Targeted Initiatives on Export Control of CBRN Dual-use Materials and Technologies

The Targeted Initiatives (TIs) implement capacity-building activities to stimulate national and regional cooperation to mitigate CBRN risks and strengthen relevant capacities. The TIs are implemented by the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC) in Astana, Kazakhstan and the Science and Technology Center in Ukraine (STCU) in Kyiv, Ukraine.

A key aspect of controlling the potential spread of CBRN weapons involves measures to inhibit the acquisition of materials and technologies for hostile purposes. As many of the materials and technologies have peaceful uses, any controls on their transfers affect multiple communities. These communities must understand the proliferation threats and risks linked to their activities and their responsibilities under national and international law.

The TIs work closely with Partner Countries (PCs), considering the regional context and specific national needs to tailor and co-develop projects. The focus is on domestic and regional capacity building and fostering sustainability of activities beyond the TIs.

The TIs had substantial success in this regard. Given the complexity of export controls and CBRN dual-use concerns, the TIs take a comprehensive approach. They emphasise stakeholder involvement, including industry, customs, research institutions, and, critically, professors, academics, and students in the multiple disciplines taught at universities. The TIs actively engage those communities to build a broad culture of responsibility to enhance the effective implementation of CBRN transfer controls.

TI successes
Over the past five years, the TIs actively facilitated networks of experts through conferences and workshops and established partnerships to implement capacity-building activities to stimulate national and regional cooperation. Central elements of the TIs focus on education through partnerships with universities, co-development of custom-tailored curricula, industry engagement, networking activities for scientists, experts, and practitioners, and doctoral research grants.

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1 The European Commission Targeted Initiative (TI) on Export Control of Dual-use Materials and Technologies with relevance to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) weapon technologies.
2 Each Science Center administers a complementary set of projects that offer opportunities for collaboration and synergies. The current PCs are Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. Participants from all PCs are invited to and have attended regional and international events.
3 In that way, the TI complements and supports several EU initiatives, foremost the P2P export control programme.
Education

The education work package includes developing and deploying a dedicated full-credit master’s course on export controls and individual modules at the bachelor level. The competent national authorities of Ukraine, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan already accredited several master’s programmes implemented under the TIs. Other courses also follow the formal requirements for future accreditation. In addition, the TIs offer PhD-level scholarships to support the development of academic expertise in export control-relevant research.

Direct beneficiaries of the TIs’ educational component include the private sector, public administration, and the academic and research communities. The activities provide continuing awareness-building and professional development in export control, dual-use technologies, materials, know-how, intangible technology transfers, and responsible science.

Co-developing and implementing the educational programme build capacity for educators, professors and lecturers, enhance research and teaching, and guide the TIs in identifying gaps and future needs. Helping to set up a national and regional research base is also generative because it broadens the understanding of ever-evolving issues about export controls, dual-use issues, intangible technology transfers and responsible science. Moreover, it supports national and regional collaboration in PCs.

Industry engagement

The TIs developed national export control handbooks with complete descriptions of a PC’s laws, regulations, and relevant lists. These are publicly available in multiple languages. Most PCs have completed these. A regional handbook for the GUAM region is nearing completion.

The TIs effort to establish Internal Compliance Programs (ICPs) benefits industry. They started as an encouragement to update and implement ICPs for the nuclear and chemical industries in two PCs. Eventually, they produced an ICP guide for chemical, biological, nuclear and radiological industries.

Following development, the mobile App ‘PIK’ for commodity identification is now available in Armenian, English, and Russian and will soon be in Ukrainian and Rumanian. A desktop version is forthcoming.

Networks and follow-ups

Networking among institutions and individuals is a critical success factor for export control mechanisms. It, therefore, offers a central and overarching rationale to integrate the various TI activities. Workshops, seminars, and conferences are the main venues for coordinating and exchanging ideas with relevant stakeholders. The TIs have stimulated a range of activities. For instance, the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences recognised that its research institutes lacked guidance on dual-use issues and is now working with the TI to develop materials. Collaborations between non-governmental organisations, universities and other organisations, such as chambers of commerce, have been initiated to offer courses on core export control issues, such as commodity identification and classification. These and others have long-term impacts on building relevant communities and awareness beyond classic export control issues.

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4 These optional courses, at master and bachelor level, address various disciplinary orientations with a focus on vocational training, for example, in international relations, economics, law, technical degrees, and political science.