

The Industrial Accidents Convention's Assistance and Cooperation Programme and transboundary cooperation in South-Eastern Europe

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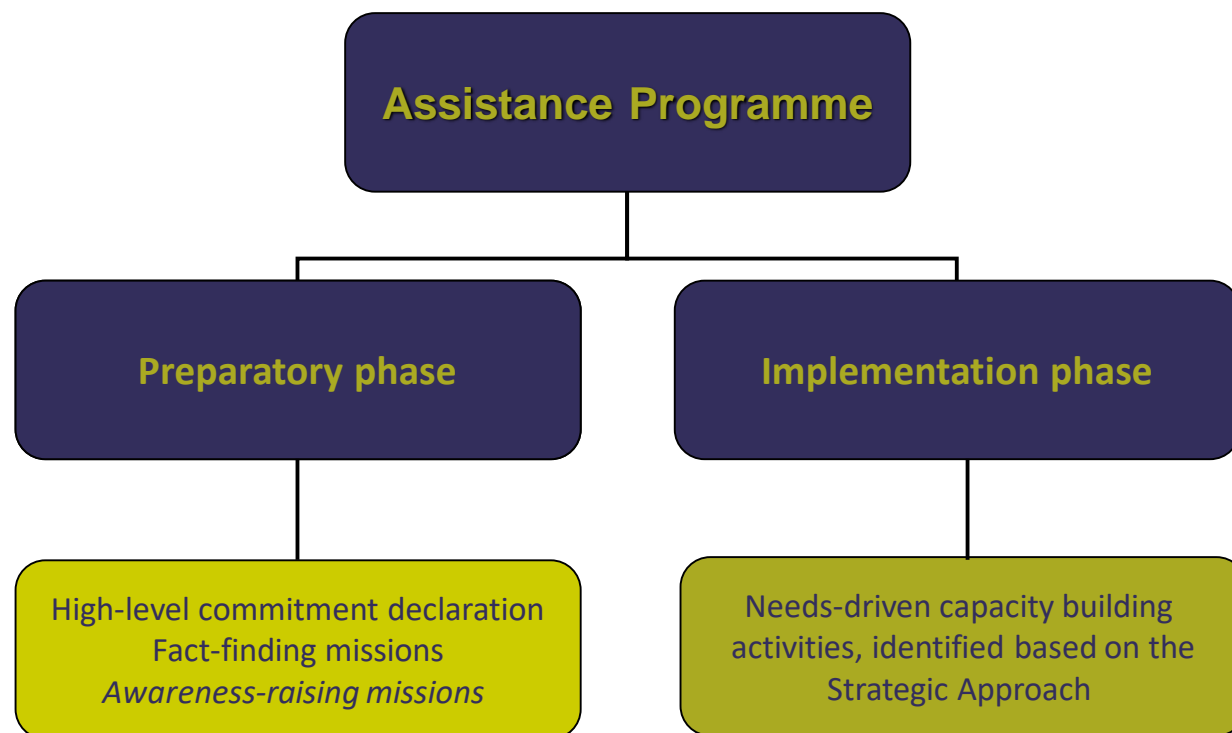
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UNECE

Assistance and Cooperation Programme

- Created in 2004
- Renamed and rebranded in 2018
- **Aim:** To support countries of South-Eastern and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia in the implementation of the Convention. The Programme's beneficiary countries increasingly provide assistance to each other.



Parties to the Convention and beneficiaries of the Assistance and Cooperation Programme in the subregion of South-Eastern Europe

State	Party to the Convention	Assistance and Cooperation Programme beneficiary
Albania	YES	YES
Bosnia and Herzegovina	YES	YES
Montenegro	YES	YES
North Macedonia	YES	YES
Serbia	YES	YES

Assistance and Cooperation Programme

Cyclic/ strategic approach



Main stages of the Convention implementation / indicators and criteria

Step 1 – Self-assessment of the national mechanisms, determination of existing gaps & challenges

Step 2 – Action plan to address existing challenges and improve existing mechanisms

→ Project proposals

Step 3 – Evaluation of results of the implemented actions

Priority working areas

Six working areas:

Working area 1. Identification of hazardous activities

Working area 2. Notification of hazardous activities

Working area 3. Prevention

Working area 4. Preparedness

Working area 5. Response and mutual assistance

Working area 6. Information to the public and public participation

Two cross-cutting themes (when assessing all six working areas):

- Legislation (both primary and secondary)
- Institutional capacity (at the national and local levels)

Two additional working areas:

- The siting of hazardous activities

From assistance to cooperation

The Eighth Conference of the Parties:

