource Centre for Release Estimation Techniques](#)
- [PRTR.net](#) (global portal to PRTR information)



[PRTR Brochure](#)

Reference: [OECD PRTR Portal](#) 02/07/2019 9:5

The [home page of PRTRs](#) is quite schematic from which different sections of information are accessed, namely:

<p>The Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to PRTRs OECD and PRTRs More about OECD activities <p>Products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publications on PRTRs 	<p>Web-based resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centre for PRTR Data Resource Centre for Release Estimation Techniques PRTR.net (global portal to PRTR information) 	 <p>PRTR Brochure</p>
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Reference: [OECD PRTR Portal](#) 02/07/2019 9:5

The page is only available in two languages: English and French.

The content of each of these sections is discussed below.

3.1.1.-Introduction to PRTRs

In this [section](#) two main topics are addressed (*):

What is a PRTR?:

PRTR definition, main characteristics and benefits.

Introduction to Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs)

WHAT IS A POLLUTANT RELEASE AND TRANSFER REGISTERS (PRTR)?

A Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR) is a publicly accessible database or inventory of chemicals or pollutants released to air, water and soil and transferred off-site for treatment. It brings together information about which chemicals are being released, where, how much and by whom.

PRTRs typically require facility owners or operators who release chemicals (e.g., in such industries as manufacturing and mining) to quantify their releases and to report them to governments on a regular basis.

Reporting can be both on emissions from fixed sources (e.g., factory smokestacks) as well as from diffuse sources (e.g., mobile sources such as automobiles, trucks, aircraft and trains).

Depending on the threshold a government sets for reporting, facilities can range from large industrial sites to small operations such as dry cleaners.

PRTRs provide a rich source of data for multiple uses and purposes:

- Government agencies – national, state and local – can use PRTR data to measure trends in pollutant releases and waste generation, inform environmental policy decisions, evaluate environmental programmes and, when combined with health-related information, identify potential human health and environmental risks.
- The public can use PRTRs to: identify potential chemical exposures and risks posed by releases from nearby facilities, make informed decisions, and monitor the progress of facilities' efforts to lessen their environmental impact.
- Companies can use PRTR data to identify opportunities to improve efficiency, reduce waste and as a metric for evaluating their progress towards sustainable development.
- Other stakeholders, such as non-governmental organisations, the news media and researchers benefit from access to published PRTR information – particularly when combined with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) geographic mapping and toxicity information – to identify possible hot spots of concern or possible correlations between exposure and observed health or environmental effects.
- Financial firms also use PRTR data to support socially responsible investments, as well as identify potential liabilities of firms and impacts on real estate prices.

History of PRTR at the OECD:

Information about the OECD role in the promotion and implementation of PRTRs.

HISTORY OF PRTR AT THE OECD

The OECD began work on PRTRs in response to [Agenda 21](#), the result of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Agenda 21 calls for governments to implement and improve databases about chemicals including inventories of emissions, with the co-operation of industry and the public.

In 1996, the OECD Council adopted a Recommendation on implementing Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers ([CD/96/L1/Final](#)), as amended in 2003 ([CD/2003/L7](#)), replaced in 2018 ([CD/2018/L5](#)), which calls for Member countries to establish a PRTR scheme. In line with the Council Recommendation, OECD also published a guidance manual for governments to develop and implement a PRTR scheme.

The work has been conducted within the framework of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) which was established by UNEP, UNITAR, ILO, FAO, UNIDO, WHO and OECD in 1996 based on the recommendation by the Agenda 21.

In 1998, OECD held the International Conference on PRTRs: National and Global Responsibility in Tokyo, Japan. This conference was the largest and most significant gathering of PRTR experts since the Earth Summit in 1992. This conference produced a blueprint for future international action to enhance and support PRTR implementation (see conference proceedings, [Part I](#) and [Part II](#)).

After the conference, the OECD has produced a series of technical reports highlighting characteristics of PRTRs. These reports analyse the difference of PRTRs and discuss how a variety of national goals can drive the design of a PRTR and its operation. These activities also serve as a reference for countries developing, or considering the development of, PRTRs.

PUBLICATIONS

- [List of publications in the PRTR series](#)

(* see section 2.2 of this document to know more about the green colour used

3.1.2.- OECD and PRTRs

This [section](#) (*) provides more information with the role of the OECD particularly on the Council's Recommendation on PRTRs and other interesting information related to this topic

Beginning on the Work- OECD Council's Recommendation

Implementation of the Council Recommendation

Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs)

OECD Council's Recommendation

1. Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) in response to [Agenda 21](#), the result of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Agenda 21 calls for governments to implement and improve databases about chemicals including inventories of emissions from industry and the public.

2. The Council adopted a [Recommendation on Implementing Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers](#) (C/(96)41/Final, as amended in 2003 C(2003)87), and invited member countries to establish a PRTR scheme. In line with the Council Recommendation, OECD also published a guidance manual for governments to establish a PRTR scheme in [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#) and [Russian](#).

3. The Council also invited member countries to participate within the framework of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) which was established by the OECD, UNIDO, WHO and ILO in 1995 based on the recommendation by the Agenda 21. Past meetings of the IOMC include: The Americas (1997) in Mexico (see outcome: [PRTRs: A Tool for Environmental Management and Sustainable Development](#)); Central and Eastern European (1998) in New Independent States (NIS) of the Former Soviet Union, 15-17 January 1997 in Prague (see [summary report](#)); and Southeast Asia, 25-27 January 1997 in Singapore.

4. The Council also invited member countries to participate in the International Conference on PRTRs: National and Global Responsibility in Tokyo, Japan. This conference produced a blueprint for enhancing and supporting PRTR implementation (see conference proceedings, [Part I](#) and [Part II](#)).

OECD Council Recommendation

5. The Council periodically conducted surveys on the status of implementation of the Council Recommendation in member countries. A [summary of the survey and review of the results](#) serve as a reference tool for countries developing a new PRTR system or modifying an existing one.

6. The Council's survey undertaken in 2009, all OECD member countries have established, or are preparing to establish a PRTR scheme in their countries. Links to regional PRTRs are available from [PRTR.net](#), a global portal site for the PRTR information.

[Activities to assist PRTRs implementation](#).

() see section 2.2 of this document to know more about the green colour used*

Although the information provided focuses on the process of implementation of PRTRs in OECD member countries, it may be very interesting not only for the other OECD countries that have not yet implemented a PRTR but also for other non-OECD countries.

3.1.3.- More about the OECD activities on PRTRs:

In this [section \(*\)](#) specific information about the ongoing activities carried about at the OECD is given. The main aim of these activities is to develop practical tools to help countries to establish and implement a PRTR, focusing on some of the most important challenges of the PRTRs such as improving data quality, PRTR data application and harmonization of PRTRs globally

Ongoing activities

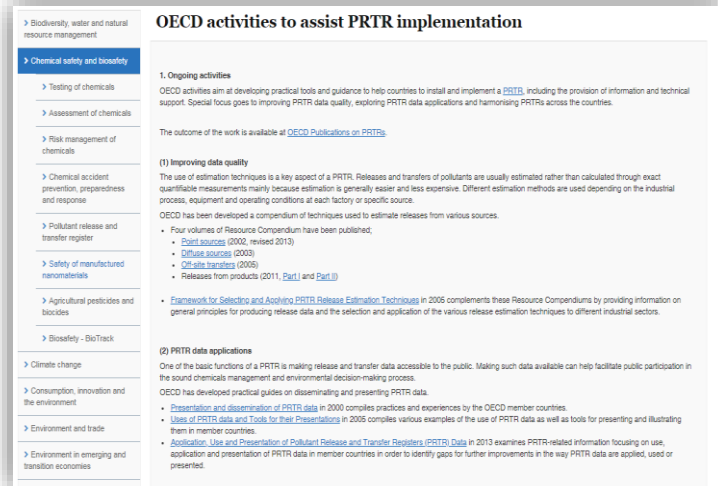
(1) Improving data quality

(2) PRTR data applications

(3) Harmonization of PRTRs across the countries

Expert Group on PRTR

Information about the body in charge of overseeing the OECD PRTR activities.



OECD activities to assist PRTR implementation

1. Ongoing activities

OECD activities aim at developing practical tools and guidance to help countries to install and implement a PRTR, including the provision of information and technical support. Special focus goes to improving PRTR data quality, exploring PRTR data applications and harmonising PRTRs across the countries.

The outcome of the work is available at [OECD Publications on PRTRs](#).

(1) Improving data quality

The use of estimation techniques is a key aspect of a PRTR. Releases and transfers of pollutants are usually estimated rather than calculated through exact quantifiable measurements mainly because estimation is generally easier and less expensive. Different estimation methods are used depending on the industrial process, equipment and operating conditions at each factory or specific source.

OECD has been developed a compendium of techniques used to estimate releases from various sources.

