



EU-CHINA

## **SPEAC**

Safe non-food consumer  
Products in the EU and China

**TRAINING MODULES**

# Welcome to SPEAC

SPEAC is the short name for 'Safe non-food consumer Products in the EU and China'.

It can be challenging for manufacturers and exporters, especially smaller and medium-size enterprises, to identify rules and understand how to comply with requirements for the safety of products around the world. Therefore, the European Commission has launched the SPEAC project to inform manufacturers, exporters, online sellers, importers and other economic operators in the supply and distribution chains about European safety requirements for non-food consumer products. The SPEAC project will provide practical solutions to easily comply with these requirements. Priority product groups of the SPEAC project are toys and childcare articles, and electric and household appliances, because products of these categories often show serious risks for consumers.

The goal of SPEAC is to have safer products in the markets so that consumers are better protected, and their consumer rights, which are of high value in the European Union, are better safeguarded. The project will contribute to the consumers' trust that all products on sale in the EU are safe.

This booklet provides an overview of the SPEAC training content in form of 15 generic modules to be further customised for distinct training activities with the interested stakeholders.



The SPEAC project is implemented by a Consortium led by GIZ International Services.



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For inquiries and if you are interested in joint training activities, please contact the SPEAC team:

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# Selecting from 15 generic modules

## Combining and customising the modules to specific needs

The SPEAC training will help the Chinese business community to supply safe products to the EU single market. It will support the educational work of chambers of commerce, industry associations, trade associations, government agencies, research and training institutes, certification bodies and others concerned with increasing consumer product safety.

The offered training is practical and attempts to address the real needs, concerns and sentiments of the Chinese business community in meeting EU requirements:

- Understanding the most common consumer product safety failures which create serious risks for consumers; and the root causes of these failures.
- Making compliance with EU requirements as easy to understand as possible by simplifying information and providing best practice solutions and examples.

While the focus of this programme is the safety of toys, childcare products, electrical and household appliances, several modules address cross-sector issues such as harmonised standards, conformity assessment, risk assessment and management, certification, CE marking, and other horizontal requirements for exporting to the EU market.

The programme consists of 15 generic training modules. Each module attempts to answer a question that a business might ask itself. Not all modules will be of the same importance for all businesses, therefore it is possible to:

- Select modules according to the individual relevance of a business sector.
- Use modules stand-alone or in combination with other modules.

Upon selection, the actual training activities will be organised together with the interested stakeholders. Detailed curricula will be designed, and contents will be further customised to meet individual needs and priorities. This will be done in consultation with the international SPEAC team of experienced European and Chinese experts with business, government and academic backgrounds.

# The 15 modules at one glance

## Module A

### Consumer product safety in the EU

How does it work, what is useful and important to know?

## Module B

### Serious product safety risks

What are the risks? What are the causes? How are they identified?

## Module C

### Dangerous toys

As a manufacturer - how to produce safe products

## Module D

### Dangerous childcare articles and children clothing products

As a manufacturer - how to produce safe products

## Module E

### Dangerous electric and household appliances

As a manufacturer - how to produce safe products

## Module F

### Laws, standards and other relevant information

How to find the essential, relevant EU rules for a business

## Module G

### The importance of risk assessment and risk management for product safety

How and when to conduct risk assessment and risk management?

## Module H

### Consequences of serious product safety failures

How unsafe products negatively affect businesses and reputation?

## Module I

### Extended producer responsibilities

Who is to ensure product safety in the EU market?

## Module J

### Conformity and safety assessment

What processes and steps apply when exporting to the EU market?

## Module K

### Obligations relating to CE marking

When and when not to apply the CE mark?

## Module L

### Specific Directives, regulations and other requirements

What additional rules might apply?

## Module M

### Selling products online to the EU market

What specific issues need to be considered?

## Module N

### Observations of market surveillance authorities

What authorities experience regarding serious product safety risks?

## Module O

### Training for the trainers

How trainers could use the materials offered by the SPEAC project?



