



UNECE Weekly

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It's just happened ...

Communicating the success of the Air Pollution Convention

With a long history of achievement in reducing air emissions throughout Europe, why is the Air Pollution Convention one of Europe's best kept environmental secrets? Thirty experts on air pollution and communications met in London (9-11 April) for a Workshop on a Communication Strategy for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution.



Scientists, journalists, media specialists and NGOs analysed together the problem of conveying complex scientific results to the general public, the press and to other regions of the world. The workshop recommended that the Convention take a more pro-

active approach to develop media-friendly material, enhance the Convention's website, and explore the links with other initiatives worldwide to contribute to air pollution initiatives, in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The recommendations will be presented to the Convention's Working Group on Strategies and Review in September where delegates will consider how to put into practice some of the ideas emerging from the workshop.

Air pollution monitoring and modelling

Air pollution monitoring and modelling are central to the work of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution. The Task Force on Measurements and Modelling, operating under the Convention's EMEP Steering Body, held its 4th meeting in Valencia (Spain) on 9-11 April. In agreeing on a draft EMEP Monitoring Strategy for 2004-2009, the Task Force emphasized the need for good long-term rural background monitoring of air pollutants all over Europe to give a sound

scientific basis for air pollution controls to protect human health and ecosystems. Atmospheric dispersion modelling will complement this monitoring work, and as part of its work the Task Force began its review of the new unified model that describes the movement of fine particles, ground-level ozone, as well as acidifying and eutrophying gases. There were also discussions on model results for mercury pollution and persistent organic pollutants.

First meeting of THE PEP Steering Committee

The Steering Committee of the joint UNECE - WHO/Euro Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) held its 1st session on 10-11 April. It endorsed a proposal to establish a web-based Clearing House for disseminating information and capacity building on transport, environment and health, and adopted terms of reference for an ad hoc Task Force to provide guidance on the next steps to be taken. Secondly, it acknowledged the importance of the project on urban plans for transport sustainable for



health and the environment and welcomed the invitation of Cyprus to hold a workshop on 16-19 November 2003 to discuss the relevant good practices and

lessons learned through case-studies. Thirdly, it endorsed the project submitted by Austria, France, Malta, Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland for evaluation of transport-related health impacts and their costs - related workshops will be held in Vienna (24-25 April 2003) and Stockholm (12-13 June 2003). Finally, it endorsed the project on indicators to monitor integration of environment and health aspects into transport policies and decided to establish a Task Force to carry out further work.

Not an official record - For information only

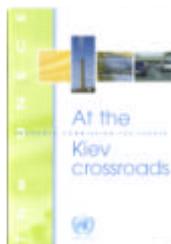
UNECE addresses public's right to know about GMOs

On 9-11 April the Working Group on Genetically Modified Organisms, under the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, continued negotiations on developing a legally binding instrument with the goal of reaching agreement on the extent to which the public should have a right to participate in decision-making on GMOs. The meeting agreed

that any legally binding option should encompass deliberate release of GMOs into the environment, including their placing on the market, but that there was still need to discuss further the exact form of the option, the scope of GMO-related decision-making to be covered and the public participation provisions that would apply to it. It was therefore agreed to adopt an open and flexible approach by leaving all options open for the time being. The Working Group will resume negotiations at its 2nd meeting (1-3 October).

Off the press ...

At the Kiev Crossroads



There is much that we as individuals can do to protect our environment and make this world a better place. We can recycle old batteries, cycle to school or to the office, take the bus, refuse to buy over-packaged goods, take empty bottles to the bottle bank, and not drop litter in the street. But what does the so-called international community do to save the planet and improve our lives? What do our elected representatives talk about at international conferences? How are their decisions put into practice? And does it make a difference? With the fifth "Environment for Europe"

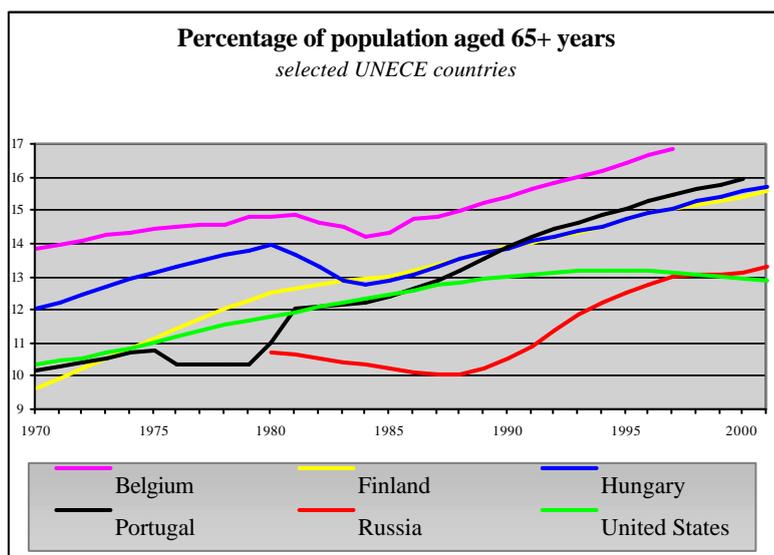


Ministerial Conference in Kiev, Ukraine, less than seven weeks away, these are very legitimate questions to raise. UNECE's 16-page booklet "At the Kiev Crossroads" intends to shed light on the UNECE's environment and human settlements work, and answer some of these questions. It is available in English and in Russian.

Coming up soon ...

28-29 April Working Group on Water Management (Helsinki, Finland)
28-30 April UNECE/Eurostat Work Session on Migration Statistics
29-30 April Drafting Group for the Kiev Ministerial Declaration

Facts and figures:



Sources: UNECE Economic Analysis Division/Population Activities Unit, based on data from WHO/Europe, and for the United States, from the US Bureau of the Census.

Notes: The following countries represent trends in their region:

Belgium	Western Europe
Finland	Nordic countries
Hungary	Central Europe
Portugal	Southern Europe
Russian Federation	Eastern Europe

For further information please contact:

Information Service
UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
CH - 1211 Geneva 10,
Switzerland

Tel: +41(0)22 917 44 44

Fax: +41(0)22 917 05 05

E-mail:

info.ece@unece.org

Web site: <http://www.unece.org>