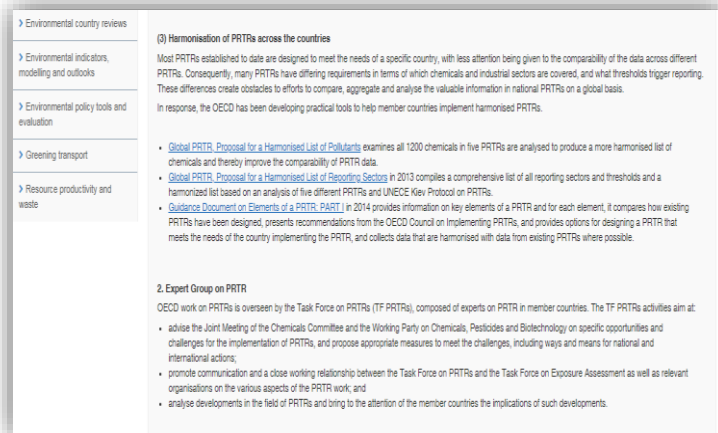
- Four volumes of Resource Compendium have been published:
 - [Point sources](#) (2002, revised 2013)
 - [Diffuse sources](#) (2003)
 - [On-site transfers](#) (2005)
 - [Release from products](#) (2011, [Part I](#) and [Part II](#))
- [Framework for Selection and Archiving PRTR Release Estimation Techniques](#) in 2005 complements these Resource Compendiums by providing information on general principles for producing release data and the selection and application of the various release estimation techniques to different industrial sectors.

(2) PRTR data applications

One of the basic functions of a PRTR is making release and transfer data accessible to the public. Making such data available can help facilitate public participation in the sound chemicals management and environmental decision-making process.

OECD has developed practical guides on disseminating and presenting PRTR data.

- [Presentation and dissemination of PRTR data](#) in 2000 compiles practices and experiences by the OECD member countries.
- [Uses of PRTR data and Tools for their Presentation](#) in 2005 compiles various examples of the use of PRTR data as well as tools for presenting and illustrating them in member countries.
- [Application, Use and Presentation of Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers \(PRTR Data\)](#) in 2013 examines PRTR-related information focusing on use, application and presentation of PRTR data in member countries in order to identify gaps for further improvements in the way PRTR data are applied, used or presented.



(3) Harmonisation of PRTRs across the countries

Most PRTRs established to date are designed to meet the needs of a specific country, with less attention being given to the comparability of the data across different PRTRs. Consequently, many PRTRs have differing requirements in terms of which chemicals and industrial sectors are covered, and what thresholds trigger reporting. These differences create obstacles to efforts to compare, aggregate and analyse the valuable information in national PRTRs on a global basis.

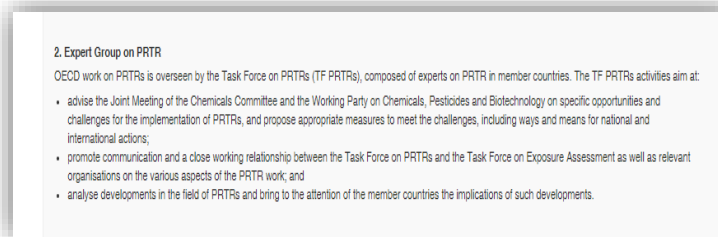
In response, the OECD has been developing practical tools to help member countries implement harmonised PRTRs.

- [Global PRTR, Proposal for a Harmonised List of Pollutants](#) examines all 1200 chemicals in five PRTRs are analysed to produce a more harmonised list of chemicals and thereby improve the comparability of PRTR data.
- [Global PRTR, Proposal for a Harmonised List of Reporting Sectors](#) in 2013 compiles a comprehensive list of all reporting sectors and thresholds and a harmonized list based on an analysis of five different PRTRs and UNECE Kiev Protocol on PRTRs.
- [Guidance Document on Elements of a PRTR, PART I](#) in 2014 provides information on key elements of a PRTR and for each element, it compares how existing PRTRs have been designed, presents recommendations from the OECD Council on Implementing PRTRs, and provides options for designing a PRTR that meets the needs of the country implementing the PRTR, and collects data that are harmonised with data from existing PRTRs where possible.

2. Expert Group on PRTR

OECD work on PRTRs is overseen by the Task Force on PRTRs (TF PRTRs), composed of experts on PRTR in member countries. The TF PRTRs activities aim at:

- advise the Joint Meeting of the Chemicals Committee and the Working Party on Chemicals, Pesticides and Biotechnology on specific opportunities and challenges for the implementation of PRTRs, and propose appropriate measures to meet the challenges, including ways and means for national and international actions;
- promote communication and a close working relationship between the Task Force on PRTRs and the Task Force on Exposure Assessment as well as relevant organisations on the various aspects of the PRTR work; and
- analyse developments in the field of PRTRs and bring to the attention of the member countries the implications of such developments.



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- promote communication and a close working relationship between the Task Force on PRTRs and the Task Force on Exposure Assessment as well as relevant organisations on the various aspects of the PRTR work; and
- analyse developments in the field of PRTRs and bring to the attention of the member countries the implications of such developments.

(*) see section 2.2 of this document to know more about the green colour used

All the information shown in this part is exclusive to the OECD and is based on the different experiences of the countries with PRTRs and therefore constitutes an essential source

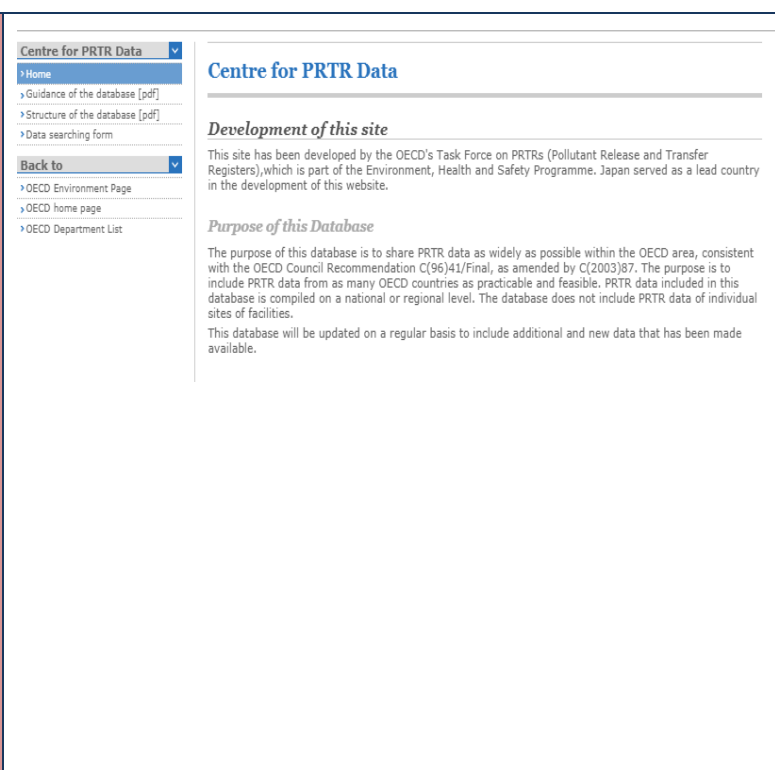
of information for those others that are in the process of implementing a PRTR or considering it. That is why this section is classified as “red” one, in terms of the aim of this study.

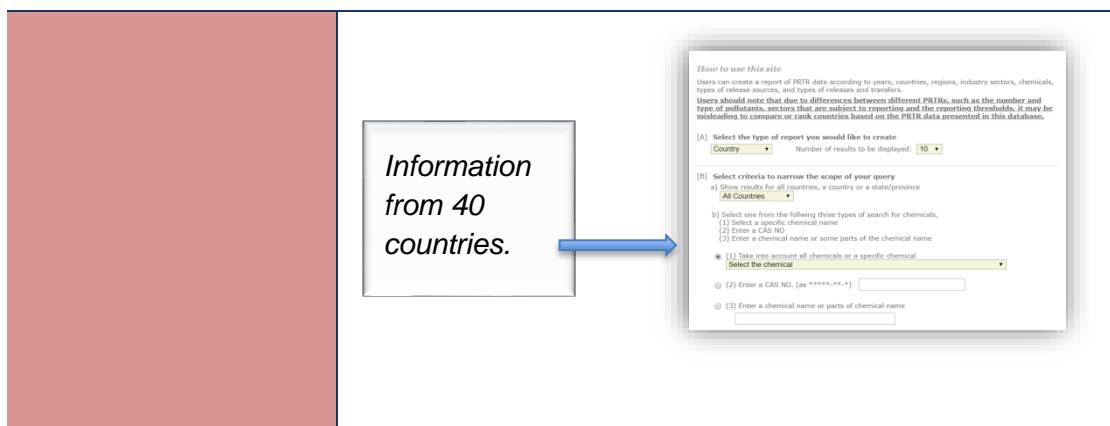
3.1.4.- Web-based resources

This is another specific piece of information only provided by the OECD portal. There are two main topics:

- [Centre for PRTR Data](#), and
- [Resource Centre for PRTRs](#)

A).- Centre for PRTR data (*).