## Module A

# Consumer product safety in the EU

## How does it work, what is useful and important to know?

Businesses exporting to the EU market are challenged by the fact that EU consumer product safety requirements are not contained in a single law but governed by several closely interrelated components. This complexity arises from the fact that the system is not only about protecting European consumers from dangerous products, it is also about facilitating the free movement of goods within the EU single market. In addition, many institutional responsibilities are not centralised but rest with the authorities of the 27 EU Member States.

### Objective

The objective of this module is to provide a concise overview of the relationship between laws and standards, the approach to conformity, the consumer perspective, the key institutions who are maintaining the overall system and the responsibilities of businesses in the system.

### Learning outcomes

Through attending this module, participants will gain a better understanding of:

- The EU legal framework on product safety in relation to consumer protection and product quality and its relevance to Chinese manufacturers.
- The use of various EU standards related to product safety and their relevance to Chinese manufacturers.
- The roles and responsibilities of the EU Member States, market surveillance authorities and the implications for the exporting businesses.
- What measures does the Chinese government take to regulate exporters?
- The mechanisms, how dangerous products in the market are identified.
- The responsibility of economic operators to ensure product safety

### Tags and sub-topics

Basic principles, legal framework, harmonised standards, general product safety, consumer protection, market surveillance.

This module can be used stand-alone or as an introductory module in combination with other modules or elements of other modules.

## Module B

# Product safety risks

## What are the risks? What are the causes? How are they identified?

The EU has established the Safety Gate/RAPEX system (EU Rapid Alert System for non-food consumer products) for the identification of dangerous consumer products on the market. It ensures that information about dangerous products identified by the Member States is quickly circulated to prevent or restrict the selling of these products on the market. 30 countries currently participate in the system; all the EU Member States plus the European Economic Area (EEA) countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. The Safety Gate/RAPEX information concerning products of Chinese origin is also made available to China to directly follow up on notifications through the so-called RAPEX-China.

The Safety Gate/RAPEX statistics lists dangerous products with risks caused by mechanical, chemical and electrical issues. The most frequent serious risks are choking and strangulation (for children), poisoning and electric shocks and burning (mainly related to priority product groups of the SPEAC project).

### Objective

The objective of this module is to provide an overview of the main consumer product safety issues from the perspective of the EU consumer collated through the Safety Gate/RAPEX system.

### Learning outcomes

Through attending this module, participants will gain a better understanding of:

- The most frequent serious product safety issues in the EU identified by the Safety Gate/RAPEX.
- The technical causes of these problems through exploring real examples.
- What is causing the problems and what can be done to avoid serious risks.
- The role of market surveillance authorities and other institutions in the identification of dangerous products and follow-up measures by the authorities in the EU and China.

### Tags and sub-topics

Risks, Safety Gate/RAPEX notification, market surveillance.

This module can be used stand-alone or in combination with other modules related to dangerous products of certain industry sectors and on preventive measures such as risk management.



## Module C

# Dangerous toys

## As a manufacturer – how to produce safe products

This module is aimed specifically at toy manufacturers and covers issues which are unique to this sector. Toys are the most frequently listed dangerous products in the Safety Gate/RAPEX statistics. Dangerous toys are a very serious issue, because they could harm the most vulnerable members of our society, i.e. babies and children. Safe toys will save lives!

### Objective

The objective of this module is to give hands-on information to toy manufacturers on how to prevent bringing dangerous products to the market.

### Learning outcomes

Through attending this module, participants will gain:

- Awareness of how dangerous toys could negatively affect lives and health.
- Understanding of the EU Toy Safety Directive<sup>1</sup> and related Standard (EN71).
- Understanding what the main/common risks of toys are (e.g. mechanical risks, choking and chemical risks), and what the (economic and technical) reasons and causes are.
- How EU product safety requirements relate to profit margins in the toy sector.
- The ability to apply best practice of product safety in the toy sector
- Confidence in applying any specific EU requirements which are unique to the toy sector and ensure the consistent supply of compliant products into the EU market.

