



EUROSAI

Working Group on the Audit of Funds
Allocated to Disasters and Catastrophes



ACTIVITY REPORT OF THE EUROSAI WORKING GROUP ON THE AUDIT OF FUNDS ALLOCATED TO DISASTERS AND CATASTROPHES FOR 2021

KYIV 2022

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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| EUROSAI | European Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions |
| EUROSAI WGEA | EUROSAI Working Group on Environmental Auditing |
| INTOSAI | International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions |
| INTOSAI WGEA | INTOSAI Working Group on Environmental Auditing |
| ISSAI | International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions |
| ARABOSAI | Arab Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions |
| SAI | Supreme Audit Institution |
| Working Group | EUROSAI Working Group on the Audit of Funds Allocated to Disasters and Catastrophes |
| Strategic Plan of the Working Group | Strategic Plan of the EUROSAI Working Group on the Audit of Funds Allocated to Disasters and Catastrophes |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |

INTRODUCTION

Natural hazards and man-made threats, as well as environmental, man-made and biological threats and the risks associated with them, are constantly growing.

According to the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (Belgium), 500-800 large-scale catastrophes have occurred annually at the global level over the past 25 years. (<https://www.cred.be>)

The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction provides the following data: in 2020, 389 natural disasters were recorded, which affected 98.4 million people, more than 15 thousand people died and caused economic damage in the amount of 171.3 billion US dollars.

(<https://www.preventionweb.net/publication/2020-non-covid-year-disasters>)

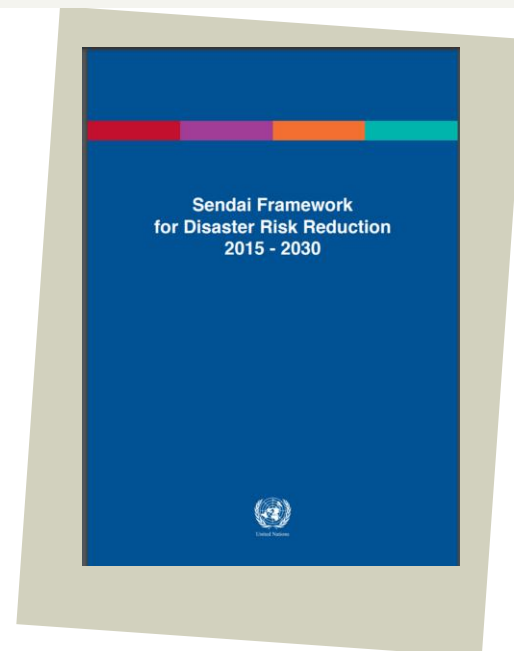


The urgency of the protection of infrastructure, which, in particular, is vital for the security of the population, society and state, ie infrastructure, which in world practice is defined as critical, is due to awareness of natural and man-made processes, increasing number and scale of terrorist threats and cyberattacks.



<https://blogs.korrespondent.net/blog/events/3923098>

At the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, which took place in March 2015 in Japan and which adopted the Sendai Framework Program for Disaster Risk Reduction for 2015-2030 (<https://www.wcdrr.org/>), it was emphasized that natural disasters cause death, destruction and cause social and economic shocks, especially at the local level. Every year, millions of people are forced to flee their homes due to natural disasters. As a result, countries are forced to reduce the resources allocated to sustainable development programs.



Thus, given the growing trend of catastrophes and disasters in the world, the issue of further work of the Working Group is becoming increasingly important. The activity of the Working Group needs a new impetus, in particular by expanding cooperation with other EUROSAI and INTOSAI working groups, non-governmental organizations and experts, improving the publicity of the work and promoting the results.

1. MAIN ACTIVITIES OF THE EUROSAI WORKING GROUP ON THE AUDIT OF FUNDS ALLOCATED TO DISASTERS AND CATASTROPHES IN 2021 AND FEATURES OF THIS PERIOD

The following tasks of the Working Group were set for 2021:

- Taking measures to extend the mandate of the Working Group for the next period under the chairmanship of the Accounting Chamber of Ukraine;
- Approval of the Strategic Plan of the Working Group for 2021–2024;
- Implementation of measures of the Strategic Plan of the Working Group, prescribed for 2021.

The activities of the Working Group in 2021 were carried out taking into account the peculiarities of this period, namely the restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected both the format of the Working Group and the development of cooperation with other working groups of EUROSAI and INTOSAI.

Today, the world is experiencing an extremely unfavorable epidemiological situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This causes the accumulation of significant amounts of waste generated from personal protective equipment, which must be disposed of as hazardous. In addition, leading countries share the view that anthropogenic climate change is a major factor that not only led to natural disasters, but also provoked the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is also worth noting that Ukraine suffers from occupation of certain territories, as a result of which thousands of people have to leave their places of residents. In addition, in these areas there are high risks of environmental and man-made threats: significant deterioration of drinking water quality, failure of commercial and drinking water supply systems, flooding of mines, causing flooding of nearby towns and villages.

During the last eight years, it has not been possible to assess the damage to natural complexes and industrial facilities, necessary repair and restoration works, as well as state supervision in the field of environmental protection in these areas.