<p>Centre for PRTR Data.</p> <p>The aim of this database is to share PRTR data as widely as possible within the OECD area. PRTR data included is compiled on a national or regional level. Information at facility level is not shown.</p> <p>It is regularly updated based on voluntarily submitted data as there is no any mandatory requirement to any OECD country to submit its data.</p> <p>(Japan serves as a lead country in this activity)</p>	
<p>Search options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By country • By pollutant • By sector • By type of source • By year • By type of emissions/transfers 	<p>How to use this site</p> <p>Users can create a report of PRTR data according to years, countries, regions, industry sectors, chemicals, types of release sources, and types of releases and transfers.</p> <p>Users should note that due to differences between different PRTRs, such as the number and type of pollutants, sectors that are subject to reporting and the reporting thresholds, it may be misleading to compare or rank countries based on the PRTR data presented in this database.</p>



() see section 2.2 of this document to know more about the green colour used*

This database is the only one in which data from different countries on a global scale can be consulted. Somehow, it complements the two regional registries that currently exist, the [E-PRTR](#) and the [North American PRTR](#) managed by the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC).

This remarkable section should be made more visible worldwide, precisely because of its uniqueness in which comparable information from many countries are shared, even further bearing in mind that it is built on a voluntary basis.

B).- Resource Centre for PRTRs (*).

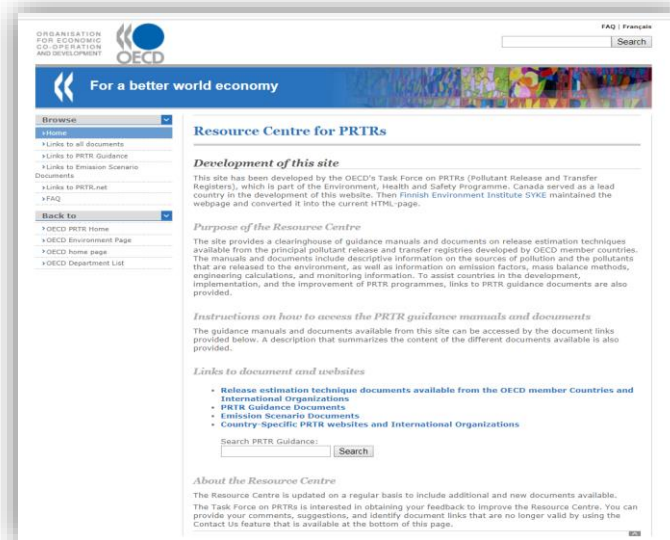
This sub-section is also an OECD specific compilation. There are many of documentary repositories in almost all the existing PRTRs websites, usually considering its particularities. So, the advantage of having such a "general compilation on Release Estimation Techniques (RETs)" is that it could be served as the reference site to display all the available information in this regard could be accessible for everyone who could need it. It would also be helpful in terms of moving forward to a greater comparability globally through applying and naming the specific RETs employed to prepare PRTR data.

Canada was the first leader of this project, followed by the Finish Government ([Finnish Environment Institute SYKE](#)) who currently handle the Resource Centre for PRTRs. It is updated on a regular basis to include additional and new documents.

As in the previous case (Centre for PRTR data), this sub-section should be made more visible worldwide.

Options available:

- [RETs documents available from the OECD member countries and international organizations.](#)
- [PRTR guidance documents.](#)
- [Emission Scenario Documents.](#)
- [Country-Specific PRTR website and international organizations.](#)



() see section 2.2 of this document to know more about the green colour used*

A third topic is covered by the **Web-based resources** section, that is the inclusion of a direct link to [PRTR.NET](#), which is also described later in this document.

3.1.5.- Products: Publications on PRTRs (*).

“Products” mainly means “documents”. In this [section](#), all PRTR documents produced by the OECD can be consulted and downloaded. Essentially they refer to guidance documents on several PRTR related issues.

Three types of publications:

- Council Acts
- Guidance Manuals:
 - Global PRTRs
 - PRTR data Applications
 - RETs
 - Workshop Report
- Other publications

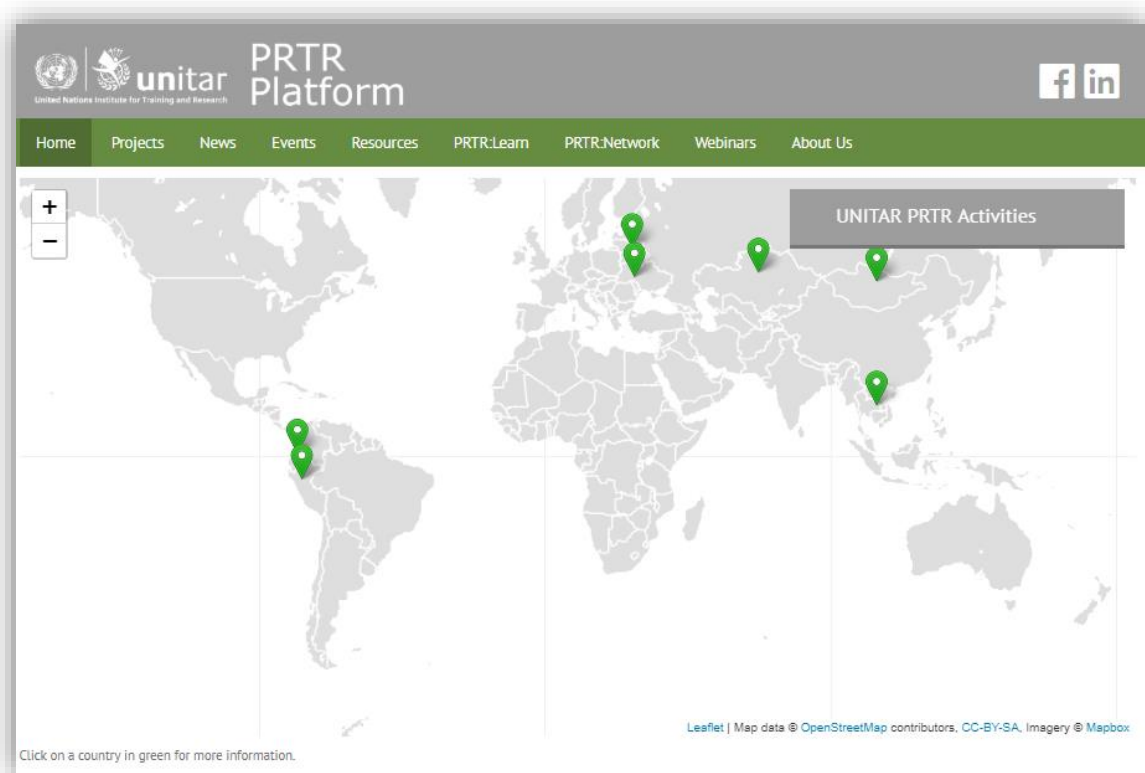


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Once again, this is a very noteworthy section of the OECD website. It would be quite appropriate to say that it is certainly one of the best-known sections consulted, since these manuals are frequently used as a reference for those countries that are in the process of implementing a PRTR.

3.2. UNITAR PRTR PLATFORM

The [UNITAR \(United Nations Institute for Training and Research\) PRTR Platform](#) is a website developed under the UNITAR's Chemicals and Waste Management Programme framework focused on providing institutional, technical and legal infrastructure support and capacities for sound management of chemicals. The aim of this PRTR Platform is to provide specific information about the main activities carried out by UNITAR in promoting PRTRs as helpful tools for countries to comply with the reporting requirements under the international environmental conventions related to the management of chemicals.



Besides the horizontal browser bar linking to the main sections of the web, the home page is dominated by a *mapa mundi* displaying the UNITAR ongoing activities in PRTRs. Also in this homepage are presented general ideas about PRTRs and its valuable information is shown:

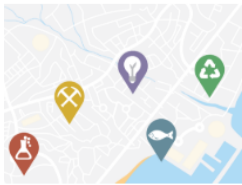
What is a PRTR?:

PRTR definition, main characteristics and benefits, using simple questions to point out the reader's interest.

Summarizing windows:

with the latest in each section and links to "see/read more"

What is a Pollutant Release and Transfer Register?



Do you know what is happening in your neighbourhood?
Do nearby industrial facilities release toxic chemicals?
What kinds of toxic chemicals are they releasing?

A Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR) can help you find these answers!

Welcome to UNITAR's PRTR Platform. Here, you can learn more about different aspect of PRTR, with our virtual classroom PRTR:Learn, as well as on-going projects and event related to PRTRs. A resource section is also available and provide a collection of international guidance on PRTRs as well as country-specific documents and strategies regarding a PRTRs' implementations. And don't forget to join a growing PRTR community on the social networks, to share experience and learn more about PRTRs.

[Read more](#)



3rd Global Round Table on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers

November 7 2018

The 3rd Global Round Table on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers: "Promoting Informed Decisions for a Sustainable Future"



First PRTR reporting trial in Mongolia

October 22 2018

Did you know that during the long cold season the levels of air pollution in Ulaanbaatar are among the highest in the world?