- (a) Recognized the progress achieved during the 10 years of the Assistance Programme, and the continuous need to provide further assistance to the countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia;
- (b) Highlighted the need to enhance the exchange of experiences and good practices among Assistance Programme beneficiary countries;
- (c) Encouraged beneficiary countries to increase their ownership of the Programme, among others, through the preparation of self-assessment and action plans and the submission of project proposals;

The Tenth Conference of the Parties:

- Decided to rename and rebrand the “Assistance Programme” into the “Assistance and Cooperation Programme” by adopting the revised Long-term strategy for the Convention until 2030

Way forward – Assistance and Cooperation Programme

Re-branded to ensure that the Programme remains an effective instrument for delivering assistance and increasing capacity at all levels

- **Beneficiaries** cooperate increasingly and support each-other, taking full ownership for activities carried out
- Objectives:
 - Enhanced information sharing at and across the sub-regional level among beneficiaries
 - Improved transboundary cooperation, through sub-regional projects and activities
 - Leading to enhanced governance, through national policy dialogues on industrial safety, involving all relevant stakeholders
 - Addressing safety of “hot spots”
 - Working increasingly on the TMF safety, Natech risks etc.
- Implementing **multi-year, multi-country projects**

Capacity-building activities on land-use planning and industrial safety under the Assistance and Cooperation Programme



Capacity-building activities on Land-Use Planning and Industrial Safety

Conclusions of the Seminar on Land-Use Planning and Industrial Safety held in Mechelen, Belgium (16-17 May 2018) include the need for:

The organization of sub-regional workshops or seminars by UNECE with the support of lead Parties/organizations, in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, focusing on exchanging good practices and lessons learned within and across that sub-region, and including practical sessions with a role play. These seminars would support the implementation of the UNECE Guidance on land-use planning, the siting of hazardous activities and related safety aspects in these sub-regions.

The subregional workshops have been organized as follows:

- ❖ For Eastern Europe and Caucasus, May 2019, the Republic of Moldova
- ❖ For South-Eastern Europe, October 2021, Serbia (& online teaser event in October 2020)

It is also planned to organize:

- ❖ For Central Asia – tbc based on available funding



Capacity-building activities in South-Eastern Europe

Capacity-building activities

Workshop on the use of indicators and criteria for the implementation of the Strategic Approach (Bratislava, Slovakia, 2011) 1/2

- The indicators and criteria were elaborated together with a Form for monitoring, analysing, planning and evaluating the participation of countries in the Assistance Programme.
- Countries participating in the Assistance Programme were requested to self-evaluate the progress achieved in the implementation of the Convention and draft a Plan of action

Workshop on the use of indicators and criteria for the implementation of the Strategic Approach 2/2

- **Recommendations**

Preconditions for the use of the indicators and criteria are:

- a good knowledge of the Convention;
- a good knowledge of the situation in the country; and
- involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the country.

- **In the Republic of Serbia**

- Indicators and criteria facilitate the process of identifying gaps in the implementation of the Convention and to plan concrete actions to overcome them
- Used as an instrument for filling in the report on implementation of the Convention

Capacity-building activities

Training session on evaluation of safety reports (Belgrade, Serbia, 2010)

- Approaches (including the roles of authorities) for the evaluation of safety reports
- Content and methodologies used in safety reports
- Develop a checklist on safety reports - basis for providing guidance on preparation of safety reports
- Follow-up to the project focused on using a checklist methodology during the on-site inspection
- The next steps - providing training for operators on the development of safety reports and of internal emergency plans

Follow-up to the training session on evaluation of safety reports and joint inspection (Zagreb, Croatia, 2011)