The above demonstrates the right choice of the Working Group's mission, which is to build the capacity, pool and coordinate the efforts of European SAIs to assist national governments in developing effective and efficient disaster prevention and response tools that can ensure their mission, in particular use of the work of the Working Group.

2. EXTENSION OF THE MANDATE OF THE EUROSAI WORKING GROUP ON THE AUDIT OF FUNDS ALLOCATED TO DISASTERS AND CATASTROPHES FOR 2021–2024

According to the Articles 5–9 of the EUROSAI Statute, on 14 April 2021, **XI EUROSAI Congress** was held online.

According to the EUROSAI Statute and the Agenda of the event, the Accounting Chamber of Ukraine, as the Chair of the Working Group, **the following 3 documents were submitted to XI Congress:**

- Activity Report of the Working Group for the period from May 2017 to April 2021;
- Strategic Plan of the Working Group for 2021–2024;
- Draft Resolution of the Congress on the extension of the mandate of the Working Group for the next three years period.



Miloslav Kala, President of the SAI of the Czech Republic, President of EUROSAI, during opening of the XI EUROSAI Congress



Valeriy Patskan, Chairman of the Accounting Chamber, during presentation of the WG's Activity Report at the XI EUROSAI Congress

While reporting to the participants of the Congress, the Accounting Chamber of Ukraine, as the Chair of the Working Group, informed that during 2017–2021 in the framework of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for 2017–2021, in particular, **the Strategic Goal 1** “Professional cooperation”:

- three international coordinated audits were completed (on protection of the Bug River catchment area from pollution (follow-up audit); on waste management and utilization; on the prevention and consequences elimination of floods), based on the results of which joint reports were prepared and signed and the authorized bodies of Ukraine and the EU were informed;
- three annual meetings of participants and four seminars on the most relevant topics for members of the Working Group were held;
- articles on the activity of the Working Group, in particular, in the annual editions of the EUROSAI Magazine for 2017 and 2018, were prepared, highlighting the basic principles of activity, preconditions for the establishment, mission, principles and strategic goals of the Working Group for the near future;
- experts from international organizations were involved in order to determine better and more professional activities of the Working Group.

In the framework of implementation of the Strategic Goal 2 “Professional cooperation”:

- two training seminars on the application of relevant international standards in the field of disaster prevention and response were held;
- **the Good practice recommendations for conducting audits in the field of prevention and consequences elimination of floods** was prepared and approved.



In the framework of implementation of the Strategic Goal 3 “Contributing to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals” the Working Group held a seminar on the theme “Contributing to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in the sphere of prevention and consequences elimination of disasters and catastrophes”, during which the possibilities of SAIs to address the problematic issues that arise in conducting performance audits in the field of climate change related to fires and floods, including the lack of appropriate databases and relevant information, the ineffectiveness of coordination of responsible authorities, were discussed.

This indicates the successful implementation of strategic goals identified in the previous reporting period, and the Strategic Plan of the Working Group for 2017–2021 as a whole, and the feasibility of further accumulation of the SAI’s efforts in the field of disaster prevention and response.

At the same time, the implementation of the Strategic Plan was hampered by the instability of best practices in conducting audits of the SDG 11 «Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable» in the part related to the field of disaster prevention and response, which needs further refinement.

With this in mind, the Accounting Chamber of Ukraine made a proposal to extend the mandate of the group for the next three-year term under the chairmanship of the Accounting Chamber of Ukraine, which was supported by all the SAIs-members of the Working Group.

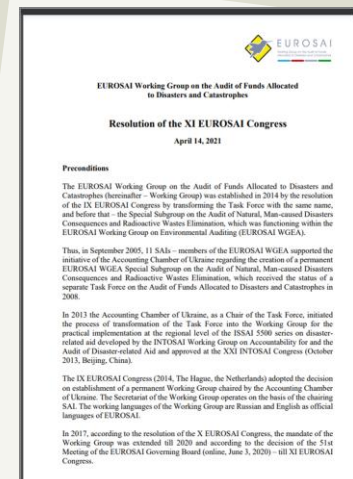
According to the results of consideration of materials on the XI EUROSAT Congress, on 14 April 2021 the resolution was approved, which, in particular, states that the activities of the Working Group and the issues it addresses are an important element of the policy of the international and regional community of SAIs, as well as global trends of governments and stakeholders, promotes mutual understanding and cooperation between SAIs-members of EUROSAT and INTOSAT, by exchanging ideas and experience of auditing in the field of disaster prevention and response, conducting joint and parallel audits, improving the professional development of specialists.

XI EUROSAT Congress to acknowledge the importance of the achievements and the need to continue the work of the Working Group:

- Takes note of the 2017–2021 Activity Report of the Working Group;
- Extends the mandate of the Working Group for the next three-year period;
- Approves the Strategic Plan of the Working Group for 2021–2024;
- Agrees that the Accounting Chamber of Ukraine will be chairing the Working Group from 2021 to 2024;
- Authorizes the Accounting Chamber of Ukraine, as a Chair of the Working Group, to present an activity report of the Working group for 2021–2024, as well as proposals for the further status and activities of the Working Group after 2024, at the XIIth EUROSAT Congress in 2024.

In addition, the resolution contains appreciation to all the members and observers of the Working Group for their contribution to the activity of the Working Group, and encourages SAIs – members of EUROSAT to join the Working Group as its full members.