Establishment of publicly accessible National PRTR approved by the Government of the Republic of Moldova

July 31 2018

Based on Governmental Decision nr. 373 dated 24 April 2018, the creation of a national PRTR has been officially approved in the

PRTR:Learn

Video trainings on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers

[Start watching](#)

Events

Final PRTRs Lessons Learned Workshop & Third Project Steering Committee Meeting - UNEP/UNITAR/GEF
3/25/19-3/27/19, Siem Reap, Cambodia

Third Global Round Table on PRTRs
11/7/18-11/8/18, Palais de Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

National Inception Workshop and trainings on institutional and technical aspects of PRTRs in Mongolia
6/26/18-6/29/18, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

[View all](#)

Latest Resources

National Strategy for Public Access to Environmental Information and PRTR data of the Kingdom of Cambodia

National PRTR Executive Proposal of the Kingdom of Cambodia

Report of the National PRTR Inception Workshop of the Republic of Peru

[View all](#)

(*) see section 2.2 of this document to know more about the green colour used

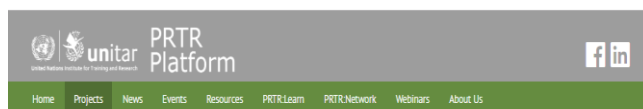
The UNITAR PRTR Platform is only accessible in English

3.2.1.- UNITAR PRTR descriptive sections

The following site's sections provide mostly information focused on the various ongoing UNITAR projects, the latest activities and the most relevant developments. These sections have therefore been classified as "descriptive" (*) for the purposes of this work.

Projects

UNITAR ongoing or terminated country projects



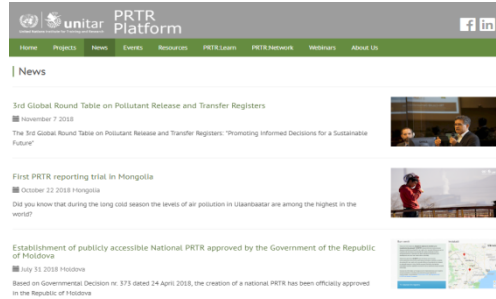
Projects

Global Project on the Implementation of Pollutant Release and Transfer Register as a tool for POPs reporting, dissemination and awareness raising - Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Peru

Strengthening Capacities for Developing a National Pollutant Release and Transfer register (PRTR) in Support of SAICM Implementation in Mongolia - Mongolia

[News](#)

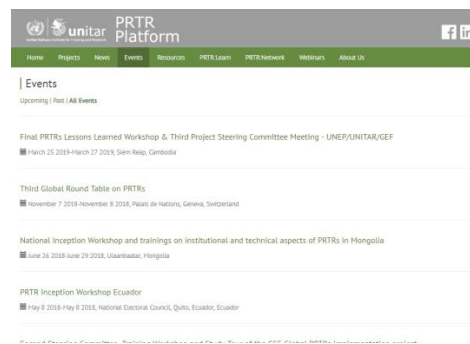
Latest news related to PRTR meetings, events, publications, articles, etc.



The screenshot shows the 'News' section of the PRTR Platform website. It features a navigation bar with links for Home, Projects, News, Events, Resources, PRTR Learn, PRTR Network, Webinars, and About Us. The main content area lists three news items: 1) '3rd Global Round Table on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers' dated November 7, 2018, with a sub-headline 'Promoting Informed Decisions for a Sustainable Future'. 2) 'First PRTR reporting trial in Mongolia' dated October 22, 2018, with a sub-headline 'Did you know that during the long cold season the levels of air pollution in Ulaanbaatar are among the highest in the world?'. 3) 'Establishment of publicly accessible National PRTR approved by the Government of the Republic of Moldova' dated July 31, 2018, with a sub-headline 'Based on Governmental Decision no. 373 dated 24 April 2018, the creation of a national PRTR has been officially approved in the Republic of Moldova'.

[Events](#)

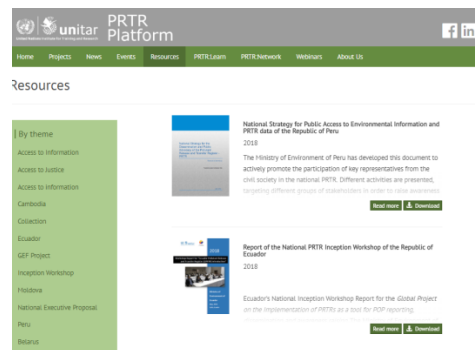
Information on international and national events (workshops, conferences, meetings) related to PRTRs



The screenshot shows the 'Events' section of the PRTR Platform website. It features a navigation bar with links for Home, Projects, News, Events, Resources, PRTR Learn, PRTR Network, Webinars, and About Us. The main content area lists several upcoming events: 1) 'Final PRTRs Lessons Learned Workshop & Third Project Steering Committee Meeting - UNEP/UNITAR/GEF' dated March 25, 2019 - March 27, 2019, in Siem Reap, Cambodia. 2) 'Third Global Round Table on PRTRs' dated November 7, 2018 - November 8, 2018, in Palais de Nations, Geneva, Switzerland. 3) 'National Inception Workshop and trainings on institutional and technical aspects of PRTRs in Mongolia' dated June 26, 2018 - June 29, 2018, in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. 4) 'PRTR Inception Workshop Ecuador' dated May 8, 2018 - May 8, 2018, at the National Electoral Council, Quito, Ecuador, Ecuador.

[Resources](#)

PRTR guidelines and documents produced by national institutions and international organizations. Materials organized: By theme; by organization; by country.

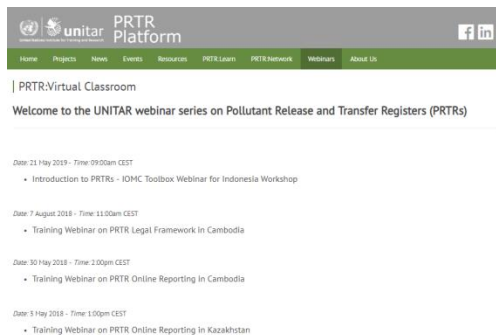


The screenshot shows the 'Resources' section of the PRTR Platform website. It features a navigation bar with links for Home, Projects, News, Events, Resources, PRTR Learn, PRTR Network, Webinars, and About Us. The main content area is titled 'Resources' and includes a sidebar with a 'By theme' list: Access to Information, Access to Justice, Access to Information, Cambodia, Collection, Ecuador, GEP Project, Inception Workshop, Moldova, National Executive Proposal, Peru, and Belarus. The main content area displays two resource cards: 1) 'National Strategy for Public Access to Environmental Information and PRTR data of the Republic of Peru 2018' with a sub-headline 'The Ministry of Environment of Peru has developed this document to actively promote the participation of key representatives from the civil society in the national PRTR. Different activities are presented, targeting different groups of stakeholders to reach the goal.' 2) 'Report of the National PRTR Inception Workshop of the Republic of Ecuador 2018' with a sub-headline 'Ecuador's National Inception Workshop Report for the Global Project on the implementation of PRTRs as a tool for POP reporting'.

[Webinars](#)

Virtual PRTR classroom where users can access information such as topic and link of the next scheduled webinar. Webinars are usually open, free and the address specific PRTR topics, with the participation of international PRTR experts.

Though this section is mainly a "descriptive" one, it could be also very useful to use it in a broader context



The screenshot shows the 'Webinars' section of the PRTR Platform website. It features a navigation bar with links for Home, Projects, News, Events, Resources, PRTR Learn, PRTR Network, Webinars, and About Us. The main content area is titled 'PRTR:Virtual Classroom' and includes a sub-headline 'Welcome to the UNITAR webinar series on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs)'. Below this, there is a list of upcoming webinars: 1) 'Introduction to PRTRs - IOMC Toolbox Webinar for Indonesia Workshop' dated 21 May 2019 - Time: 09:00am CEST. 2) 'Training Webinar on PRTR Legal Framework in Cambodia' dated 7 August 2018 - Time: 11:00am CEST. 3) 'Training Webinar on PRTR Online Reporting in Cambodia' dated 30 May 2018 - Time: 1:00pm CEST. 4) 'Training Webinar on PRTR Online Reporting in Kazakhstan' dated 5 May 2018 - Time: 1:00pm CEST.

(*) see section 2.2 of this document to know more about the green colour used

3.2.2.- PRTR:Learn and PRTR:network

Especially interesting from the perspective of this work are the sections called [PRTR:Learn](#) and [PRTR:network](#), which should be more exploited and visible to the global PRTR community.

