



UNECE Weekly

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It's just happened ...

Armenia accedes to UNECE Convention on Road Traffic

Armenia has become the 62nd Contracting Party to the UNECE Convention on Road Traffic and has notified the Secretary-General that it has selected **AM** as the distinguishing sign for display on its vehicles in international traffic.

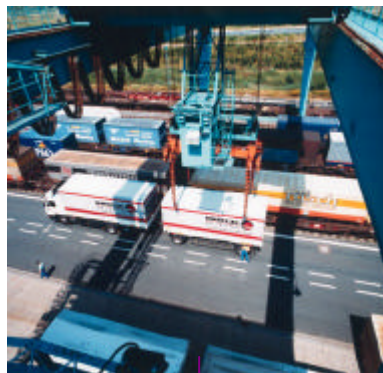
AM The Convention on Road Traffic forms the basis of countries' national highway codes. It regulates all facets of driving behaviour, such as speed, distance between vehicles and obligation to give way, and details the

technical conditions for the admission of vehicles to international traffic. In addition, it provides models of domestic and international driving permits. While applied widely by the member countries of the UNECE, the Convention also has a significant number of Contracting Parties from outside the UNECE region.

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Making intermodal transport more efficient

The Joint UNECE/ECMT Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics, at its session in Paris on 7-8 March 2005, adopted "model" action plans and partnership agreements to facilitate the conclusion of cooperative arrangements among Governments and with the private sector for efficient international intermodal (road/rail) transport services. The "models", containing also operational benchmarks to measure performance, have been prepared on the basis of the best practices in this kind of arrangement between countries and the transport industry in order to increase productivity, reliability and punctuality of intermodal transport services across the Alps, in particular through Austria and Switzerland. These "models" will now be transmitted to the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) for



approval at their meeting in Moscow (May 2005) to be used at pan-European level.

The Paris meeting also adopted amendments to the AGTC Agreement extending the network of intermodal transport lines and operational standards to the countries in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe. Finally, it adopted an opinion on the proposal of ISO to

standardize 45 ft (13.7 m) long containers, pointing out that such containers would conflict with the maximum authorized length for road vehicles in most UNECE member countries and could thus not be transported on the European road network.

For more information contact the Transport Division (wp.24@unece.org).

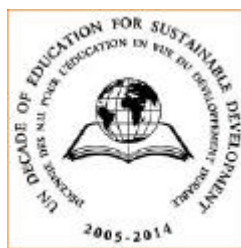
Intermodal transport is a form of transport that combines the advantages of two or more modes of transport, e.g. rail and road. Rail can efficiently carry large quantities of freight over long distances, whereas road vehicles provide the needed flexibility for regional distribution. In this form of transport, either trucks are carried on special railway wagons or the goods are carried in containers, swap bodies or semi-trailers and are loaded and unloaded at specially equipped terminals. Such services require close cooperation among governmental authorities and several private sector partners.

Coming up soon ...

Sustainable development through education

The UNECE will launch its regional Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development at a High-level Meeting of Environment and Education Ministries in Vilnius, Lithuania, 17-18 March. Resulting from a decision by UNECE Environment Ministers at their "Environment for Europe" Conference in Kiev in May 2003, the Strategy was developed under joint Swedish and Russian leadership through a participatory process involving representatives from both the environment and the education sectors, as well as UNESCO, NGOs and other stakeholders.

The objective of the Strategy is to incorporate key themes of sustainable development in all education systems, integrating these themes into all relevant subjects and programmes, and providing specific



sustainable development subjects and programmes. It addresses a wide range of issues, including curricula, teaching materials, the skills of educators, and inter-departmental and cross-sectoral cooperation, providing a flexible framework that each country can adapt to its own priorities, specific needs and circumstances. The

importance of the public's awareness and understanding of sustainability and the special role of the media in this are also highlighted. The Strategy is also a substantive contribution to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014).

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Off the press...

Certification of forestland

The European Forest Sector Outlook Studies (EFSOS), prepared under the auspices of the UNECE Timber Committee and the FAO European Forestry Commission have, for half a century, supported policy makers in the forest sector by providing credible and current information to develop forest management plans, policies and strategies that respond to emerging issues and trends. The 6th Study focuses on the interactions between the forest sector and society and attempts

to describe how these are changing over time. It gives long term trends for the supply and demand of forest products (roundwood, sawnwood, panels, pulp, paper, non-wood products) and services as well as the outlook to 2020 in western and eastern Europe and four major CIS countries, including the Russian Federation. It stresses the future shift in the balance of the sector to the east, and the importance of cross-sectoral issues, notably consequences for the forest sector of energy, environment and trade policies. The study identifies a number of major policy issues and proposes some policy recommendations as a basis for future debate.

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Facts and figures:

Nominal hourly earnings in manufacturing

Selected UNECE economies
(Change over same period of the previous year, per cent)

	2001	2002	2003	2004			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
France	4.5	3.4	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.8	...
Germany	1.5	1.7	2.4	2.2	2.4	1.6	...
Italy	1.9	2.7	2.6	3.0	3.7	2.2	...
Austria	3.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.3	2.8	...
Belgium	2.8	2.5	1.9	1.9	2.3	2.2	2.4
Finland	4.8	3.9	4.3	3.9	3.4	3.2	...
Ireland	8.7	5.8	5.0	3.6	4.4	4.7	...
Luxembourg	5.3	-0.2	0.8	2.5	3.2
Netherlands	3.9	3.7	2.4	1.6	2.3	1.9	...
Spain	4.1	5.0	4.9	5.3	1.6	2.4	...
United Kingdom	4.3	3.5	3.5	3.5	4.3	3.5	...
Denmark	4.3	4.0	4.1	3.5	3.4	3.1	...
Sweden	3.0	3.4	2.9	2.7	2.5	2.9	...
Norway	4.5	5.2	4.7	4.6	4.5	4.6	...
Turkey	35.0	32.6	16.8	12.4	12.1
Canada	1.6	2.7	3.2	3.4	3.2	2.0	...
United States	3.1	3.6	2.9	2.4	2.7	2.7	...

Source: UNECE Statistical Database, compiled from OECD and national sources.

Also coming up soon ...

14-16 March Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

16-17 March UN Road Safety Collaboration Meeting

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