This indicates the importance and relevance for European countries of issues studied by SAIs in the framework of the Working Group.



3. STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE EUROSAI WORKING GROUP ON THE AUDIT OF FUNDS ALLOCATED TO DISASTERS AND CATASTROPHES FOR 2021–2024

The Strategic Plan of the Working Group for 2021–2024, approved by the resolution of the XI EUROSAI Congress, defined the mission, goals, main objectives and expected outcomes from the implementation of the plan.

The mission of the Working Group remains unchanged – capacity building, coordination and consolidation of efforts of the European SAIs to help their governments in development of effective and efficient instruments for prevention and consequences elimination of disasters and catastrophes.

The implementation of the defined mission will be carried out “In three steps” by implementing three strategic goals in order to mobilize the efforts of the Supreme Audit Institutions – members of the Working Group, aimed at:

✚ Professional development of auditors (Step 1 “TOWARDS”).

✚ Disaster prevention and minimization of relevant threats (Step 2 “FORWARD”).

✚ Effective external communication (Step 3 “TO THE WORLD”).



At the same time, the Strategic Plan of the Working Group for the next three years envisages not only the continuation of work on conducting audits on the preparedness of governments for natural and man-made disasters, exchange of experience between auditors and organization of other joint activities, but also:

- increase the level of publicity of work;
- active promotion of the results of the Working Group by creating a separate website and information page on social networks;
- expanding the range of users as a result of the work of the Working Group and the number of SAIs interested in participating in its activities;
- consideration of the possibility of closer cooperation with other Working Groups of EUROSAI and INTOSAI in order to draw public attention to current disaster threats;
- the need to intensify the activities of the Working Group, in particular, in the direction of expanding cooperation with non-governmental organizations and experts;
- ensuring transparency and efficiency in the implementation of activities implemented within the Working Group.

Implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Working Group for 2021-2024 will promote the implementation of the EUROSAI Strategic Goals for 2017-2023, INTOSAI Strategic Goals for 2017-2022, as well as the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda until 2030.

For the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Working Group for 2021–2024, a number of objectives have been formed within each strategic goal, in the context of each objective a list of activities has been determined, as well as the expected outcomes for monitoring the implementation of the plan, which corresponds to the voiced at the XI EUROSAI Congress, recommendations for establishing clear links between objectives and results in developing a strategic plan.

✚ **The First Strategic Goal** is aimed at mobilizing efforts of SAIs for professional development of auditors; its implementation is a contribution to achieving the EUROSAI Strategic Goal “Supporting effective, innovative and relevant audits by promoting and brokering professional cooperation”.

Activities within this goal are focused on the professional development of auditors, exchange of best practices, and development of effective methodological approaches.

In this direction, the Strategic Plan of the Working Group identifies three objectives:

1. Improving the practical usefulness of products developed within the framework of the Working Group. The results of activities should be useful and in-demand for auditors and contribute to the effectiveness of the audit process of funds allocated for disaster prevention and response.

In particular, the following activities are planned:

- Conducting surveys on the need to develop methodological materials (databases, good practice recommendations, etc.),
- Creation of a database of audit matrices in the field of disasters and its placement on the Working Group's website to provide free online access to interested users.

2. Improving the skills of auditors.

This task is relevant to the work of the Working Group on an ongoing basis, as the competence of auditors directly affects the effectiveness of audits and the quality of recommendations to be implemented by governments and other mandated bodies.

It is planned to hold a number of seminars, trainings, online conferences in order to cover more auditors who study the audit of funds aimed at disaster prevention and response.


The working group will involve experts in practical, academic and international aspects of disaster-related issues.

3. Improve internal communication in the Working Group and ensure effective and comfortable exchange of experiences and best practices on conducting disaster prevention and response audits between auditors involved in relevant tasks.

One of the ways to implement the objective is to create an information page of the Working Group on social networks to discuss issues related to disasters.

This will provide an opportunity not only to expand the audience of users with information about the activities of the Working Group, but also to gain new impetus from discussions of current issues and identify topics of interest to users for proper preparation of a strategic plan for the next period.

In addition, this will help increase the number of participants in meetings of the Working Group, increase their activity, as well as the constant exchange of experience, knowledge, best practices between the SAIs-members of the Working Group.

 **The Second Strategic Goal** of the Working Group for 2021–2024 is to mobilize of the SAI's efforts aimed at disaster prevention and minimization of relevant threats.

The implementation of this Strategic Goal is a contribution to the achievement of the EUROSAI Strategic Goal “Helping SAIs deal with new opportunities and challenges by supporting and facilitating their institutional capacity development”.

The following measures are envisaged in this direction: studying the issue of prevention of various types of catastrophes, identifying the most pressing risk areas for their occurrence, drawing the attention of governments to the identified problems, development of effective recommendations by SAIs. For this purpose it is planned to implement such objectives:

1. Increase the efforts of the SAIs – members of the Working Group to implement their recommendations to improve the safety of critical infrastructure.

In particular, the Strategic Plan for 2021–2024 provides carrying out audits on safety issues of critical infrastructure facilities (NPPs, HPPs, flood protection facilities, extractive industries, etc.).