### Tags and sub-topics

Definitions, what is and isn't a toy? How the Toy Safety Directive and the General Product Safety Directive<sup>2</sup> (rules on general product safety) apply. Essential safety requirements for toys. Declaration of conformity and CE marking. Technical documentation, instructions, markings and warnings. Common reasons for non-conformity in EU.

<sup>1</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:02009L0048-20181126>

<sup>2</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A32001L0095>

This module can be used stand-alone or in combination with other modules related to dangerous products, horizontal requirements and on preventive measures such as risk management.

## Module D

# Dangerous childcare and children clothing products

## As a manufacturer – how to produce safe products

This module is aimed specifically at goods manufacturers in this sector and covers issues which are unique to this sector. The most frequently listed risks of these products, according to the Safety Gate/RAPEX statistics are choking, strangulation, cutting and poisoning. These are serious issues since they concern the most vulnerable consumer groups, i.e. babies and children.

### Objective

The objective of this module is to give hands-on information to manufacturers of childcare articles and children's clothing products on how to prevent bringing dangerous products to the market.

### Learning outcomes

Through attending this module, participants will gain:

- Increased awareness of how dangerous products could negatively affect lives and health.
- Understanding what the main/common risks are (examples), and what the (economic and technical) reasons and causes are.
- Knowledge on how EU product safety requirements relates to profit margins in this sector.
- The ability to apply best practices of product safety in this product sector
- Confidence in applying any specific EU requirements which are unique for this sector and ensure the consistent supply of compliant products into the EU market.
- The ability to recognise horizontal matters relevant in this sector.

### Tags and sub-topics

General product safety. What is 'safe' and how is this to be judged? Safety assessment. Use of standards. Technical documentation, instructions, markings and warnings. Common reasons for non-conformity in the EU.

This module can be used stand-alone or in combination with other modules related to dangerous products and on preventive measures such as risk management or on horizontal requirements.





## Module E

# Dangerous electric and household appliances

## As a manufacturer – how to produce safe products

This module is aimed specifically at electric and household goods manufacturers and covers issues which are unique to this sector. These products rank second of the most frequently listed dangerous products in the Safety Gate/RAPEX statistics. The most frequent serious risks are burning and electric shocks.

### Objective

The objective of this module is to give hands-on information to electric and household goods manufacturers on how to prevent bringing dangerous products to the market.

### Learning outcomes

Through attending this module, participants will gain:

- Increased awareness of how dangerous products could negatively affect lives and health.
- Understanding what the main/common risks are (examples), and what the (economic and technical) reasons and causes are.
- Knowledge on how respecting EU product safety requirements relates to reputation in this sector.
- The ability to apply best practices of product safety in this product sector.
- Confidence in applying any specific EU requirements which are unique for this sector and ensure the consistent supply of compliant products into the EU market.
- The ability to recognise horizontal matters relevant for this sector such as the Waste Electric and Electronic Equipment Directive<sup>3</sup> (WEEE), etc.

### Tags and sub-topics

What products are covered? Interrelationship between the Low Voltage Directive<sup>4</sup> and GPSD. Equipment for incorporation. Mandatory safety requirements. Technical documentation. Common reasons for non-conformity in the EU.

<sup>3</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32012L0019>

<sup>4</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32014L0035>

This module can be used stand-alone or in combination with other modules related to dangerous products and on preventive measures such as risk management or on horizontal requirements.

## Module F

# Laws, standards and other relevant information

## How to find the essential, relevant EU rules for a business

The challenge for many businesses is navigating the number of sources of information which are available relating to the laws and standards on EU consumer product safety. This information can be found somewhere, and much is in the Chinese language (e.g. in the CNIS museum).

### Objective

This module will assist to understand what reliable sources of information are available, what is relevant and how it can best be used in an effective and efficient way.

