



# Newsletter

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## WELCOME TO THE 3<sup>rd</sup> STRIKE PROJECT NEWSLETTER!

**Stronger Training and Increased Knowledge for Better Enforcement against Waste and Mercury - STRIKE** project aims to further enhance operational activities and capacities of authorities involved in addressing illegal trade & management of problematic waste streams (e.g. e-waste, end-of-life vehicles, batteries & waste mercury), as well as illegal production & trade of mercury-added products (MAPs). Our newsletters are available at: <https://www.strikeproject.org/blog>

### AREAS OF WORK



#### **Enhanced knowledge and risk analysis of waste related crime and mercury-added products**

To enhance knowledge and understanding of illegal trade and management of problematic waste streams (including in particular e-waste, ELVS, batteries and other mercury waste), and illegal production and trade of mercury-added products, in support of an improved risk analysis and possible harmonisation of national annual plans and enforcement strategies.



#### **New tools and methodologies**

To develop practical tools and advanced methodologies in support of practitioners across the compliance and enforcement chain, in their fight against waste and product trade crimes, including waste mercury and mercury-added products. Technical information generated during the project will be used to indicate product types and waste streams vulnerable for fraud and direct future compliance and enforcement activities.



#### **Capacity building and skills acquisition**

To enhance capacities and skills of practitioners and stakeholders in selected countries in Europe, as well as CEE/Balkans region Africa in the detection, investigation and prosecution of waste-crime cases and illegal trade in mercury-added products. This activity includes two main components: 1) the update and development of tailored-made tools and materials on waste and mercury-related crimes and 2) capacity building activities for practitioners, delivered both face-to-face (multidisciplinary training sessions) and online (webinars).

Learn more at: <https://www.strikeproject.org/>

## STRIKE PARTNERS

The University of Limerick is the lead institution of the project consortium which is composed of four organizations ranging from UN Organizations to different research institutions and universities.



*Click on the icons to discover more about each organization!*

In addition to the project team, there are five Associate Partners that will support the project's activities, in particular: the [German Customs Authority](#); [District Government of Lower Bavaria](#); [Basel Convention Regional Centre](#) (Slovakia); [African Institute](#) (South Africa) and the [Waste Management Department of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning of Macedonia](#).

You can find more information about project partners here: <https://www.strikeproject.org/partners>

## COMMUNICATION

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## STRIKE UPDATES



### Enhanced knowledge and risk analysis of waste related crime and mercury-added products

One of the aims of the STRIKE project is to enhance knowledge and understanding of illegal trade and management of problematic waste streams. Two main activities to achieve this are the development of the [Strategic Risk Analysis](#) and the [Guidelines on the preparation of Annual plans and Enforcement Strategies](#).

### Strategic Risk Analysis

#### The Strategic Risk Analysis Report has been finalised!

Access to this report is restricted to law enforcement authorities. Are you working in law enforcement and interested in this report? Please contact us via the [Strike Project Website](#)

➤ The [strategic risk analysis](#) is a broad assessment of risks and trends in the illegal trade and management of problematic waste streams, and illegal production and trade of mercury-added products. The Strategic Risk Analysis is based on information provided by 57 law enforcement authorities and key experts through a joint-questionnaire and interviews. The following [risks and trends](#) of illegal trade and disposal/management of waste are assessed: problematic waste streams, quantities of waste, routes, modus operandi and the involvement of organised crime groups. The report provides an overview table with risks and trends of specific waste streams (e-waste, plastics and paper waste, ELVs and tires, bio-medical waste, mercury waste, municipal and household waste, metal waste and construction & demolition waste). The final chapter of the report gives recommendations and best practices in intelligence-led inspections and investigations.



Illegal waste origin (orange) and waste destination (blue) countries in 2020 reported in the STRIKE questionnaires

## Activities on the development of guidelines on the preparation of annual plans and enforcement strategies

Currently, at national level in the European Union, there is no harmonization in the preparation of annual plans and enforcement strategies to counter waste crime. Within this activity the STRIKE partners aim at **collecting and understanding existing practices** (and challenges encountered) in place, both inside and outside the EU. The collected practices will be used as a solid basis to develop a set of guidelines on how to develop enforcement strategies at national level on waste trafficking, with the ultimate objective of trying to propose a process of harmonization in this direction.