2. Development of methodological approaches to conducting audits on disaster prevention and elimination of their consequences that may be caused by force majeure.

Given the extreme complexity of this topic, the implementation of this objective should involve relevant experts to determine the risks of such disasters (flooding of mines, inability to operate hazardous facilities, mass migration, risks of environmental and humanitarian disasters, etc.), as well as defining approaches or instruments to assess possible losses.

3. Monitoring the efforts of governments of the countries of SAIs-members of the Working Group aimed at preventing various types of disasters.

To this end, it is planned to conduct appropriate audits, including mandatory audits on the implementation of recommendations, as well as surveys, questionnaires, analyzes. On the implementation of the task,

two surveys were conducted by the SAIs-members of the Working Group to identify the issues of greatest interest and which should be studied in more depth.

(Detailed information on the results of the surveys is provided in the relevant section of the Report).

➤ The Third Strategic Goal – mobilization of SAI's efforts aimed at effective external communication. E

Effective and efficient work of the Working Group is impossible without proper external communication with stakeholders, raising awareness of its activities, as well as attracting maximum public attention to the issues explored within the work of the Working Group.

➤ To this end, firstly, it is planned to involve new members in the activities of the Working Group and to create a separate website to better inform various stakeholders about the results of the Working Group's activities. A tool such as BIEP, created by the SAI of the Czech Republic, will also be used, that will promote expanding the audience of stakeholders among SAIs-members of EUROSAI and INTOSAI and beyond, for which the issues of disaster prevention, minimization are relevant and who will be interested in developments on this topic.

➤ Secondly, it is planned to exchange experience and best practices between auditors, improve their skills, involve international experts in conducting trainings on audits on disaster prevention and response, as well as organize training events on a regular basis.

➤ Thirdly, coordination of the efforts of different working bodies of EUROSAI and INTOSAI in the sphere of disaster prevention is necessary to ensure effective external communication. To this end, it is advisable to use online/cross-conferences to prepare a "road map" to coordinate the actions of different working bodies of EUROSAI and INTOSAI in this sphere. The result of such work will be the formation of joint projects with other working groups of EUROSAI/INTOSAI for coordination of efforts of the SAIs-members of the Working Group, aimed at disaster management.

Thus, the Strategic Plan of the Working Group for 2021–2024 is developed taking into account the current risks and dangers caused by disasters of various kinds – both natural and man-made. The document contains a detailed list of tasks and activities in terms of each of the three Strategic Goals, the implementation of which is aimed at the mission of the Working Group, practical assistance to SAIs-participants in audits and analytical activities on disaster prevention and response, and raising awareness of the Working Group's activities and promoting the results of its activities among a wide range of information consumers.

At the same time, the implementation of planned measures will depend on external circumstances and constraints caused by the pandemic COVID–19.

4. IMPLEMENTATION OF MEASURES TO FULFIL THE STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE EUROSAI WORKING GROUP ON THE AUDIT OF FUNDS ALLOCATED TO DISASTERS AND CATASTROPHES IN 2021

The **VIIth Meeting of the Working Group** took place on November 16, 2021. Due to the constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the event was organized by videoconference. The event also included a plenary session on the topic “Natural and man-made disasters: challenges for SAIs”.

The meeting was attended by 49 representatives of SAIs of 16 countries, namely: the Republic of Albania, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, the Republic of Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, the Italian Republic, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Moldova, the Republic of Poland, Romania, the Republic of Serbia, the Republic of Turkey, Ukraine, as well as of the European Court of Auditors.



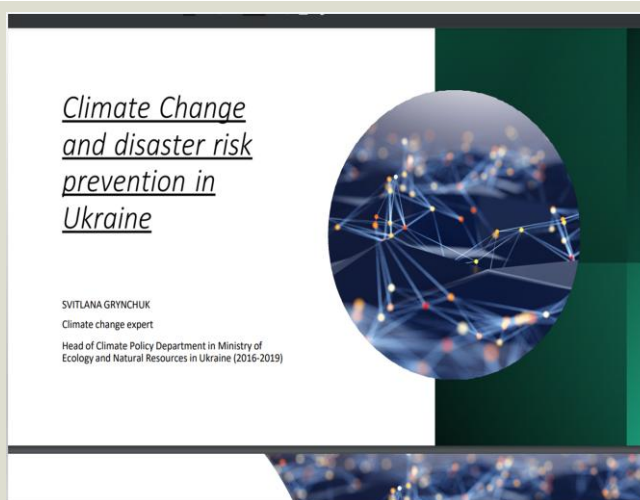
Participants of the VII Meeting of the Working Group, 2021

This was the first meeting of the Working Group since the approval of the resolution of the XI EUROSAI Congress on the extension of the mandate till the next three year period and with the participation of the SAI of the Czech Republic as a new member of the Working Group.

The meeting emphasized the important role of SAIs in disaster prevention, as recently the countries of the world are facing not only the devastating effects of the pandemic, but also the increasing number of natural and man-made disasters, accidents and emergencies. The Strategic Plan of the Working Group for 2021–2024 should help in achieving a specific goal.