### Learning outcomes

Through attending this module, participants will know how to find and apply in a practical way the range of information available for manufacturers seeking to sell safe products in the EU market:

- Overview of the range of available information sources.
- Quickly being able to find relevant information.
- Requirements set out in sector specific pieces of legislation and the relationship with harmonised standards.
- Applying both 'horizontal' and 'vertical' requirements to a specific product range.
- The commercial advantage in systematically researching information at the earliest part of the design and production processes.

### Tags and sub-topics

Sources of information. Applying information in practical terms at the design, production and exporting phases.

This module can be used stand-alone or in combination with other modules related to the legal EU requirements of exporting to the EU, including sector specific rules.



## Module G

# The importance of risk assessment and management for product safety

## How and when to conduct risk management?

Risk assessment is a powerful approach to ensure that products are not dangerous for the presumed consumers under reasonably foreseeable conditions of use. It is the responsibility of manufacturers to take account of these conditions and take adequate measures to ensure product safety. All serious risks must be avoided and identified risks mitigated through adequate risk management, which applies to both existing and novel products.

### Objective

Advocating a risk-based approach to EU legal requirements to ensure that risks associated with dangerous consumer products are mitigated from the onset.

### Learning outcomes

Through attending this module, participants will acquire the practical skills to minimise product safety risks through systematic risk management measures:

- Understanding how and when to conduct a risk assessment of products, and that taking early steps is essential.
- Specific approaches to risk management in the EU and its member States.
- Learn to set up a risk management process in relation to the products of concern.
- Identify the most common risks (e.g. mechanical, chemical, electrical etc.) that could be related to a specific product.
- Apply the findings to products and safety issues and taking risk prevention measures.

### Tags and sub-topics

Approaches to risk assessment and risk management, with a special focus on the European market. Most common failing products in EU market. Understanding the reasons. Risk reduction. Use of information and warnings.

This module can be used stand-alone or in combination with other modules related to preventing unsafe products in general and/or sector specific.

## Module H

# Consequences of serious product safety failures

## How unsafe products negatively affect businesses and reputation?

Once an unsafe product is identified, institutional steps are taken to withdraw the product from the market. Products are recalled or even banned. This module discusses the potential consequences of bringing unsafe products to the EU market.

### Objective

The objective of this module is raising awareness that unsafe products not only can harm consumers but can have negative effects on a business, a whole sector's reputation and an entire export nation.

### Learning outcomes

Through attending this module, participants will understand that corporate responsibility is more than increasing the profit margin:

- Measures taken by authorities both in the EU and China to follow up identified dangerous products supplied to the market, and what is the scope of consequences
- Potential economic implications for a business of selling dangerous products in the EU market.
- Liabilities and sanctions for having supplied dangerous products to consumers with harmful effects.
- How EU consumers and the public react to dangerous products and the implications on the reputation of products made in China
- How to use Safety Gate/RAPEX information in a positive way to improve product safety.
- Instilling a safety culture as part of the business culture.

### Tags and sub-topics

Understanding recurring problems with product safety and explaining the added value of Safety Gate/RAPEX for industry, authorities as well as consumers. What needs to be done differently? Other sources of feedback and data. Product incident investigation. Consumer reactions. Public reactions. Novel policies. Fines and other sanctions.

This module can be used stand-alone or in combination with other modules related to preventing unsafe products in general and/or sector specific.



## Module I

# Extended producer responsibilities

## Who is to ensure product safety in the EU market?

The system of the free market economy puts the primary responsibility for products, in terms of safety, quality and price, on the economic operators. EU legislation places responsibilities and duties on all those in the chain of distribution, including the manufacturer, importer and distributor.

### Objective

This module will help Chinese business and their business partners in the EU to understand their responsibilities and what needs to be done.

### Learning outcomes

Through attending this module, participants will:

- Understand the legal responsibilities of all those in the chain of distribution, i.e. manufacturers, importers and distributors
- Understand what the involved businesses need to do in a practical sense to comply with the rules.
- Know about upcoming requirements in the future to export to the EU market.
- Know about Chinese requirements for companies exporting to the EU.