PRTR:Learn (*)

Explanatory videos about different topics:

- communication and data formulation,
- legal implementation,
- RETs
- Data Standardization
- Online Reporting Systems

(and the corresponding instructions)

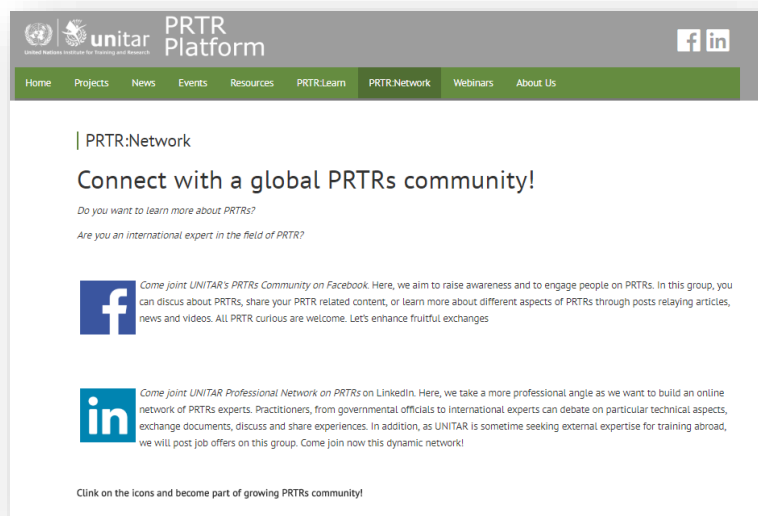


PRTR:Network (*)

Using the social networks to connect the global PRTR community:

- Facebook group to reach out to the more general audience

- LinkedIn group to facilitate the creation of a network of international PRTR experts

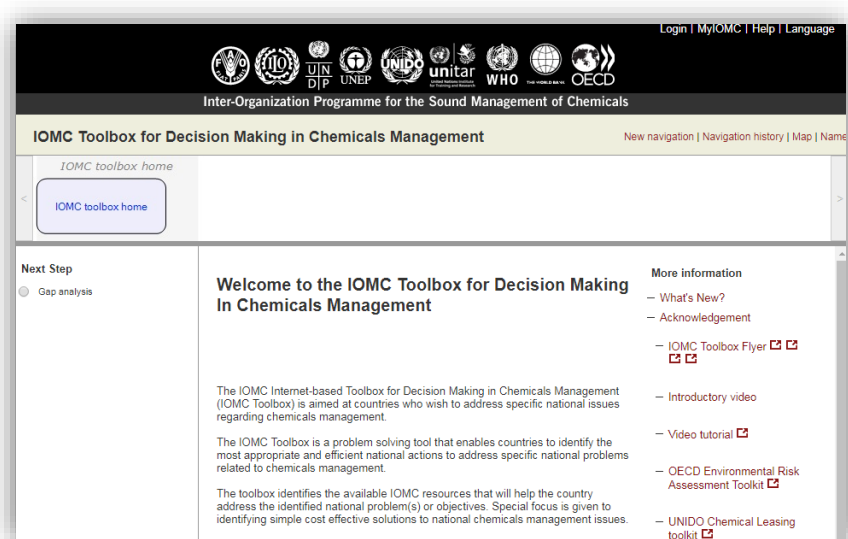


(*) see section 2.2 of this document to know more about the green colour used

3.3 - IOMC toolbox on PRTR

The third global portal in PRTR assessed is the [IOMC Toolbox on PRTR](#), handled by the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) - a collaborative agreement between FAO, ILO, UNDP, UN Environment, UNIDO, UNITAR, WHO, the World Bank and the OECD.

Actually, the IOMC Toolbox scheme on PRTR constitutes one of the possible options [in the more general IOCM platform](#) developed to facilitate countries in their implementation and decision making processes in chemicals management:



This website is available in three languages: **English, Spanish and French.**

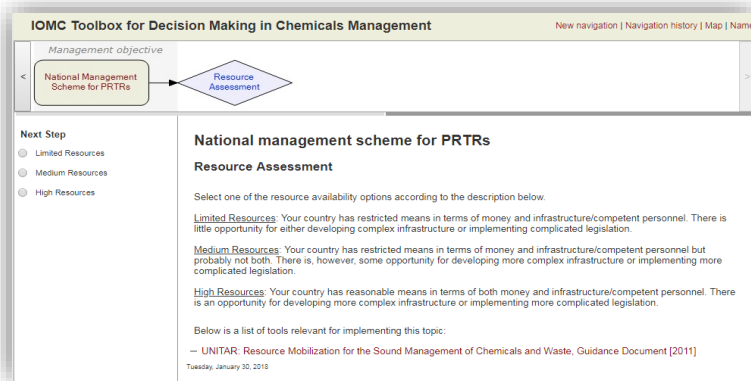
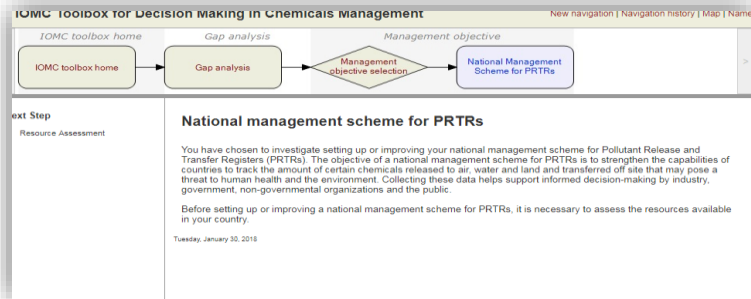
The site is currently under revision and will be promptly replaced by a new one. The new image of this new site can be seen in this [link](#):



The IOMC Toolbox includes 8 chemicals management schemes. Among those, the Toolbox provides a dedicated PRTR scheme to help countries that are in the initial phase of PRTR design, or in a more advanced implementation phase, to find the relevant PRTR documents and guidelines published by IOMC organizations. Trying to summarize the way the current version works, the tool is developing a customized flowchart, depending on the selected options in each step. For each one of these choices, a series of recommendations on how to move the process forward are offered.

IOMC Toolbox for Decisión Making in Chemical Managements:

National Management Scheme for PRTR (IOMC Toolbox for PRTRs) (*)

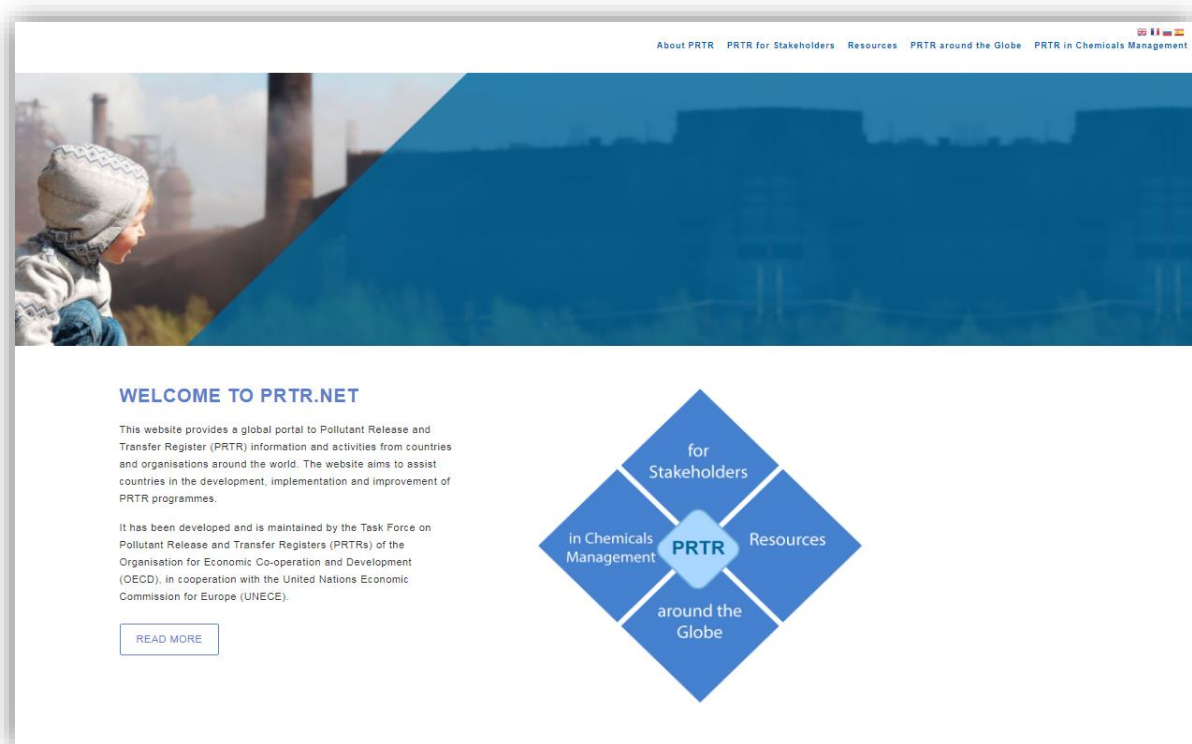


() see section 2.2 of this document to learn more about the green colour used*

Though the information used to develop the flowchart is based on both the OECD and UNITAR guidance materials, this section is classified as “red” one for the purpose of this exercise, since it is a user-friendly way of proceeding.

3.4.- PRTR.net

This [PRTR portal](#) is the one with the most global perspective of all the websites analysed.



It has been designed to serve as the main showcase in relation to PRTR information and activities worldwide. Assisting countries in their implementation and/or improvement of PRTR programmes is the final goal of this website.

Currently the website is hosted and maintained by the UNECE and is managed substantively jointly by UNECE and OECD.

The information provided on the website is available, so far, in four languages: **English, French, Russian and Spanish.**

Besides the corresponding browser bar and quick access to several sections, the latest news and resources on PRTRs are also summarized in the home page.

In following chapters is analysed a little bit more deeply into how this page is structured and its contents.

3.4.1.- About PRTR section.