✚ Adviser to the Minister of Finance of Ukraine Svitlana Grynychuk, as an independent expert on climate change, was involved in the meeting. She joined the discussion on climate change, disaster prevention in Ukraine and measures taken by the Government in this direction.

The expert’s presentation contained an overview of world policies and efforts of the international community, the fight against climate change, the main factors leading to climate change, as well as measures to address climate change in Ukraine, provided by relevant documents (Strategy for Environmental Safety and Adaptation to Climate change until 2030 and the 2022-2024 Operational Plan for the implementation of the Strategy for Environmental Security and Adaptation to Climate Change until 2030).



During the VII Meeting of the Working Group, representatives of the Accounting Chamber of Ukraine also raised the issue of disaster preparedness at the present stage as new challenges for governments and SAIs and the specifics of determining performance criteria in the audit of critical infrastructure.

Thus, the participants of the meeting stressed the need to conduct audits to reduce the risk of disasters and drew attention to possible steps of SAIs in this direction, in particular:

- assessing the adequacy of policies or focusing on their absence;
- conducting audits on the implementation of disaster risk reduction policies;
- take measures to raise awareness of the importance of disaster risk reduction policies.

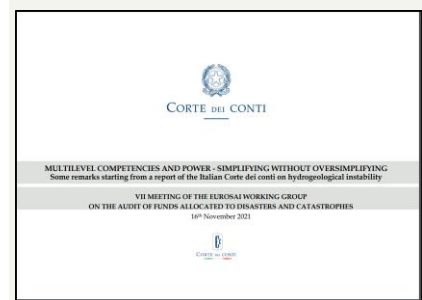


Particular attention is paid to determining the criteria for effectiveness in the implementation of control measures at critical infrastructure, as consolidating the efforts of the SAIs-members of the Working Group to implement recommendations to improve the safety of critical infrastructure through appropriate audits, is provided by the Strategic Plan of the Working Group for 2021–2024.

The participants of the meeting outlined the tasks of the SAIs in planning and conducting audits related to critical infrastructure, and pointed out that states need to create an effective management system for critical infrastructure protection, because those countries where it is created effectively counter and prevent terrorist attacks, cybercrimes, as well as promptly eliminate the consequences of man-made and natural emergencies.

Holding the annual meeting of the Working Group allowed the representatives of several SAIs to share the experience in part of conducting audits on disaster prevention and response. In particular, the representatives of the SAI of Italy acquainted with the practice of conducting audits to reduce hydrogeological risks, as the issue of hydrogeological instability is relevant for this country due to the impact on population, infrastructure and economy.

Information on the flood risk audit in Turkey was also provided. The audit provided for measures to reduce risks in order to prevent the transformation of floods arising as a natural disaster into a catastrophe and to minimize possible damage.



✚ The representatives of the SAI of Poland presented the results of the international coordinated audit “Transboundary movement of waste in light of the Basel Convention provisions” and pointed to the need for proper implementation by the SAIs of three countries (Ukraine, Slovakia and Poland) provisions of the Basel Convention in the context of the effectiveness of the audit of transboundary movements of wastes, elimination of shortcomings in the supervision and movement of wastes, amendments to European and national legislation on international movements of wastes, and competences of national authorities in this field.

Status of compliance with the provisions of the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Wastes between Ukraine, Slovakia and Poland was the subject of an international coordinated audit for the second time conducted by the SAIs of these countries.

Reference. This issue was first jointly investigated in 2007, and in 2008 the leaders of the three SAIs signed a Joint Information on the results of the audit of transboundary movements of waste between Ukraine, Slovakia and Poland for the period 2004 – 1 half of 2007 in the framework of implementation of the Basel Convention provisions.

It should be noted that recently the volume of waste generation and accumulation, in particular hazardous, has been constantly growing in most countries of the world, due to the development of economies and scientific and technological progress. Accordingly, there is a growing need for effective control of hazardous waste (collection, storage, treatment, utilization, disposal and transportation, including transboundary).

Thus, according to the statistical organization of the European Commission (Eurostat), in 2018 the movement of hazardous waste from EU member states amounted to a total of 7.8 million tons, which is almost twice as much as in 2001 (4 million tons). In addition, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there will be a significant accumulation of waste generated from personal protective equipment on the entire planet in the coming years, which must be disposed of as hazardous waste.

Given the urgency of cross-border movement of hazardous waste, in 2018 in order to verify the implementation of previous recommendations the SAIs of Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine agreed to conduct the international coordinated audit “Transboundary movement of waste in light of the Basel Convention provisions”.

In March 2019 the leaders of these SAIs signed (in Bratislava, Slovakia) Common position on cooperation between the SAIs of Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine during conduction of the international coordinated audit “Transboundary movement of waste in light of the Basel Convention provisions” to determine the common purpose, subject and basic conditions of the international coordinated audit.

Reference. Transboundary movements of hazardous wastes were also the main topic of a seminar organized by the Working Group in 2019 (in Belgrade, Serbia).

The purpose of the international coordinated audit is to assess the reliability and efficiency of the bodies responsible for transboundary movement of waste, including in the framework of international cooperation.

The international audit was coordinated by the SA of Poland, which was also responsible for preparation of the Joint Report on the basis of national audits of the SAIs-participants.

The Joint Report was prepared in four languages – English, Ukrainian, Polish and Slovak.