### Tags and sub-topics

Responsibilities of manufacturers, importers and distributors. Routes to conformity. Labelling and traceability.

This module can be used stand-alone or in combination with other modules related to exporting products to the EU in general and/or sector specific.

## Module J

# Conformity and safety assessment

## What processes and steps apply when exporting to the EU market?

A manufacturer can only place a product on the EU market when it meets all the legal requirements. The conformity of a product with the legal requirements must be assessed by the manufacturer before it is put on the market. While the responsibility is with the manufacturer, some legislation requires the involvement of a conformity assessment body in the process. The manufacturer must draw up a declaration of conformity containing certain required information as evidence of that the conformity assessment process has taken place.

### Objective

This module has the objective of introducing the overall approach to conformity and safety, the roles of conformity assessment bodies (notified bodies) and the circumstances in which a self-assessment of conformity can be made or whether third party input is required.

### Learning outcomes

Through attending this module, participants will understand the EU requirements relating to conformity assessment in practical terms when selling products to that EU market, and how to demonstrate that products are safe and compliant:

- The differences between the EU and Chinese approach to conformity assessment.
- The obligations placed on a Chinese manufacturer when exporting to the EU.
- Whether or not a third party is needed in the conformity process.
- How to draw up the declaration of conformity and supporting technical documentation.

### Tags and sub-topics

Conformity assessment processes. Declarations of conformity. Rationale for selecting appropriate steps. Conformity assessment bodies and notified bodies.

This module can be used stand-alone or in combination with other modules related to exporting products to the EU in general and/or sector specific.



## Module K

# Obligations relating to CE marking

## When and when not to apply the CE mark?

Affixing the CE marking to a product is a declaration by the manufacturer that the product in question has been designed and manufactured to meet the essential safety requirements and creates a presumption that the product is entitled to free circulation within the EU/EEA market. The CE mark gives no indication of the quality of a product but means that the manufacturer has checked that the product complies with all essential requirements. Not all products must bear the CE mark – only those product categories subject to specific Directives require the mark. Other products must still be safe but must not be CE marked.

### Objective

This module has the objective of ensuring that the meaning of the CE mark is clear and when it should or should not be used.

### Learning outcomes

The CE mark is the most visible aspect of the entire conformity process, but its meaning may not always be clearly understood. Through attending this module, participants will understand the circumstances when the CE marking is or isn't required and how to get this right:

- How the EU's conformity marking system works in practice and what the CE mark means.
- How the CE mark relates to all aspects of a product and which specific pieces of legislation may be relevant
- How the CE mark relates to key product safety aspects.
- How to apply the CE mark system in practice.

### Tags and sub-topics

Responsibilities of manufacturers. Specific issues and challenges faced by small businesses. Preparing a technical file. Contents of technical file. CE marking and related issues.

This module can be used stand-alone or in combination with other modules related to exporting products to the EU in general and/or sector specific, and to conformity assessment.

## Module L

# Specific Directives and requirements

## What additional rules might apply?

There is no single reference document, piece of legislation or standard that can be consulted which contains all the provisions relevant to the sale of a specific consumer product. Many important requirements may be set out in a variety of provisions.

### Objective

This module intends to help to fully understand the breadth of the EU requirements on consumer product safety, and to identify these additional requirements.

### Learning outcomes

Through attending this module, participants will gain an understanding of the Directives and standards which may be relevant in addition to product specific requirements:

- The range of laws and standards that interact to protect consumers.
- The implications of related requirements dealing with hazardous substances, packaging, waste, such as REACH, ROHS, WEEE.
- The implications arising from market surveillance requirements including new upcoming requirements, e.g. that exporters must have a representative in the EU.
- How these requirements are enforced by market surveillance authorities.

### Tags and sub-topics

Overall legal framework. General product safety. 'Horizontal' requirements. Specific pieces of legislation in the fields of waste, packaging and hazardous substances. New upcoming EU legislation.

