

Risk assessment of Industrial Accidents and Enforcement of Cross-border Obligations RIECO

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Introduction

- In 2011 the project CERACI was started within the European Union
- CERACI's aim was to strengthen the public health risk assessment for the acute phase of chemical incidents by providing recommendations about the exposure assessment step in the process
- The project aimed to facilitate cooperation in the public health management of chemical incidents by improving interoperability of exposure assessment guidelines, tools and practices

Industrial Accidents Convention

- It was recognized that the CERACI project is of great importance for the Convention and that the outcomes of CERACI will contribute to improving preparedness and response to cross-border chemical incidents and to mitigate their effects
- It was therefore decided to conduct a more or less similar project as CERACI within the UNECE region (EU countries excluded)

Why this project ?

- The Industrial Accidents Convention promotes active international cooperation between countries, before, during and after an industrial accident and obliges countries to take measures to increase industrial safety, decrease the risks of industrial accidents and ***to collaborate across borders in the event of an industrial accident with transboundary impacts on human health and the environment.***
- Articles 2, 3, 8, 11 and the annexes V, VII and X form an important (legal) basis for this topic

Legal basis:

- Art. 2: applies to the prevention of, the preparedness for and the response to industrial accidents capable of causing transboundary effects
- Art. 3: Parties shall take appropriate measures and cooperate within the framework of the Convention to protect human beings and the environment. Preparedness and response measures shall be applied
- Art. 8: Parties shall take appropriate measures to establish and maintain adequate emergency preparedness to respond to industrial accidents

Article 11 of the Convention:

‘In the event of an industrial accident adequate response measures are taken and that the Parties concerned shall ensure that the effects are assessed.’

More in particular:

- The Parties shall ensure that, in the event of an industrial accident, or imminent threat thereof, adequate response measures are taken, as soon as possible and using the most efficient practices, to contain and minimize effects.
- 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 to coordinate their response measures.

Annexes to the Convention:

- Annex V (*Analysis and evaluation*): Emergency planning – decision making on siting – information to the public – preventive measures
- Annex VII (*Emergency preparedness measures*): on- and off-site contingency plans and what kind of measures and arrangements should be covered in the plans
- Annex X and XII (*Mutual assistance*): provisions – information and data collection and dissemination – research, training and methodologies – technical assistance and assistance in the case of an emergency

Conclusion:

The Convention:

- includes the assessments of the effects of industrial accidents, inter alia human beings (health risk assessments), flora and fauna, soil, water and landscape.
- Parties need to develop, implement policies and strategies for reducing the risks of industrial accidents and improving preventive, preparedness and response measures.
- it is expected from Parties that appropriate measures must be taken and that adequate emergency preparedness to respond to industrial accidents must be established and maintained.

Project has CERACI as basis

Main output of CERACI project:

- Summary of response structures across EU Member States
- Identification of treaties and agreements for collaboration, cross-border working and mutual aid
- Identification and engagement of a network of experts
- Compilation, categorisation and verification of good practices in exposure assessment across EU Member States
- Guidelines for exposure assessment organisation and practice
- A self-assessment methodology to identify gaps in capability or planning

Main objective of the project:

‘To improve the preparedness and response to (cross-border) industrial accidents in the non-EU countries who are Parties to the UNECE Convention and countries who expressed their commitment to implement the requirements of the Convention by providing guidance and recommendations.’

To be accomplished by:

- Identifying the capabilities and organisation for the assessment of effects on human health and the environment from (cross-border) industrial accidents in non-EU Parties and committed countries to the Convention.
- Identifying and developing good practices in the capabilities and organisation of the preparedness and response phases of (cross-border) industrial accidents.
- Exploring the need for a network of experts.

Definitions and limitation

Industrial accident:

‘An event resulting from an uncontrolled development in the course of any activity involving hazardous substances that can cause severe damage and harm to human health, the environment, livelihoods and property.’

Scenario's:

Relevant scenarios could include hazardous substance releases from (or fires at) fixed sites including storage sites or from transportation.

Focus project on:

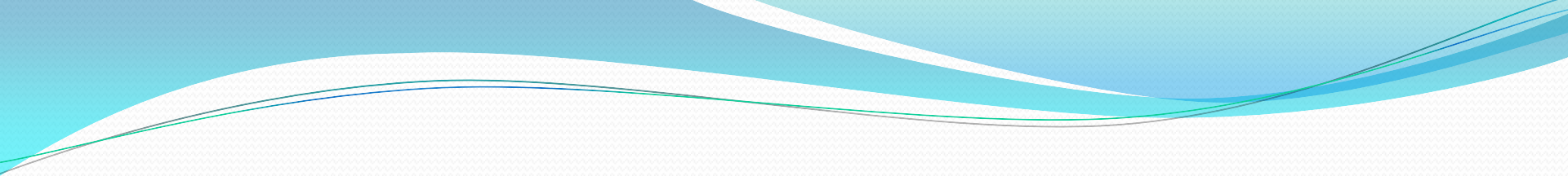
- Hazardous substances which only refer to chemical substances and not radiological or biological substances.
- The effects of an industrial accident on human health and the environment and not on the effects on livelihoods or property.
- Crisis management, i.e. the preparedness and response phases of an industrial accident.

Expected results

- Guidance and recommendations for exposure and risk assessment of (cross-border) industrial accidents
- Guidance for improving cross-border cooperation
- Guidance for Inspectorate organisations on cross-border obligations related to the preparedness and response to (cross-border) industrial accidents

Project tasks and methodology

- Web-based survey of non-EU Parties and committed countries
 - Survey capabilities and organisation for assessment of effects
 - Identification of good practices
 - Analysis
 - Communication
- International Workshop
 - To verify the outcomes of the survey
 - Comparison and contrasting to the CERACI survey
 - Discussion on good practices
 - To explore the needs for guidance and recommendations
 - To explore the need for a network of experts
 - Communication
- Report and guidelines
- Communication



Any questions?