



# UNECE Weekly

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Issue N° 21 – 23-28 June 2003

## *It's just happened ...*

### **Seeing the Whole 'Elephant'**

When multinational enterprises locate plants in low wage jurisdictions abroad what is the impact on domestic wages, employment and production? Are decisions by multinationals to locate abroad primarily a low-wage-seeking outsourcing, or primarily a strategy to improve access to foreign markets? What role do multinationals play in international financial crises, in the international transfer of technology, in environmental degradation? Answering these questions requires an integrated overview of each multinational

'elephant'. However, the international statistical system is currently at the stage of describing the individual parts. At its annual plenary meeting in Geneva last week the Conference of European Statisticians considered how to improve the statistical basis for responding to these and related questions about the important worldwide process of "globalisation".

For more information contact: Lidia Bratanova ([lidia.bratanova@unece.org](mailto:lidia.bratanova@unece.org))

### **Sustainable Energy Work Programme Reviewed**

The extended Bureau of the Committee on Sustainable Energy, including representatives of some of its subsidiary bodies, met on 16 June. The Bureau discussed strategic directions of sustainable energy activities, new initiatives of the Committee, joint activities with other Principal Subsidiary Bodies and forthcoming meetings. It endorsed several key issues: the re-launching of work on electric power, reorientation of activities on



coal in sustainable development, new and renewable sources of energy, the Energy Efficiency 21 Project Fund or financing mechanism and new objectives of the Energy Security Forum. Intersectoral projects were reviewed between the Committee on Sustainable Energy and the Committees on Environment Policy, Inland Transport, Timber, and Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development

### **Condition of European forests**



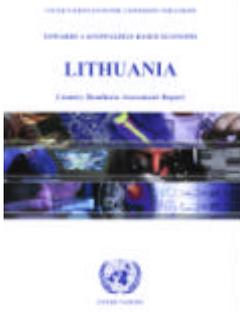
One of the world's largest biomonitoring networks at its 19<sup>th</sup> Task Force meeting (Zagreb, 26-28 May) concluded that the condition of European forests is changing under present

environmental conditions, air pollution being one of the causes. Calculations assuming countries meet their air pollution targets under international agreements, predict decreases in the high nitrate concentrations in some forest soil waters, though the soils themselves will take much longer to

recover. While the successes of sulphur emission abatement strategies are well documented, nitrogen deposition is still increasing in many regions, while ozone concentrations exceed critical levels and rising carbon dioxide concentrations have also become a threat to forest ecosystems. In 2002, the percentage of European trees with damaged crowns remained high and visible ozone injuries were detected in many areas. The annual Forest Condition Report, of the International Cooperative Programme (ICP) on Forests under the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, will be published this summer and will be available on the ICP's web page [www.icp-forests.org](http://www.icp-forests.org)

## Off the press ...

### Lithuania on its way towards knowledge-based economy



Lithuania is the 10<sup>th</sup> country of the 27 transitional and emerging market economies participating in the UNECE project "Towards A Knowledge-based Economy – Country Readiness Assessment." The report just issued highlights the country's efforts to build up an institutional environment conducive to the development of knowledge intensive activities, using its own comparative advantages, as well as the benefit of being in close proximity to

and support of more advanced EU and neighbouring Nordic countries. As a newly independent State, Lithuania has to simultaneously address a number of fundamental challenges, including the creation of its own statehood, while preserving and expanding capacities and capabilities needed for the knowledge-based economy to evolve.

For further information contact Larissa Kapitsa. ([Larissa.Kapitsa@unece.org](mailto:Larissa.Kapitsa@unece.org))

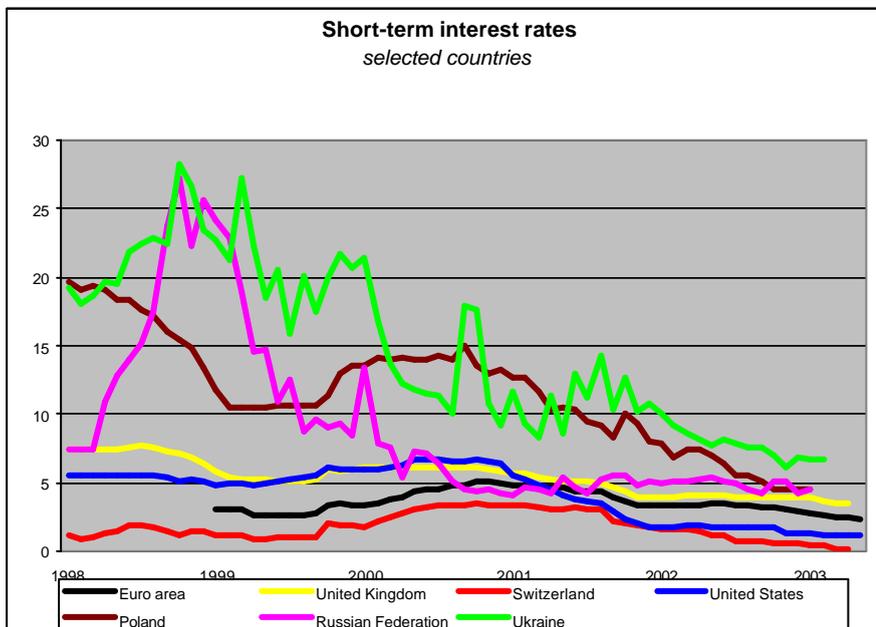
## Coming up soon ...

23-24 June	Conference on SPECA
24-27 June	World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29)
24-27 June	Meeting of the Specialized Section on Standardization of Dry and Dried Produce (Fruit)
25-26 June	Joint UNECE/Eurostat Meeting on Business Registers (Luxembourg)
26-27 June	Ad Hoc Multidisciplinary Group of Experts on Safety in Tunnels (Rail)

### UNECE Conference on SPECA

The Conference on the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia, to be held on 23-24 June 2003, has a dual purpose—to boost cooperation among the SPECA, and to pool the efforts of the UN system organizations and the donor community active in Central Asia in order to augment their effect on development and integration of Central Asia into the European and global economy.

### Facts and figures:



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](mailto:info.ece@unece.org)  
Web site:  
<http://www.unece.org>

Source: UNECE Statistical Division, based on data from OECD, European Central Bank (ECB), and International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Notes:

- Euro area, 3-month deposits, euro interbank offered rates (EURIBOR).
- United Kingdom, 3-month interbank loans.
- Switzerland, 3-month Euro-deposits.
- United States, 3-month/90-day rates/ Certificate of Deposit.
- Poland, weighted average rate (according to information collected from 15 biggest commercial banks) on short-term household deposits in domestic currency.
- Russian Federation, prevailing rate for time deposits with maturity of less than one year
- Ukraine, weighted average rate on short-term deposits.

rd - For information only