This module can be used stand-alone or in combination with other modules related to exporting products to the EU in general and/or sector specific, and to conformity assessment.





## Module M

# Selling products online to the EU market

## What specific issues need to be considered?

A key element in relation to protecting consumers from unsafe consumer goods is the growth of e-commerce. Online marketplaces have many benefits for consumers but carry additional risks. The basic rule is that whatever protection consumers enjoy does not change whether products are purchased in a physical shop or online.

### Objective

This module intends to help to understand the existing and upcoming EU's requirements impacting online sales and the specific implications on product safety.

### Learning outcomes

The E-commerce Directive provides the general legal framework for online platforms. In December 2020 the Commission published a proposal for a Digital Services Act, that aims to strengthen the accountability and responsibilities of online intermediaries. In addition, the Commission is currently preparing a revision of the General Product Safety Directive, which will tackle product safety challenges of online sales.

Furthermore, a new 'EU Directive on better enforcement and modernisation of EU consumer protection' was adopted in November 2019 which contains many new elements in relation to consumer protection addressing a range of issues associated with e-commerce. In addition, from July 2021, new market surveillance rules will have particular implications for anyone selling online into the EU market. Through attending this module, participants will gain an understanding of these Directives and further aspects related to online marketplaces:

- The range of requirements set out in various EU Directives relating to online trade.
- How the EU protects consumers shopping online.
- Corresponding Chinese legal requirements for online trade to overseas countries, including the EU.

### Tags and sub-topics

Relative risk. E-commerce and detailed requirements. Product safety and consumer rights. Market surveillance issues.

This module can be used stand-alone or in combination with other modules in a cross-cutting way.

## Module N

# Observations of market surveillance authorities

## What authorities experience regarding serious product safety risks?

The SPEAC project intends to invite officers from the European Commission, EU Member States and Chinese authorities of market surveillance and customs to share their observations on unsafe products and what should be improved by the manufacturing, exporting and importing business community. In addition, consumer organisations will be invited.

### Objective

This module intends to create awareness on the most frequent incidents of non-compliance with the product safety rules and what preventive measures can be taken.

### Learning outcomes

Through attending this module, participants will get first-hand insights on the observations of market surveillance and customs and what measures are taken to prevent unsafe products in cross-border trade:

- Recurring cases of dangerous products appearing on the market.
- Examples of identified dangerous products.
- The role of consumer organisations and their relationship to market surveillance.
- EU-wide market surveillance and consumer protection bodies and their roles
- How to cooperate with intermediary business membership organisations to increase product safety.
- Advanced measures in planning to fight against illegal business practices trying to sell counterfeit and dangerous products
- Upcoming legal reforms both in the EU and China.

### Tags and sub-topics

Market surveillance issues. Recurring cases of unsafe products. New approaches.

This module can be used stand-alone or in combination with other modules in a crosscutting way.



## Module 0

# Training for the trainers

## How trainers could use the materials offered by the SPEAC project?

Many business membership organisations (chambers, industry associations) and government agencies have their own training facilities through which the SPEAC training content could be used for further training activities. This will ensure the sustainability of the benefits generated by the SPEAC project.

### Objective

This module intends to qualify and inform professional industry and institutional trainers to pass on the knowledge and skills provided by the SPEAC in their professional capacity as trainers to more stakeholders and businesses.