This section is common to other websites, while including specific aspects, such as PRTR vs sustainability and frequent asking questions (F.A.Q.):

About PRTR (*):

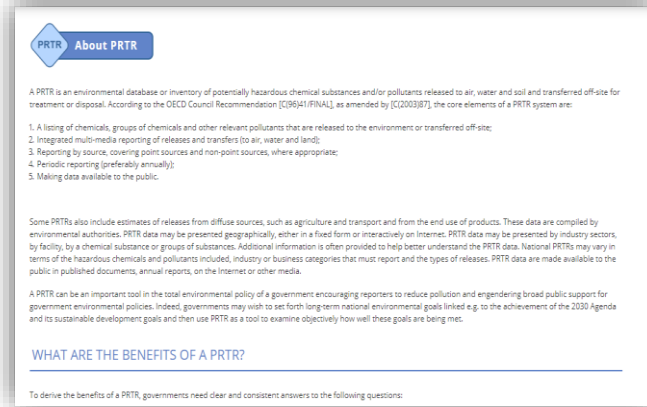
PRTR definition, core elements and benefits for stakeholder...

In this section also:

Information about the [role of PRTR in sustainable development...](#)

...

[F.A.Q.](#)



PRTR About PRTR

A PRTR is an environmental database or inventory of potentially hazardous chemical substances and/or pollutants released to air, water and soil and transferred off-site for treatment or disposal. According to the OECD Council Recommendation [C(1964)1(FINAL)] as amended by [C(2003)87], the core elements of a PRTR system are:

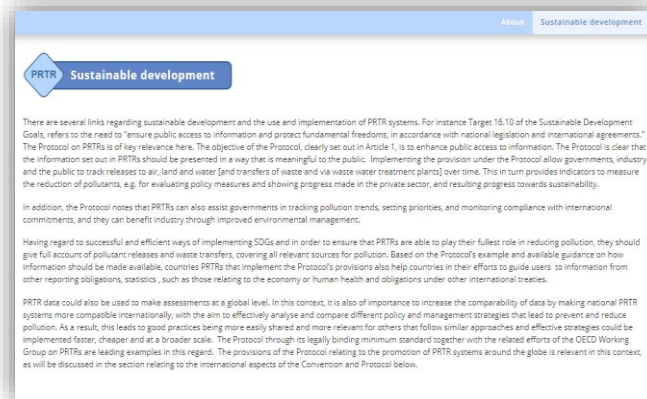
1. A listing of chemicals, groups of chemicals and other relevant pollutants that are released to the environment or transferred off-site;
2. Integrated multi-media reporting of releases and transfers (to air, water and land);
3. Reporting by source, covering point sources and non-point sources, where appropriate;
4. Periodic reporting (preferably annually);
5. Making data available to the public.

Some PRTRs also include estimates of releases from diffuse sources, such as agriculture and transport and from the end use of products. These data are compiled by environmental authorities. PRTR data may be presented geographically, either in a fixed form or interactively on Internet. PRTR data may be presented by industry sectors, by facility, by a chemical substance or groups of substances. Additional information is often provided to help better understand the PRTR data. National PRTRs may vary in terms of the hazardous chemicals and pollutants included, industry or business categories that must report and the types of releases. PRTR data are made available to the public in published documents, annual reports, on the Internet or other media.

A PRTR can be an important tool in the total environmental policy of a government encouraging reporters to reduce pollution and engendering broad public support for government environmental policies. Indeed, governments may wish to set forth long-term national environmental goals linked e.g. to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and its sustainable development goals and then use PRTR as a tool to examine objectively how well these goals are being met.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A PRTR?

To derive the benefits of a PRTR, governments need clear and consistent answers to the following questions:



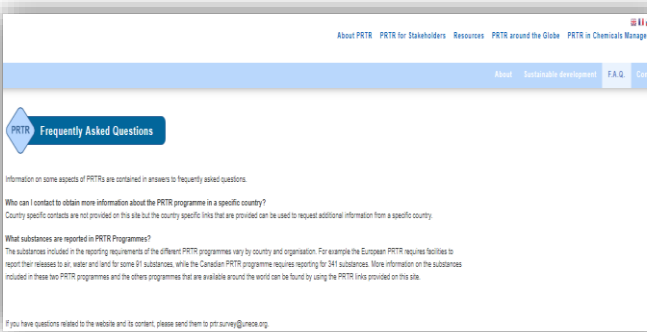
PRTR Sustainable development

There are several links regarding sustainable development and the use and implementation of PRTR systems. For instance Target 16.10 of the Sustainable Development Goals, refers to the need to "ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements." The Protocol on PRTRs is of key relevance here. The objective of the Protocol, clearly set out in Article 1, is to enhance public access to information. The Protocol is clear that the information set out in PRTRs should be presented in a way that is meaningful to the public. Implementing the provision under the Protocol allow governments, industry and the public to track releases to air, land and water (and transfers of waste and via waste water treatment plants) over time. This in turn provides indicators to measure the reduction of pollutants, e.g. for evaluating policy measures and showing progress made in the private sector, and resulting progress towards sustainability.

In addition, the Protocol notes that PRTRs can also assist governments in tracking pollution trends, setting priorities, and monitoring compliance with international commitments, and they can benefit industry through improved environmental management.

Having regard to successful and efficient ways of implementing SDGs and in order to ensure that PRTRs are able to play their fullest role in reducing pollution, they should give full account of pollutant releases and waste transfers, covering all relevant sources for pollution. Based on the Protocol's example and available guidance on how information should be made available, countries PRTRs that implement the Protocol's provisions also help countries in their efforts to guide users to information from other reporting obligations, statistics, such as those relating to the economy or human health and obligations under other international treaties.

PRTR data could also be used to make assessments at a global level. In this context, it is also of importance to increase the comparability of data by making national PRTR systems more compatible internationally, with the aim to effectively analyse and compare different policy and management strategies that lead to prevent and reduce pollution. As a result, this leads to good practices being more easily shared and more relevant for others that follow similar approaches and effective strategies could be implemented faster, cheaper and on a broader scale. The Protocol through its legally binding minimum standard together with the related efforts of the OECD Working Group on PRTRs are leading examples in this regard. The provisions of the Protocol relating to the promotion of PRTR systems around the globe is relevant in this context, as will be discussed in the section relating to the international aspects of the Convention and Protocol below.



PRTR Frequently Asked Questions

Information on some aspects of PRTRs are contained in answers to frequently asked questions.

Who can I contact to obtain more information about the PRTR programme in a specific country?
Country specific contacts are not provided on this site but the country specific links that are provided can be used to request additional information from a specific country.


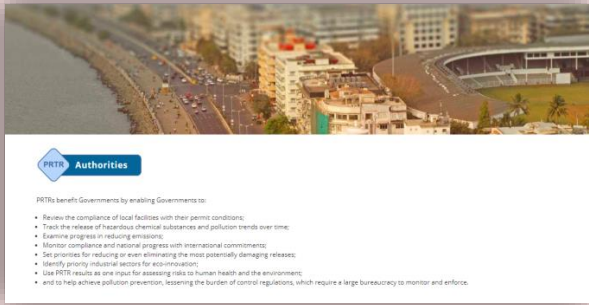
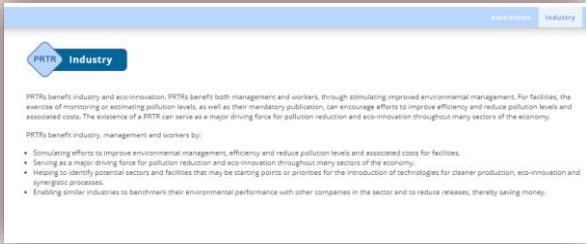
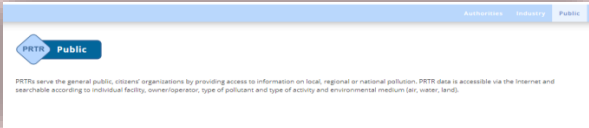

What substances are reported in PRTR Programmes?
The substances included in the reporting requirements of the different PRTR programmes vary by country and organisation. For example the European PRTR requires facilities to report their releases to air, water and for some of substances, while the Canadian PRTR programme requires reporting for 241 substances. More information on the substances included in these two PRTR programmes and the others programmes that are available around the world can be found by using the PRTR links provided on this site.

If you have questions related to the website and its content, please send them to prtr.survey@oeko.org.

() see section 2.2 of this document to know more about the green colour used*

3.4.2.- PRTR for Stakeholders

Though this information is similar on some of the other website, not so how to present it:

<p>PRTR for Stakeholders (*): <i>Who stakeholders are and how they can use PRTR data...</i></p>	
<p><i>Authorities</i></p>	
<p><i>Industry</i></p>	
<p><i>Public in general</i></p>	
<p><i>Research</i></p>	

(*) see section 2.2 of this document to know more about the green colour used

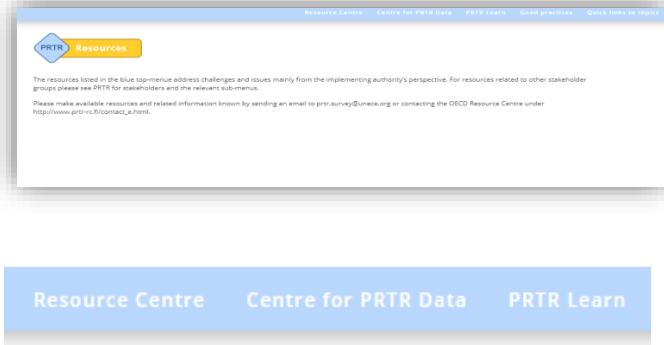
3.4.3.- Resources

A worthwhile [section](#) since it is not a compendium of technical documents and manuals but a list of links in which such information can be found. In addition, potential site visitors are also invited to contribute with new sources of information or updating the existing ones, through the possibility of contacting directly the different website administrators.

