



UNECE Weekly

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It's just happened ...

Fifty-ninth session of the Economic Commission for Europe, 24-26 February

Chaired by Ambassador Clyde Kull (Estonia), the session first discussed the economic developments in the UNECE region using the *Economic Survey of Europe 2004 No. 1* as background. Two Round Tables were organized on policies to stimulate competitiveness and growth; the first identified best practices and national policies that have proved successful in increasing competitiveness and growth, the second focused on regional initiatives and cooperation in the UNECE region and on the role of UNECE in stimulating competitiveness. The Commission also discussed its cooperation with OSCE. In their introductory statements the Executive Secretary of



the UNECE and the Secretary-General of the OSCE stressed that the UNECE enjoyed a privileged position among all the organizations with which the OSCE cooperated and that the OSCE's New Strategy Document identified the UNECE as the key partner in the implementation of the Document. The New Strategy Document of the OSCE provided the basis for a new and deeper relationship between the OSCE and UNECE but the relationship needed to be precisely defined.

For more information contact: UNECE Information Service (info.ece@unece.org), Website: <http://www.unece.org/>

UNECE Spring Seminar on competitiveness and economic growth in the UNECE region

The seventh UNECE Spring Seminar, held in Geneva on 23 February, was organized in four sessions covering issues relating to general aspects of competitiveness and growth; a discussion of the determinants of competitiveness in the knowledge-driven economy; some issues related to the competitiveness of regions and localities within the UNECE economies; and the role of governments in fostering competitiveness and growth in their countries. Keynote speakers and discussants addressed questions such as why do some economies grow faster than others and how is this related to their international competitive-

ness? What are the main factors shaping the competitiveness of UNECE economies and what are the determinants of competitiveness in the knowledge-driven economy? Why are there such large within-country economic disparities between regions and localities, even in the industrialized ECE economies? What can governments do to foster the competitiveness of their economies?

For more information contact: UNECE Economic Analysis Division (info.ead@unece.org), web site: <http://www.unece.org/ead/2004seminar.htm>



Sixty-sixth session of the Inland Transport Committee

In view of the current or future important changes such as European integration, new technologies, the growth in trade and the new expectations of society that pose new challenges, the Inland Transport Committee felt the need to review its priorities and its strategy. At its 66th session, 17-19 February, it adopted Strategic Objectives, formulated on the basis of the substantial results it has achieved so far, including the Regulations concerning the Construction of Vehicles, the creation of the World

Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations, the regulation of the Transport of Dangerous Goods as well as of Road Traffic and Road Transport, the TIR Convention, the E-road network, the railway, inland waterway and combined transport networks, and the extension of these networks to the Caucasus and Central Asia. The full text of the Strategic Objectives can be consulted on the Transport Division Website (<http://www.unece.org/trans/main/itc/itc.html>, document TRANS/2004/2, Annex 3, Appendix 1)

Not an official record - For information only

Le Groupe de travail sur la circulation routière (WP.1): un autre forum mondial à la CEE-ONU?

Se fondant notamment sur les Résolutions de l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies A/RES/57/309 et A/RES/58/9 relatives à la crise mondiale de la sécurité routière et sur le rapport du Secrétaire général (A/58/228), le Comité des transports intérieurs, après avoir procédé à un large échange de vues, a adopté le 19 février 2004 une Résolution (n° 253) visant à soutenir l'idée que l'un de ses organes subsidiaires, le Groupe de travail sur la sécurité et la circulation routière (WP.1) devienne l'organe de promotion et de coordination



de la sécurité routière au niveau mondial. Néanmoins, cette éventuelle extension devrait se faire dans un cadre défini de manière progressive et sans porter atteinte aux activités originelles d'ordre juridique du Groupe qui gère en particulier les deux Conventions de 1968 sur la circulation routière et la signalisation routière.

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Pollutant release and transfer registers

The first meeting of the Working Group on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTs) established under the auspices of the Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention, was held on 16-18 February with the mandate to pave the way for the entry into force and implementation of the Protocol. The major challenge ahead is the establishment of pollution registers, supported through capacity building, exchange of know-how, transfer of technology and financial assistance. The secretariat will compile a complete list of organizations' and recipient countries' capacity building projects, and their ideas and proposals

focused on the Protocol. The Working Group also agreed upon a structured outline of a guidance document to guide implementation of the Protocol. To prepare the first meeting of the Parties, the secretariat will prepare an "options" paper on developing rules of procedure and a compliance mechanism for the Protocol – a key issue being how closely these should correspond to those of the Convention, given that the Protocol is open to accession by non-Parties to the Convention.

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Coming up soon ...

Facts and figures:

High-level Workshop on "Economic Dimension of Security in Europe: Facing New Challenges in a Changing Environment"

Monday 8 March 2004,
Room XII at 10 am

The Workshop, jointly organized by the UNECE and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), will discuss the new challenges and threats to the economic dimension of security in a wider Europe. Transborder crime, trade and security, good governance, financial stability and the role of UNECE in the economic dimension of security will be also addressed.

For more information see:
http://www.unece.org/trade/workshop/OSCE_0304/wkshop_osce_h.htm

Annual changes in real GDP in the ECE region, 2000 - 2004

(Percentage change over previous year)

Region	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004 ^d
UNECE-50 ^a	4.1	1.4	2.1	2.5	3.6
Central and Eastern Europe-15	3.9	3.2	3.0	3.8	4.5
CIS-12	8.9	6.1	5.2	7.6	5.7
Russian Federation	10.0	5.1	4.7	7.3	5.5
Western Europe-21 ^b	3.7	1.3	1.3	0.9	2.2
European Union-15	3.6	1.7	1.1	0.8	2.1
Euro area-12	3.5	1.7	0.9	0.5	1.9
EU acceding countries-10 ^c	4.0	2.6	2.5	3.6	4.2
Enlarged EU-25	3.6	1.8	1.2	1.0	2.3
Europe excluding CIS-36	3.8	1.5	1.5	1.2	2.5
Europe including CIS-48	4.4	2.1	2.0	2.1	2.9
North America-2	3.8	0.6	2.3	3.0	4.5
United States	3.7	0.5	2.2	3.1	4.6

Source : UNECE Statistical Division

Notes: The regional aggregates are computed by summing over countries constant price values converted into US dollars using the GDP purchasing power parity of the year 2000.

^a Excludes Andorra, Israel, Liechtenstein, Monaco, San Marino.

^b Includes Turkey.

^c Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia.

^d Secretariat estimates, Economic Analysis Division.

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