Given the situation with the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated constraints, the draft Joint Report was agreed online by the SAIs-participants.

The Joint Report was signed at the meeting of the leaders of the SAIs of Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine, which was held in Rzeszów (Poland) on July 30, 2021.

Based on the results of the audit, the participants concluded that despite some differences in national legislation regarding the regulation of transboundary movements of waste, the results of audits in each of the three countries are similar, in particular, a properly functioning and effective control system was not created.

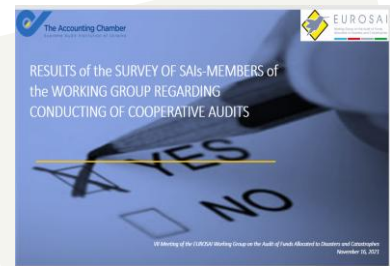
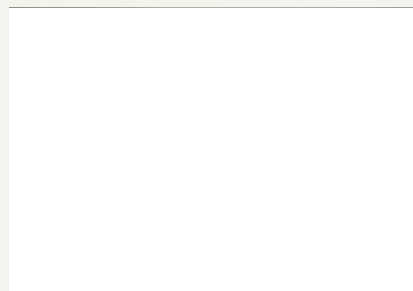
The SAIs of Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine stated that the system of control over transboundary movements of waste between these countries needs the necessary concerted action to eliminate violations identified during the audit, improve the effectiveness of control at border crossings and prevent uncontrolled dumping of waste in the country through which their international transit.

In particular, it is necessary to amend the provisions of the national legislation of the countries concerned in order to clearly define the responsibilities of the responsible authorities for waste control, the scope and manner of such control, the procedure for interaction between these bodies, and to provide border authorities with equipment determine the amount and type of waste transported.

By request the Accounting Chamber of Ukraine obtained copies of the Joint Report from the SAI of Poland, which were sent to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of Ukraine for information.

Thus, the results of the international coordinated audit **reaffirmed the similarity of problems in both Ukraine and the EU, as well as the feasibility of joint study of these issues and finding ways to address them by SAIs to draw the attention of governments to the identified shortcomings and take agreed measures to eliminate them through coverage in a joint document.**

President of the SAI of Poland Marian Banas, President of the SAI of Slovakia Karol Mitrik and the Chairman of the SAI of Ukraine Valeriy Patskan during signing of the Joint Report on the results of the international coordinated audit "Transboundary movement of waste in light of the Basel Convention provisions".



✚ In addition, during the VII Meeting of the Working Group, **the results of the survey of SAIs-members of the Working Group on the interest in conducting coordinated audits during 2021–2024 were presented.**

A survey among the SAIs-members to plan the work and determine the interest in the implementation of joint audits was announced during the VI Meeting of the Working Group, which was held online on November 24-25, 2020.

In 2021 the Accounting Chamber of Ukraine, as a chair of the Working Group, conducted survey in two:

➤ **The first stage** aimed to gather information on the efforts of the SAI member countries to implement the UN Resolution “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, namely the achievement of sustainable development goals, including SDG 1 “Poverty Alleviation”, SDG 11 “Ensuring the openness, security, sustainability and environmental sustainability of cities and towns”, and SDG 13 “Taking immediate action to combat climate change and its consequences” in the part related to disasters.

Survey participants identified the following ways in which the Working Group could contribute to achievement of SDGs:

- organization of trainings and seminars to increase the level of knowledge of auditors who will be involved in conducting audits on these issues;
- conducting coordinated audits;
- preparation of manuals, exchange of best practices and experience of conducting such audits (audit matrices, methods);
- development of a unified approach during audits in this area, creation of a virtual platform for the exchange of experience between SAIs.

In general, the majority of respondents expressed interest in participating in joint audits on the implementation of the SDGs, in particular, the relevant audits in the field of SDG 6 “Clean Water and Sanitation”, SDG 7 “Energy”, SDG 11 «Ensuring openness, security, sustainability and environmental sustainability of cities and settlements», SDG 13 “Taking urgent measures to combat climate change and its consequences”.

At the same time, the SAIs-respondents said that they either did not have practical experience in conducting audits to monitor governments’ efforts to implement the SDGs, or did not have the opportunity to share such experience at this time.

The SAIs-members of the Working Group also unanimously supported the following position: the joint activities of SAIs in this area should attract public attention and promote more effective measures by the state authorities of individual countries. In addition, it would be useful to develop indicators to monitor the achievement of SDGs for SAIs to monitor in parallel the progress of their countries at the level of each participant. A separate survey asked questions about:

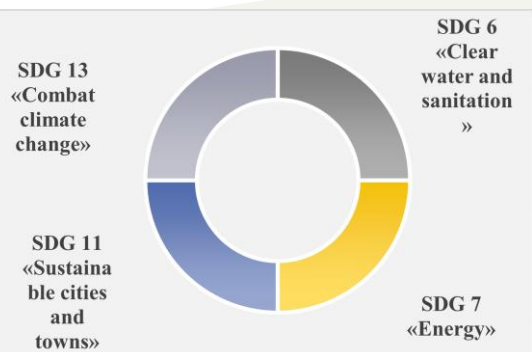
- SAI’s experience in conducting audits in the field of disaster prevention and response over the past three years;
- SAI’s interest in conducting audits over the next three years;
- current topics of audits;
- readiness to coordinate international audit;
- additional proposals for cooperation at the multilateral and bilateral levels.