Resources (*):
Focus on materials from the implementing authority's perspective

Links to:

- [OECD Resource Centre for PRTR](#)
- [OECD Centre for PRTR Data](#)
- [PRTR Learn](#)

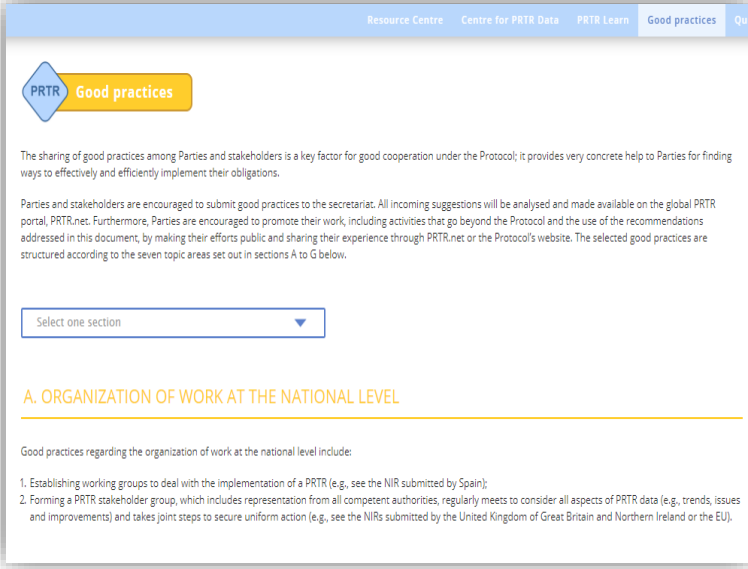


Other specific sub-sections are:

Good Practices (*):
Dataset and compendium of good practices based on the information provided by stakeholders sharing their experiences in implementation PRTR programmes, structured in several topics:

- A. *Organization of work at the national level*
- B. *Data design*
- C. *Data quality*
- D. *Pollutants, activities and emissions from diffuses sources*
- E. *Website design and improved usability*

Search options given



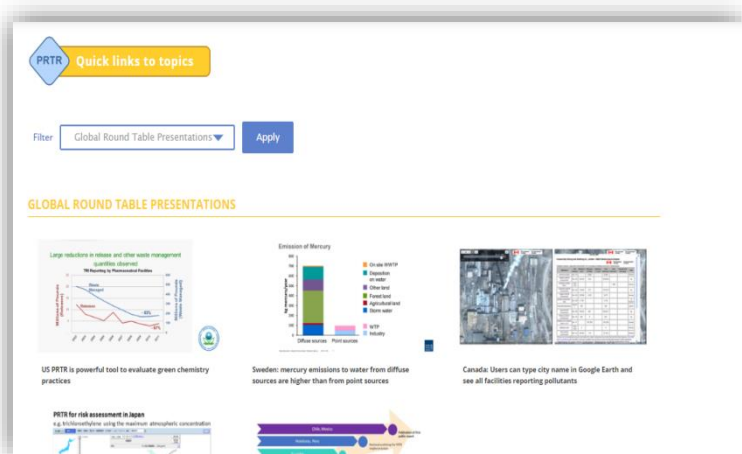
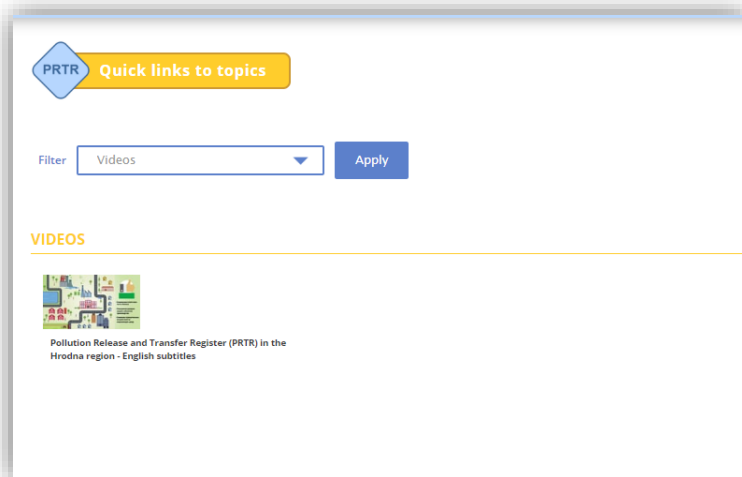
(* see section 2.2 of this document to know more about the green colour used

Quick links to topics (*):

Additional interesting materials such as:

- A. Videos
- B. Global round table presentations
- C.

Search options given



() see section 2.2 of this document to know more about the green colour used*

The way this "Resources" section is structured and designed, constitutes a really good example on how to leverage the information and contents from the different global portals. The only outstanding issue would be to gain greater visibility of these actions so that all stakeholders could take better advantage from them.

3.4.4.- PRTR around the Globe

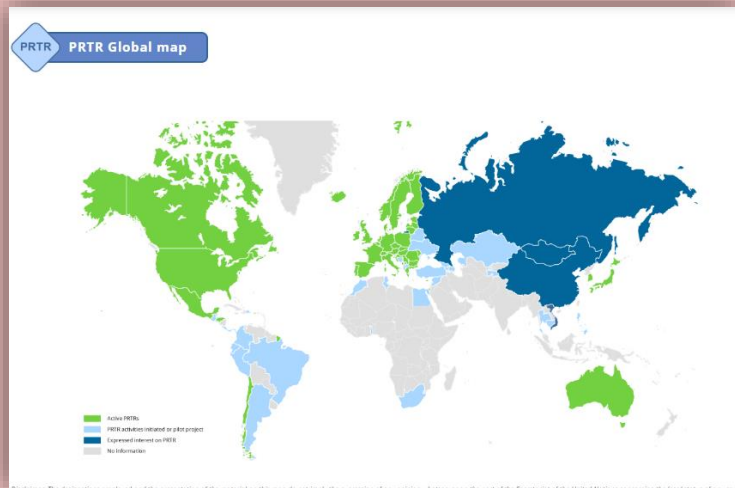
Yet again, this is a specific [section](#) of this site, partly at least. Certainly, other portals also provide links to the several implemented PRTRs and other international organizations. The global PRTR map is an original and extremely handy way to show how PRTRs are being implemented globally.

PRTR around the Globe (*)



PRTR Global map (*)

Direct access to national PRTR clicking on the map ("green" countries).
A table below the map with additional information is also provided



Links to other international agencies and organizations



PRTR and human rights



(*) see section 2.2 of this document to know more about the green colour used

The PRTR Global map should be significantly more visible, maybe using it as the image on the homepage

3.4.5.- PRTR in chemical management

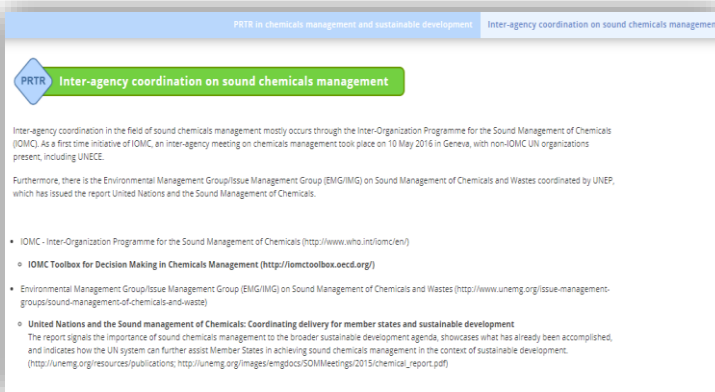
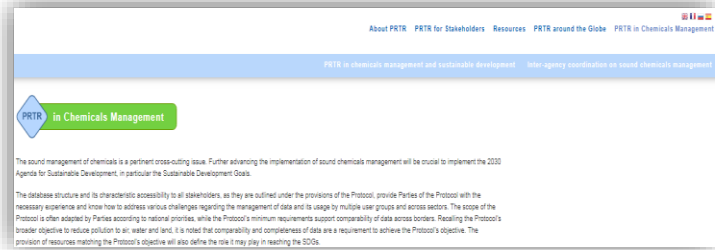
This is again a specific section, at least in terms of how the information is presented.

PRTR in chemical management (*)

Two main sub-sections

PRTR in chemical management and sustainable development

PRTR Inter-agency coordination on sound chemical management
(link to IOCM Toolbox on PRTR)



(*) see section 2.2 of this document to know more about the green colour used

The way this section is structured and designed, is another good example on improving leverage of the different global PRTR portals.

