

It's just happened ...

Gunnar Myrdal Lecture



More than 400 people attended the lecture by Nobel prize winner Professor Douglass C. North of the United States. The lecture on 5 March was part of the series of Myrdal Lectures, devoted to major international economic problems and named after Gunnar Myrdal, a distinguished social scientist and the Commission's first Executive Secretary (1947-1957). Professor North gave his lecture, entitled "The Role of Institutions in Economic Development". The full text of his lecture will be issued shortly.

Spring Seminar

Will the world be able to sustain economic growth indefinitely without running into resource constraints or damaging the environment beyond repair? What is the relationship between a steady increase in incomes and environmental quality? Are there trade-offs between the goals of achieving high and sustainable rates of economic growth and attaining high standards of environmental quality? These were some of the questions that were discussed at the Spring Seminar on 3 March.

Following a presentation by Theodore Panayotou, from the Center for International Development at Harvard University, United States, on "Economic growth and the environment", which was commented by Richard Herd from OECD, Tomasz Zylicz, from the University of Warsaw, and Kaj Bärlund, from the UNECE, the debate concentrated on the relationship between economic development and the level of environmental damage. A second panel focussed on the "Sectoral dimensions of sustainable development: energy and transport" with special emphasis on energy and transport. The lead speaker was David Newbery, Department of Applied Economics, Cambridge University, United Kingdom. The other panellists were: Thomas B. Johansson, International Institute for Industrial Environmental Economics (IIIEE), University of Lund; Inge Mayeres, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven; José Capel Ferrer, UNECE, and George Kowalski, UNECE.

Sustainable development: where do we stand?

Following the World Summit on Sustainable Development last summer, at the UNECE 58th session two panels reviewed member States' national strategies for sustainable development; one panel focused on progress in national strategies for sustainable development, the other on strategy implementation and the role of international cooperation. Most countries have either already formulated a national strategy for sustainable development or are doing so. However, the task is daunting. It is, therefore, advisable to focus action on carefully selected priorities which must be set through a process of consultation with all stakeholders, including local communities, civil society, academics and NGOs, and should encompass the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development. The role of UNECE in promoting sustainable development and in the follow-up to the World Summit was reviewed against the background of the presentations and discussions

New Economic Survey of Europe released

The short-term prospects for the economies of the UNECE region are rather gloomy according to the latest *Economic Survey of Europe ? 1 2003*. Prospects are clouded by existing global financial imbalances, geo-political uncertainties, and the weakness of major European economies. In order to achieve more balanced and sustainable economic growth in the region, the *Survey* in particular calls for a more actively anti-cyclical policy stance in Euroland. In addition to the review of the short-term outlook for the UNECE region, highlights of the *Survey* include in-depth analyses of corporate governance, systemic reforms in the CIS, the impact of EU enlargement on non-acceding countries, and labour markets in transition economies.

Hungary assesses the costs and benefits of EU accession

On the occasion of the UNECE Annual Session, the Hungarian Delegation in Geneva organized on 3 March a Seminar on the "Medium-term Economic and Social Consequences of Hungary's EU-accession". Mr. András Vértés, General Director of the Economic Research Institute of Budapest and Mrs Judit Habuda, Assistant State Secretary of the Office of the Prime Minister, illustrated the main findings of a recent study on the subject, and presented the national development plan for Hungary, which will be submitted to the EU next April. The study estimates that GDP annual growth in 2003-2006 will be 0.8% higher than it would have been in a non-accession scenario. The benefits are even stronger in terms of inflation, real wages, interest rates and investments. The international trade balance is expected to deteriorate, but this would be more than counterbalanced by net capital inflows due to EU contributions, tourism, and direct foreign investment. For further information, contact Mr. L. Horváth, Permanent Mission of Hungary, Laszlo.Horvath@ties.itu.int

Coming up soon ...

11-14 March World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29)
14 March Joint UNECE/CEI Annual Meeting

Facts and figures:

Women in the labour force selected UNECE countries

	% of women among ...					
	... employers and self-employed workers		...economically active population (15 years and older)		Women's unemployment rate	
	1995	2000	1995	2000	1995	2000
Republic of Moldova	...	51.4	60.4	60.5	...	7.2
Ukraine	56.8	50.4	55.6	55.6	4.9	11.7
Georgia	...	50.1	55.4	55.8	...	14.6
Romania	53.5	48.3	50.7	50.7	8.6	6.4
Russian Federation	38.1	44.3	58.8	59.3	9.2	9.4
Kyrgyzstan	...	41.7	59.7	60.8
Lithuania	39.9	41.1	58.8	57.8	13.9	13.3
Portugal	39.8	40.3	50.2	51.2	8.1	5
Latvia	38.5	40.3	61.5	60.0	19.8	13.5
Poland	41.0	39.5	57.1	57.1	14.7	18.1
United States ^a	37.3	38.0	57.4	58.8	5.6	4.1
Austria	37.4	37.2	44.0	43.9	4.3	3.8
Slovakia	27.2	28.4	62.5	62.8	13.8	18.6
Germany	26.4	27.8	48.2	47.9	11.9	8.3
United Kingdom ^a	25.9	27.7	51.6	52.8	6.8	4.8
Iceland ^b	25.9	27.7	68.3	68.2	4.9	2.9
Italy	26.5	27.2	37.4	38.4	16.2	14.5
Spain ^a	27.1	26.9	35.6	37.5	30.6	20.5
Luxembourg ^a	25.0	26.9	37.3	42.5	4.3	3.1
Israel	23.6	26.0	45.4	48.3	8.6	9.2
Sweden ^a	26.2	25.9	62.4	62.5	6.9	4.3
Cyprus ^d	23.4	24.0	49.3	48.7	3.7	7.4
Ireland	16.4	19.2	34.4	36.9	12.2	4.2
Turkey ^f	8.5	11.0	46.8	49.8	7.3	6.5

Source: UNECE Statistical Division, based on data from ILO and national statistics.

Notes: employers and self-employed include the agriculture sector.

a/ Economically active population 16+ b/ Economically active population 16-74

c/ Employers and self-employed workers: data for 2001 instead of 2000

d/ Data for 1990 instead of 1995 e/ Data for 1996 instead of 1995

f/ The definition of economically active population for data before 2000 refers to persons of 12+ age, whereas as of 2000 it refers to persons of 15+ age.

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