### Learning outcomes

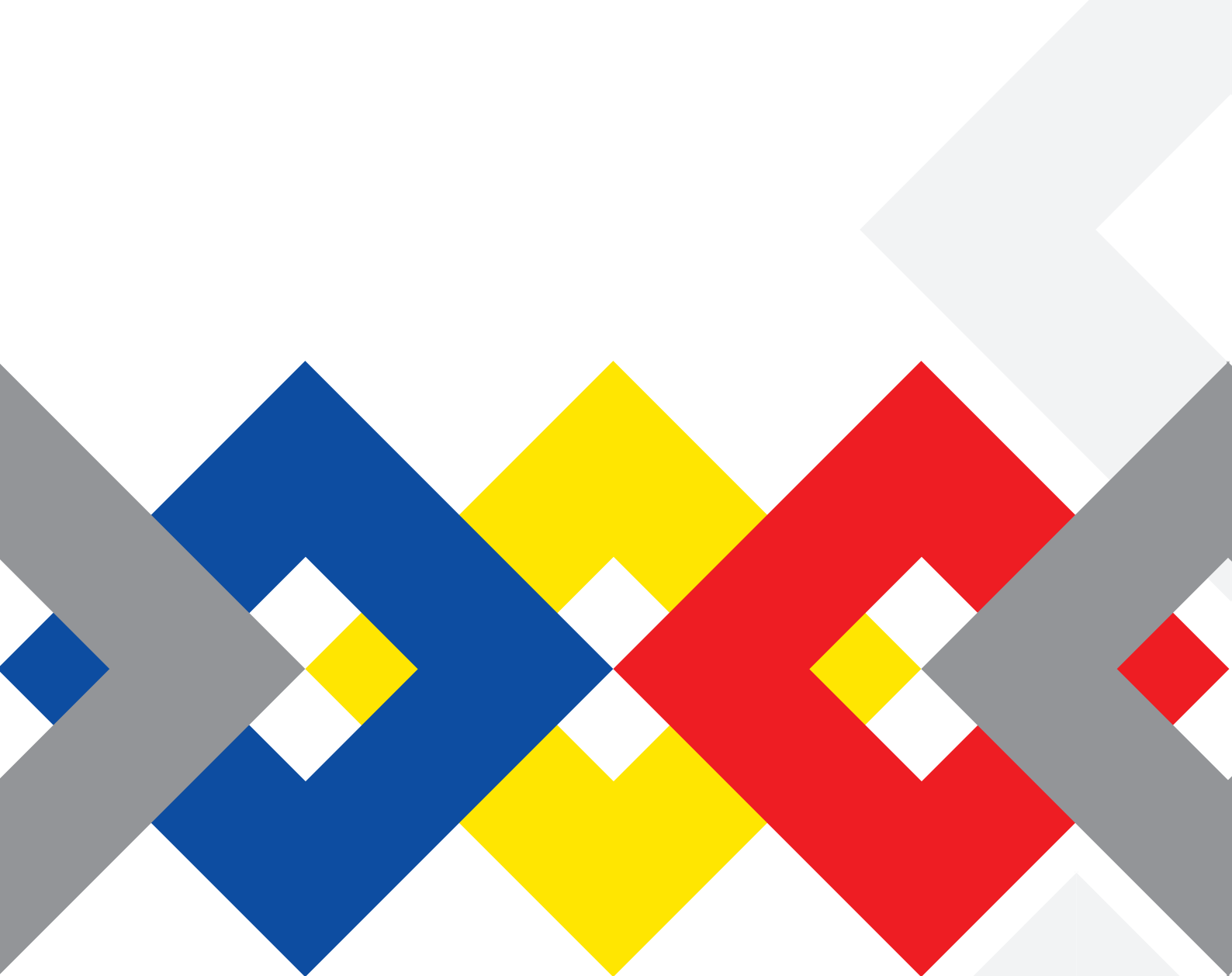
Through attending this module, trainers will become familiar with the subjects of the SPEAC training programme in order to pass on:

- All relevant essential information on the EU rules on consumer product safety.
- Specific requirements of exporting safe products to the EU market.
- Skills to locate relevant pieces of legislation.
- Techniques to identify and avoid product safety risks.
- Practical advice to businesses to conform, comply and ensure product safety.
- Staying up to date with new developments both in the EU and China.

### Tags and sub-topics

All essentials of the other modules

This umbrella module can be used stand-alone or in combination with other modules in a crosscutting way. Trainers are invited to attend all modules of relevance for their clientele.



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