4.- Appraisal Outcomes

The following table sums up the main findings of the evaluation carried out on the existing PRTR global portals, taking into account the methodology described in the chapter 2 of this document and bearing in mind the primary objective of which is to improve the exchange of information on the use and good practices in the implementation of PRTR systems at a global level.

TOPIC/ELEMENT	OECD PRTR	UNITAR PRTR	IOMC toolbox	PRTR.net
Explains what PRTR is	X	X	X	X
Describes PRTR goals/core elements	X	X	X	X
Describes PRTR benefits	X	X	X	X
Search options/tools	X⁽¹⁾	X⁽¹⁾	X⁽¹⁾	X⁽¹⁾
Provides aggregated information on releases/transfers data (Centre for PRTR data, OECD)	X			
Gives information using social network	X	X		
Provides technical documents, guidance, capacity building and, training materials, manuals, webinars, explanatory videos and/or other type of documentation.	X	X	X	X
Describes the PRTR implementation process step by step			X	
Show a global view about the PRTR state of implementation.				X
Contains a “Frequently Asked Question” section				X
Gives specific information addressed to different stakeholders	X⁽²⁾	X⁽²⁾	X⁽²⁾	X⁽²⁾
Links to PRTRs, international organization, etc.	X			X

TOPIC/ELEMENT	OECD PRTR	UNITAR PRTR	IOMC toolbox	PRTR.net
Available in one language		X		
Available in two languages	X ⁽³⁾			
Available in three or more languages.			X	X ⁽⁴⁾
<p>(1) <i>Mainly in those sections relating to compiled data/documents.</i></p> <p>(2) <i>PRTR.net is the best example on this issue.</i></p> <p>(3) <i>Some documents (Resource Centre for RETs) are feasibly in other languages than English</i></p> <p>(4) <i>Generally speaking is recommended to use the international language acronyms instead of specific flags to identify the available languages.</i></p>				

In addition to the likeness and differences listed in the table above, certain weaknesses or common shortcomings to all of these websites can be pinpointed from this thorough analysis:

- With the exception of PRTR.net, the rest of the sites are very specific and much focused on "their" target audience.
- Only PRTR.net is available in over three languages, in all its sections and tools. In this regard, it should also be noted that most of the technical documents and guidelines available are just in English.
- It seems that these global portals hardly have any impact on those who are not working directly on PRTRs and are more known as potential resources for technical documents or for guidance to authorities involved in PRTR implementation and management. Also, it seems that the public in general does not know about these portals, therefore it is difficult for the public to consult them and be aware of the benefits these records provide for the community.
- Neither do any of them provide information on visitors' statistics and accessions nor its provenance or about the information and documents, if any, downloaded and the number of times.

Therefore, while valuable information on PRTR issues can be extracted and consulted from all these portals, it could be said that the existing websites are not streamlined sufficiently and the global PRTR.net website, which experts and general public could first refer to, is not enhanced enough. Moreover, it should be the gateway to access, subsequently, to more specific, technical or local information according to the users interests and needs.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

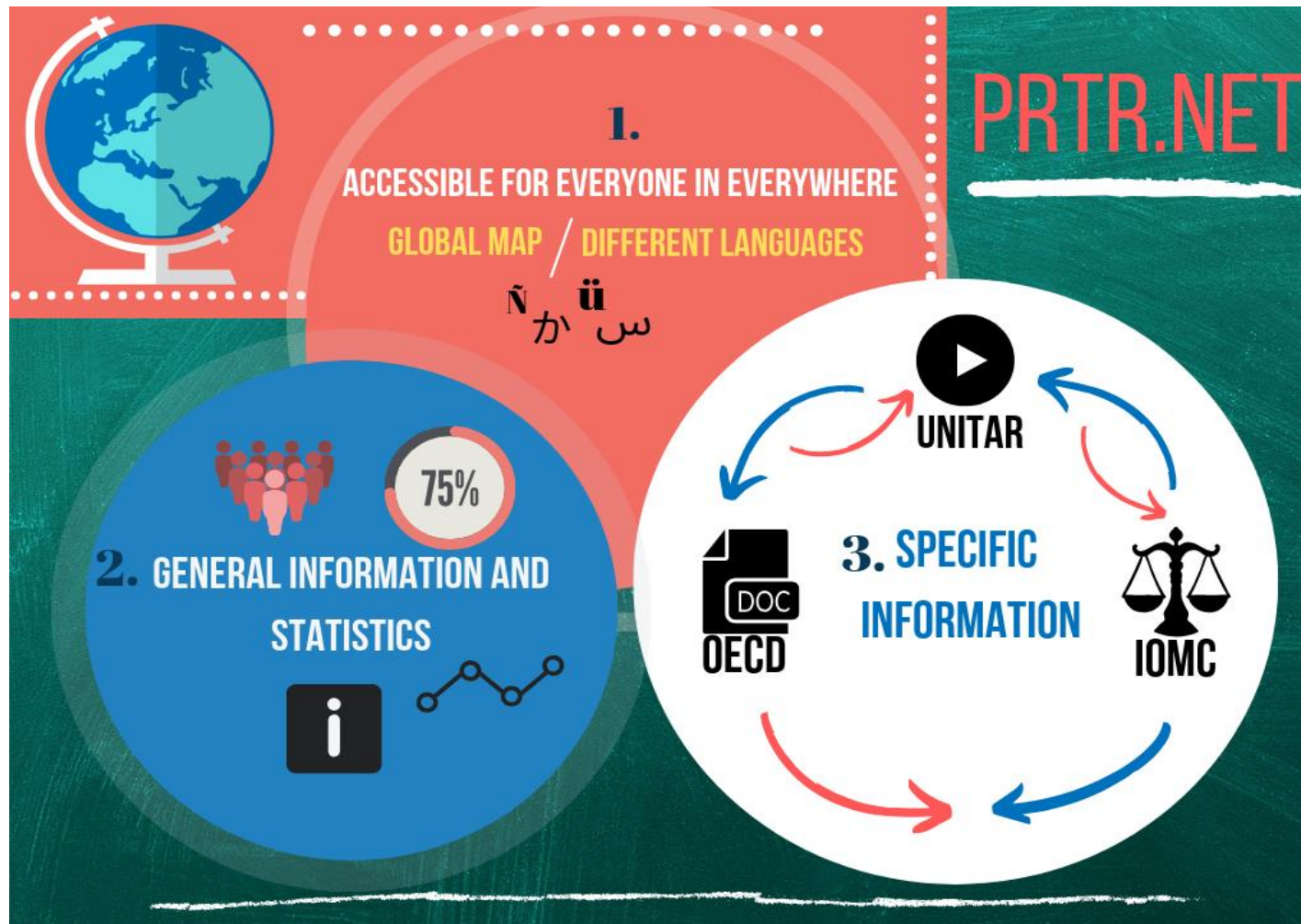
In view of the need to have in place a proper global website, which could be served as the main reference concerning PRTRs but also capable of pointing out the interest of the public in general on PRTRs, and taking into account the findings derived from this work, **PRTR.net is the best placed** of all 4 websites studied to become the main entrance to the PRTR world, due to the more PRTR umbrella term used and what is more important its potential target audience.

In order to achieve this objective, emphasis should be focused on **three fundamental pillars** considering the current site design and structure:

1. **Being global:** that is, “*accessible from anywhere to everyone*” through the best user-friendly way as possible, showing the “PRTR concept” globally and making it accessible promoting the multilingualism as possible, i.e. offering the information in many languages as possible using the international language acronyms instead of specific county flags. Maybe also using the **global PRTR map** as a lure from the home page.
2. **Provide general information about PRTR and promote actively its uses and applications.** That is, on one hand improving the basic information through answering essential questions about PRTRs, like definitions, goals, uses, applications, advantages, benefits, stakeholders involved but illustrating with some examples and good practices, using an easy language, etc. On the other hand giving information about the **visitor/user statistics** providing also data on the most frequent queries requested, document/information downloads, PRTR visitor ranking worldwide. Finally promoting the active participation of the public/visitors through boosting the contact tools including the social networks. This would also help to constantly improve this global portal but also the rest of PRTR websites worldwide. Provide comprehensive and clear information and link to PRTR.net from other websites.
3. **Provide specific information:** the proposal is based on the idea that the purpose of PRTR.net as the reference concerning PRTRs should be strengthened. In this context, with the aim to increase the visibility of the huge and valuable work that is undertaking by the international organizations like OECD, UNECE, UNITAR, UNEP, etc. and also by countries it is proposed to streamline the use of the PRTR.net as the main bridging and dissemination tool to make it know. Specific links to all these websites giving brief information on what the user can expect to find.

Last but not least, in order to keep alive the public interest and the utility of any website platform it is essential to carry out periodically but frequently updating actions accompanied by informative ones provoking in this way the constant interest in accessing the website seeking the latest news or whatever...

In short, the proposal for consideration can be graphically summarized as follows: Where could I find information about PRTR?just go to **PRTR.net (1)**:



Infographic designed by the Chair in collaboration of PRTR-España team (2019).