The results of the survey showed that about half of the SAIs in the last three years have already conducted audits on disaster risk prevention (risk reduction); ensuring disaster preparedness; responding to emergencies at the national/international level.

Most SAIs expressed interest in participating in coordinated audits in the field of disaster prevention and response in the next three years.

Among the relevant topics that need to be studied, the SAIs identified those that cover issues related to:

- earthquakes;
- fires;
- floods;
- effectiveness of the implementation of the Sendai Framework Program for disaster risk reduction for 2015-2030;
- water resources and ecosystems;
- waste, unsuitable pesticides, as well as land contaminated with pesticides;
- unified emergency call systems at the national level.



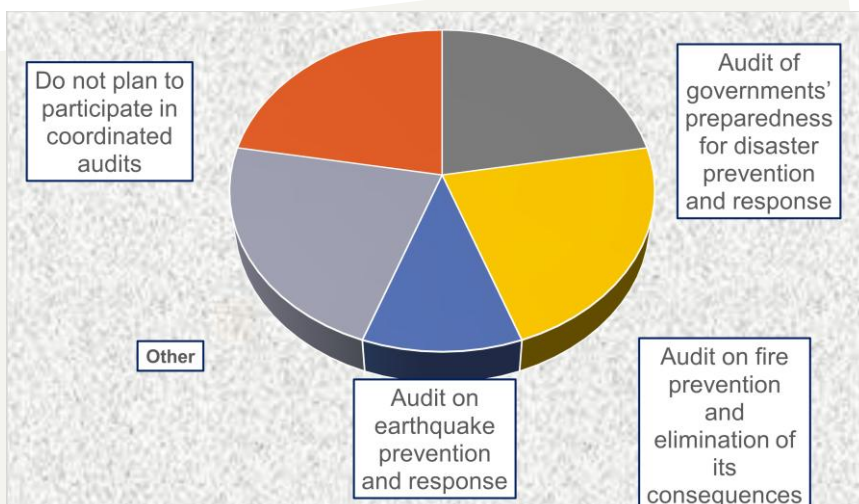
➤ Taking into account the received information, as well as the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan of the Working Group for 2021-2024, the areas most relevant for the SAI members of the group were identified and the second stage of the survey was conducted. During that stage it was proposed to determine the possible participation in 4 specific areas of coordinated audits (audit of government preparedness for disaster prevention and response; audit of fire prevention and response; audit of earthquake prevention and response; safety audit and decommissioning of critical infrastructure facilities).

Following the results of the survey:

- 23% of SAIs-members of the Working – respondents to the survey expressed an interest in conducting an audit of governments’ preparedness for disaster prevention and response (for example, a disaster of each SAI’s choice);
- 22% – audit on fire prevention and elimination of its consequences;
- 14% – audit on earthquake prevention and response;
- About 20% do not plan to participate in coordinated audits in the near future.

The rest of SAIs (about 21 percent) made other suggestions on the topics of potential coordinated audits.

Diagram 1. The state of interest of the SAIs - members of the Working Group in conducting international coordinated audits on current topics



In 2017, a Common Position on cooperation during the international coordinated audit on earthquake prevention and elimination of its consequences was developed. The results of the survey confirmed the relevance of this topic for a number of SAIs-members of the Working Group. In 2021 the SAI of Romania completed the national audit on the theme “The efficiency and effectiveness of the programs and measures undertaken in order to prevent, intervene and remove the effects of a major earthquake in Romania”, which was conducted within the framework of the Working Group in accordance with previous agreements.

In addition, during the VII Meeting of the Working Group, participation in coordinated audits within the framework of the Working Group was discussed, in particular, representatives of the SAI of Georgia expressed readiness to join the coordinated audit on fire prevention, and the SAIs of Romania and the Czech Republic offered to conduct a coordinated audit on flood prevention.

Representatives of individual SAIs (in particular, Italy, Kazakhstan and Moldova) are generally interested in participating in coordinated audits within the Working Group, but a decision can only be taken after consideration of this issue in accordance with the internal procedures of their SAIs.

Therefore, in view of the above, it is advisable to work on the issue:

1) updating the Common Position on cooperation in the conduct of international coordinated audit on earthquake prevention and elimination of its consequences and send this document to potential participants to complete the coordinated audit in 2022.

The request of the SAIs of Albania and Turkey about joining this audit or providing materials for the Joint report requires further consideration (previously, these SAIs expressed interest in participating in this audit);

2) preparation of a draft Common Position on a coordinated audit on fire prevention and elimination of its consequences (indicative deadline – 2023);

3) conducting a multilateral audit of governments' preparedness for disaster prevention and response (indicative deadline – 2024), within which each of the SAIs-participants can prepare materials in the area most relevant to his country.

Summarizing examples of preparedness for possible emergencies in a joint outcome document will provide comprehensive coverage of issues that may be encountered by SAIs-members of the Working Group and the effectiveness of precautionary measures.