### Compendium of good practices in planning enforcement strategies

The STRIKE project partners are currently working on the development of a report called: *Compendium of good practices in planning enforcement strategies*.

This report is based on the results of the joint questionnaire, expert interviews and a review of national plans and enforcement strategies. In the joint questionnaire, **37 responses (out of 57) were received about the preparation of annual plans and enforcement strategies**. On the **national level**, 19 respondents provided information on the development of plans/strategies (most from inspection authorities and national governments), 9 of these respondents reported to use a template to complete their annual plans/enforcement strategies. On the **regional/international level**, 23 respondents provided information on the preparation of plans/strategies, particularly with regards to operational activities.

More information on the actual content of the enforcement plan and strategies was also examined. Respondents were invited to provide **details on the type of organizational and operational aspects** covered by the plan/strategy. All respondents mentioned that plans/strategies cover organisational aspects (such as objectives, geographical scope, specific tasks etc.), while just a few indicated specific operational aspects (such as intelligence, information exchange, international cooperation etc.)

The report also includes a **compendium of collected annual or multi-annual plans developed by national authorities in their respective countries**. These plans may only concern waste shipment inspections when developed by competent authorities in charge of inspection activities, or they can include plans for police and criminal investigations and/or to both aspects. Plans on waste management are also included as an example.

Preliminary findings of the development of the annual plans and enforcement strategies are:

- ✓ Countries have developed different types of strategic documents, the content depends on the different division of competences of authorities within a country. The scope of the documents also varies among countries.
- ✓ Inspection plans are based on the WSR and relevant national legislations.
- ✓ The authorities involved in the drafting of such documents vary among countries. In some countries the documents are drafted unilaterally, while in other countries different
- ✓ In some countries law enforcement agencies in charge of environmental crime deal with inspection activities as well as criminal investigations. They can cover the whole enforcement chain in their plans. But, based on the collected information, in the majority of the countries these competences are assigned to different authorities. This is also reflected in the national plans/strategies.
- ✓ In some countries, the plans also serve as management/human resources schedules.

- authorities collaborate. Sometimes there is also cooperation on the European level.
- ✓ Overall, 35% of the respondents to the STRIKE questionnaire did not indicate if they have national annual or multi-annual plans, or both, which still leaves a knowledge gap on this aspect.
  - ✓ Overall, it can be concluded that the development of enforcement strategies is very specific for each national context, and still not harmonized at regional level in the EU.

### Guidelines on how to prepare annual plans and enforcement strategies

➤ On the basis of the results of the analysis of collected data and information, the STRIKE partners will produce short hands-on general guidelines for national authorities on steps to be taken in the preparation of enforcement strategies and annual plans. More information on these guidelines will follow in our next newsletter.



### Capacity building and skills acquisition

#### Training Needs Assessment

#### The Training Needs Assessment report has been finalised!

*Access to this report is restricted to law enforcement authorities. Are you a working in law enforcement and interested in this report? Please contact us via the [Strike Project Website](#)*

➤ As part of the capacity building and skills acquisition activities, the project carried out a **Training Needs Assessment (TNA)** to identify the current gaps and specific training needs of the actors involved in the enforcement chain, including police, customs, national environmental inspectorates, judges and prosecutors and any other relevant stakeholder. In response to these identified needs, the STRIKE project will build up and expand the training materials developed in the framework of the [DOTCOM](#) and [WasteForce](#) projects.

#### Development of training materials

➤ Based on the training needs assessment, the project partners identified the necessary **updates to existing materials and development of new training materials** to help authorities in the enforcement of waste and mercury-related laws. The updated training materials will include a **training module on mercury for customs and other enforcement officers** as well as **train-the-trainer materials**, to ensure as much as possible the cascade effect and the multiplication of results in the selected countries.

## Train-the-trainer materials

In view of the trainings and webinars, and to support trainers in the organisation and provision of waste and mercury-related trainings, the project partners will develop a **Trainers' Manual, a Participant Book and a Model training curriculum**. This “ready-to-use” guidance, will also help trainings and webinars participants sharing the knowledge acquired with their colleagues in their respective agencies and countries and will thus allow a wider dissemination of the project's outcomes.

