



UNECE Weekly

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Issue N° 43 – 24-28 November 2003

It's just happened ...

Facilitating trade in a secure environment – UNECE encourages organizations and Governments to work together for secure trade to avoid the risk of new Technical Barriers to Trade

On 13-14 November the UNECE and the World Customs Organization (WCO) hosted a meeting on trade security and trade facilitation. Many speakers stressed the huge cost of new security measures for the world economy, yet the cost of not taking measures to reduce the risk of devastating terrorist attacks would be even higher. A shift towards a security-based international trading system is underway throughout the world, in which it becomes clear that many technical standards do not correspond to the new reality. Different approaches (legislative, compliance, certification, partnership) were discussed and the need to balance security and facilitation in all of these approaches was emphasised to ensure that economic growth and stability were not undermined in the process. Participants stressed that the approach to security implementation should be proportional to the risk. While the need for advance information was recognized, the adoption of an on-

line only approach could create a trade divide. The importance was underlined of *implementing* existing or currently developed international instruments. The meeting provided an opportunity to formulate a strong message towards a *collaborative approach* by all Governments, international organizations and the business community, in order to ensure more efficiency and effectiveness in providing security in the international trading system. Further, it was emphasized that *partnerships* between the private sector and official control bodies, especially Customs, are essential. Mr. J. Pulford, Head of Modernisation of Customs Unit, DG Taxation and Customs Union of the European Commission, noted that "the contributions to the meeting showed the importance of continuing the work in this area", and supported the suggestion of having another meeting to follow up this work in a broader context.

For more information contact Mario Apostolov (mario.apostolov@unece.org)

Millennium Development Goals indicators

The Inter-Agency and Expert Group Meeting on MDG Indicators, organized by the Statistical Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and UNDP and hosted by the UNECE Statistical Division, took place in Geneva 10-13 November 2003. Participants included experts from international organizations and representatives of national statistical offices and donors. The meeting discussed data quality and availability with respect to the indicators used to monitor the MDG in the global report of the UN Secretary-General. Recommendations were made



on how to improve the regular monitoring of MDG indicators at international and national levels. Suggestions included further work on the elaboration of poverty measurement to map extreme poverty and to analyse sub-population groups related, for example, to urban/rural areas and gender. Discussions also focused on the need to consider the MDG in a more cross-sectoral manner and not to confine issues such as gender and slums only to indicators related to Goal 3 and Goal 7. The issue of statistical capacity building was also addressed and areas for possible intervention at country level were discussed.

For more information contact Angela Me (angela.me@unece.org)

UNECE promotes good governance for regulatory practices

How to create a business friendly regulatory environment and to eliminate technical obstacles to trade, without compromising safety, ecological and other legitimate concerns of governments? These and other questions were at the centre of discussions held at the UNECE International Seminar on Regional Experiences in Good Governance for Regulatory Practices, 10-11 November. Discussions showed that that it is not always sufficient to know "what" to do; it is no less important to know "how" to prepare and implement

technical regulations. That is why delegates commended the UNECE initiative not to limit the geographical scope of discussions to events in the UNECE region, but also try to provide an overview of global developments and practices in regulatory area. As a result, participants were able to learn about regulatory approaches and activities in the EU, USA, CIS, ASEAN and APEC regions, as well as about UNECE regulatory convergence recommendations and initiatives.

For more information contact Serguei Kouzmine (serguei.kouzmine@unece.org)

Coming up soon ...

- 27-28 November Preparatory Meeting for the First Meeting of Parties of Signatories to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment
- 26-28 November Meeting of Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Waters and International Lakes ([Madrid, Spain](#))

Facts and figures:

Short-term interest rates, deposits

selected UNECE economies

	2000	2001	2002	2003					
				M01	M02	M03	M04	M05	M06
Eastern Europe-15									
Albania	8.3	7.7	8.5	9.3	9.2	9.2	9.2	8.5	8.2
Bulgaria	3.2	3.2	3.0	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.5	3.2	3.2
Croatia	3.7	3.2	1.9	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4
Czech Republic	3.4	3.0	2.2	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.3
Estonia	3.8	4.0	2.7	3.0	3.0	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.2
Hungary	9.6	9.3	7.5	5.5	3.9	5.1	5.4	5.4	6.6
Latvia	4.4	5.2	3.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.0	3.1	3.0
Lithuania	6.7	4.6	2.7	2.1	2.2	2.1	1.1	2.1	2.2
Poland	13.9	10.2	6.1	4.5	4.4	4.2	4.0	3.7	3.5
Romania	32.9	26.6	19.1	12.5	11.9	11.6	10.4	10.1	10.4
Slovakia	7.2	5.2	4.6	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.2
Slovenia	10.1	9.8	8.2	7.2	7.1	6.8	6.4	6.3	6.0
The FYR Macedonia	11.2	10.0	9.6	9.2
CIS-12									
Armenia	18.1	14.9	9.6	8.1	7.8	7.9	6.5	8.3	6.4
Azerbaijan	12.9	8.6	8.7	11.5	11.5	11.5	9.2	8.6	8.4
Belarus	37.6	34.2	27.2	21.5	21.0	21.0	20.3	19.0	17.7
Georgia	10.2	7.8	9.8	9.2	8.9	8.5	7.9	9.0	9.0
Kazakhstan	16.5	14.7	11.4	12.2	12.6
Kyrgyzstan	23.9	13.7	7.9	6.4	6.2	5.5	6.6	5.4	5.3
Rep. of Moldova	24.9	20.9	14.2	12.6	12.2	12.2	11.6	11.9	12.1
Russian Federation	6.5	4.9	5.0	4.6	4.6	4.3	4.6	4.7	4.6
Ukraine	13.7	11.0	7.9	6.8	6.8	7.4	6.8	6.8	6.7

Source: IMF, *International Financial Statistics*; National statistics and direct communications from national statistical offices to the UNECE secretariat

Notes: Rates refer generally to weighted averages of deposit rates with different maturities of less than one year. A more precise description of definitions for individual countries is available in UNECE *Economic Survey of Europe, 2003 No. 1*, Table 3.1.1, "Short-term interest rates in selected east European and CIS economies, 2000-2002", p 47.

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>