Thus, the results of the VII meeting of the Working Group and the issues raised by the participants in the presented materials and during the discussions show that almost all countries face various types of disasters and emergencies, both common and specific to individual territories.

In addition, in 2021 the Accounting Chamber of Ukraine prepared detailed information on the activities of the Working Group for publication in 26 issues of the EUROSAI Magazine, which will help to inform EUROSAI community members about the results of the Working Group and drawing attention to disaster prevention issues.

Implementing the tasks of the Working Group in the next three years requires consolidating the efforts of all members and observers of the Group, finding new approaches to conducting audits on disaster prevention, as well as assessing the effectiveness of auditing in the face of new challenges and constraints.

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSALS OF THE PREVIOUS ACTIVITY REPORT OF THE EUROSAI WORKING GROUP ON THE AUDIT OF FUNDS ALLOCATED TO DISASTERS AND CATASTROPHES

According to the Decision of the Accounting Chamber of January 26, 2021 № 1-2 the Activity Report of the EUROSAI Working Group on the Audit of Funds Allocated to Disasters and Catastrophes for 2017-2020 was approved. The report was prepared after the completion of the previous reporting period of the Working Group in 2020 and sent to the governing bodies of EUROSAI for further approval at the XI EUROSAI Congress.

In particular, the Activity Report contained a range of recommendations to the relevant structural units of the Accounting Chamber's staff concerning ensuring effective operation of the Working Group in 2021. To implement these recommendations:

- Interaction with the SAI of Spain (Secretariat of EUROSAI), Turkey (Prewsident of EUROSAI) and Czechia (host of the XI EUROSAI Congress) was provided for preparation and participation of the SAI of Ukraine in the XI EUROSAI Congress in 2021 (the event took place by video conference);
- the necessary procedures were implemented to extend the mandate of the Working Group chaired by the Accounting Chamber of Ukraine for 2021–2024 in accordance with the statute and standard procedures of EUROSAI;
- activities within the Working Group were included in the priorities of international cooperation of the Accounting Chamber for 2021;
- joint reports on the results of international coordinated audits on “Prevention and consequences elimination of floods” and “Waste management and utilization” were signed, electronic copies of which were sent to members of the Working Group and governing bodies of EUROSAI;
- VII Meeting of the Working Group was held on November 16, 2021 (in videoconferencing format);
- a survey of members of the Working Group was carried out on conducting new international coordinated audits, the need to develop methodological documents on issues related to the scope of activities, as well as current activities of the Working Group in the next period;
- the strategic Plan of the Working Group for 2021-2024 was elaborated and approved by its members;
- the practice of involving independent experts/consultants on disaster issues in the activities carried out within the Working Group was continued;
- prompt coverage of information on the activities of the Working Group on its website, in particular on the completion of international coordinated audits and the signing of joint reports, was provided.

In connection with the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of restrictions were introduced, which significantly affected the activities of the Working Group and made it impossible to fully communicate. In particular, for objective reasons, the activities of the Working Group to monitor the efforts of countries related to the implementation of the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development until 2030, in terms of disaster prevention and response, cooperation with the INTOSAI Working Group on SDGs and key indicators of sustainable development, as well as cooperation between the Accounting Chamber and the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia in Ukraine. There were also two planned highly specialized training seminars within the framework of the Working Group, which were to intensify cooperation between SAIs and increase the level of professionalism of auditors.

Thus, even in the unforeseen circumstances caused by the global pandemic situation, the recommendations of the preliminary report on the activities of the Working Group as a whole were implemented, the necessary measures were taken to ensure its activities and the main tasks planned for 2021.



In order to implement the mission of the Working Group, to achieve the goals set by the Strategic Plan of the Working Group for 2021–2024, as well as the results of the discussions during the VII meeting of the Working Group and the survey on the interest in conducting coordinated audits, in **2022 the activity of the Working Group will focused on the following measures:**

As in 2021 due to the unfavorable epidemiological situation in the world there was no seminar within the Working Group, it is advisable to hold a separate training seminar in the first half of 2022, on the topic in line with the theme of the next coordinated audit to be carried out within the Working Group (fire prevention and response).

It is advisable to discuss the possibility of organizing such an event in view of previous agreements.

The VIII annual meeting of the Working Group and a seminar are planned for the autumn. The topics of the events will be determined later.

Taking into account the interests of SAIs, a draft Common Position on the International Coordinated Audit on Fire Prevention and Elimination will be prepared and the Common Position on Cooperation in Conducting an International Coordinated Audit on Earthquake Prevention and Elimination will be updated, which are planned to be signed by the end of 2022 (during the annual meeting or in the mode of providing electronic signatures of leaders of SAIs-participants).

Communication with SAIs-members of the Working Group and external experts on its activities, search for relevant areas for cooperation between group members and exchange of experiences on disaster prevention and response will be continued.

Taking into account that the planned VI EUROSAI-ARABOSAI Joint Conference in May 2022 in Kyiv, provides a unique opportunity to improve the awareness of the WG's activities among the ARABOSAI and launch joint projects, potential areas for possible cooperation will be worked out in the future.

Thus, the activities of the Working Group in 2022 will be aimed at fulfilling the main tasks of the Strategic Plan for 2021–2024 and envisages taking the measures necessary for the conduction of international coordinated audits in 2023.