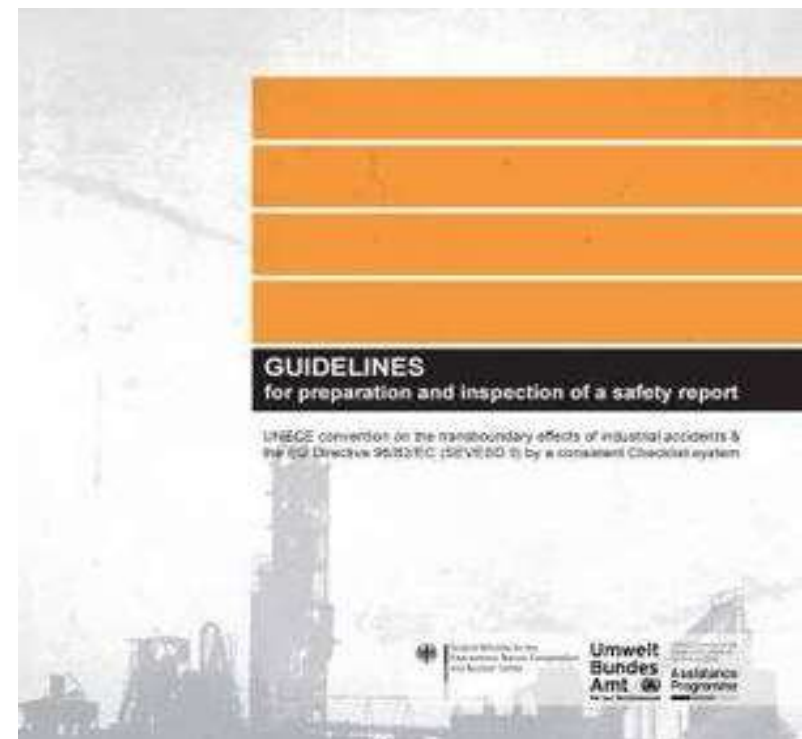
- Strengthen the knowledge of the authorities in conducting inspections at hazardous activities based on the conclusions of the safety report evaluation
- Benefits of an integrated approach for inspections
- Serbia concluded that it would work to further align the checklist system with the requirements set by its national legislation
- Repeat the experience

Training session on the evaluation of safety reports – on-site inspection, third phase (Split, Croatia, 2012)



- Improvement the knowledge of the inspectors about inspections of hazardous industrial sites, in cooperation with other authorities
- Learning good practices on the organization of integrated inspections used for industrial sites falling under the Convention and under the Seveso II Directive
- **Conclusions:**
 - The use of the checklist could be a useful tool to design inspections, especially thematic inspections
 - It is important to cooperate with other authorities before inspections, but also afterwards (preparing a joint report)
 - Unstructured cooperation between competent authorities led to difficulties in scheduling integrated inspections

Sectoral checklist and Guidelines



<http://www.unece.org/env/teia.html>

National training session on safety management system as a part of safety report (Belgrade, Serbia, 2013)

- Assistance in the process of implementation of the environmental legislation on Seveso II Directive and further development a national system for the prevention of major industrial accidents, through improving the quality of safety reports, respectively its part on safety management system.
- Defining and implementing of Safety Management System was the biggest gap in general obligations of operators, which led to poor quality of Safety Reports, without a base set for implementing obligations from TEIA Convention.

Subregional workshop on industrial accident prevention: chemicals management, identification and notification of industrial hazardous activities, Zagreb, Croatia, 21 - 23 February 2017

Main Objectives:

- To increase the administrative capacity in the area of **identification and notification** of hazardous activities
- To identify linkages and synergies with the **relevant EU legislation** in the area of chemicals management and industrial accident prevention
- To increase the awareness with regard to the **sustainable development agenda**.

Main observations & conclusions:

- Most countries of the subregion have a system in place for the identification of hazardous activities. However, little is done to comply with the requirement to notify of proposed or existing hazardous activities. National systems are not fully in line with the revised Annex I
- Countries should **finalize work on self-assessments and national action plans**
- Main **linkages between** the UNECE Industrial Accidents became clearer **Convention and the Seveso III Directive**
- Countries should consider setting up inter-institutional groups with all responsible actors, such as technical inspectorates, ministries of energy, industry, environment and other competent authorities and involving operators of hazardous facilities in order to **improve coordination at the national level**
- Countries do not have **mechanisms for consultation** with neighbouring countries on identification of hazardous activities and there is a need for improved coordination and cooperation regarding identification of hazardous activities and classification of hazardous substances
- Countries would appreciate having a simple **guide to the notification of hazardous activities** -> **done and was presented at the present workshop!**

Looking forward

- UNECE secretariat stands ready to deliver needs-driven assistance activities on country- and subregional level at request of Parties and committed countries
- In the current biennium technical-level missions are planned to be organized to:
 - Montenegro
- Requests have also been received from (organization is subject to funding availability):
 - Bosnia and Herzegovina
 - North Macedonia
- Keep the Convention's secretariat informed of your training/capacity-building needs
- Upcoming events:
 - EFDRR Focused thematic discussion - Preventing another Sandoz, Baia Mare or Beirut accident: Perspectives on risk management in the context of the Sendai Framework, 24 November 2021
 - UN/OECD seminar in follow-up to the 2020 Beirut port explosion: Lessons learned, experiences and good practices in managing risks of ammonium nitrate storage, handling and transport in port areas, preventing accidents and mitigating their consequences, 14 December 2021

Questions or comments?



<http://www.unece.org/env/teia>