## Training module on mercury for customs and other enforcement officers


The global Minamata Convention on mercury, and its implementation in the EU, new products, materials and wastes need checking in transboundary shipments. The Training Needs Assessment conducted by STRIKE showed that while general methods for inspection and investigation were well known in the target group, **specific knowledge on mercury is needed**.

The provisions of the Minamata Convention are a mix of simple and complex requirements, and therefore inspections involve both relatively straight forward and more demanding procedures. **STRIKE is developing a specific guideline for customs on mercury**. It includes descriptions of what the mercury problem is and why it needs to be addressed, relevant international and regional legislation, and specific advice for detecting restricted mercury materials, wastes and mercury-added products.

The **detection principles** described will involve the usual checking of customs codes and waste codes. Additionally, certificates required in the Convention and its EU implementation for export, import and intended use needs checking, and product specifications needs to be examined particularly for some product categories where certain sub-types are still allowed. It is also planned that the guideline will include **a photo catalogue** of both restricted and allowed product types to enhance distinction in visual inspections. Finally, the guidance will include **description on mobile and lab testing methods**, as well as suggested **procedures for avoiding risks of exposure of the inspection personnel to the toxic mercury**.

STRIKE is elaborating training material on mercury and the inspection guideline, and the training will be conducted on **webinars and on the multi-disciplinary sub-regional trainings** described below (face-to-face or online, as conditions allow at the time).

## Multi-disciplinary training sessions

 The project will organise four **multi-disciplinary training courses** covering all steps in the enforcement chain (including inspection and detection, investigation, prosecution and sentencing). The trainings will aim to enhance national and international cooperation, and involve awareness raising webinar sessions to reach a wider audience of practitioners.

The multi-disciplinary trainings will include **operational sessions**, through the in-sight testing of **tools** developed or other **ad hoc visits/inspections** (learning by-doing). The sessions will build upon the project outcomes and will be designed taking into consideration findings of the **Training Needs Assessment**.

Depending on the situation with regards to the pandemic, there will be either an **online training**, a **face-to-face training** or a combination of both (for example where only local participants can attend in the face-to-face training). In the **face-to-face trainings** a group of 25/30 participants will take part in each of the four sessions, and experienced instructors from the project's consortium will facilitate their learning experience. In case the trainings will need be held **online** a wider audience can participate. Each training will focus on a **specific region**, for example the training in Slovakia will focus on Central and Eastern Europe.

The trainings will be organised in **Germany, Ireland, Slovakia and the Netherlands** between **November 2021 and January 2022**. Certification will be provided to the participants that have completed the training.

### Webinars

A **series of webinars** will start in **May 2021**, participation will be free of costs, registration will be possible online. Certification will be provided to participants that complete three or more webinars.

**Keep an eye out for our next newsletter in May 2021 for more information on the upcoming trainings and the webinars!**

### Meet our H-LAB Members

The STRiKE Project is happy to introduce to you individual High-Level Advisory Board H-LAB Members.



#### Eisaku Toda - Minamata Convention Secretariat

Mr. Eisaku Toda serves as senior programme officer at the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, United Nations Environment Programme, since July 2017. He is responsible for scientific and technical matters regarding the implementation of the Convention, covering the lifecycle of mercury such as supply, trade, use in products and processes, emission, releases, storage, waste and contaminated sites. He joined UN Environment in July 2015 as the Head of Technology and Metals Partnership Unit, Chemicals and Waste Branch, to take charge of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership, Global Mercury Assessment, elimination of lead in paint, and sound recycling of lead batteries. Before joining UN Environment, he worked in several positions in the Ministry of the Environment of Japan, including the Director of the International Strategy Division, Chemical Evaluation Office, Risk Assessment Office and Market Mechanism Office. During this time, he served in a number of international initiatives such as member of the Adaptation Committee under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, vice-president of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, and chair of the Working Group on Test Guidelines of OECD. From 2001 to 2004, he worked in OECD on chemicals test guidelines and risk assessments.