



# UNECE Weekly

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Issue N° 178 – 26-30 June 2006

## **Environmental monitoring: the role of enterprises**

As UNECE begins to prepare environmental assessments for the upcoming "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference, it is clear that substantial improvements in environmental monitoring and data collection are needed in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA), especially on such issues as air emissions, water discharges and waste management. However, such improvements are difficult to achieve without the commitment and cooperation of enterprises.

These weaknesses in existing enterprise environmental monitoring systems in the European subregion are caused by, among other things, shortcomings or contradictions in setting basic requirements for monitoring

in legislation, lack of trust between public authorities and industry, and failure of both industry and public authorities to manage enterprise environmental data in such a way as to support decision-making, facilitate public access to information and improve reporting to the international community.

### **Effective approaches**

To address these challenges, the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment, meeting on 12-14 June, organized a panel discussion between central and territorial environmental authorities, big polluting enterprises, and environmental NGOs.

Panel discussions centred around how to set effective approaches, including legal requirements, institutional arrangements, guidelines and reporting indicators, to facilitate the



## **Statisticians meet at OECD in Paris**

The Heads of National Statistical Offices of UNECE member countries and international statistical organizations, as well as representatives of several countries outside the UNECE region, got together in Paris on 11-13 June to discuss coordination of international statistical work in the region, as well as the most important developments in statistics.

### **Guaranteed confidentiality**

This plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) adopted Guidelines and Core Principles for Managing Statistical Confidentiality and Microdata Access, offering ways for statistical offices to respond to the increasing pressure from researchers to make available microdata for analysis while guaranteeing respondents' confidentiality, which is one of the fundamental principles of official statistics.

### **Importance of population data**

Also adopted were the CES Recommendations for the 2010 Censuses of Population and Housing, an important step in preparing for the next round of population and housing censuses that in most countries will take place around 2010. Population census is a major activity for national statistical systems, not only because it requires a lot of resources but also because of its overall economic and social relevance. The population data are the basis for many of the key national and international indicators, such as GDP per capita. They are also the basis for many planning activities at local, regional, national and international level, apportionment of funds and electoral purposes.

### **Educating the public**

A seminar on the management and development of human resources in statistical offices, an issue of great importance for the successful

## **Lithuania joins UNECE Vehicle Regulations Agreement**

On 25 July Lithuania will become the 28th Contracting Party to the 1998 Agreement on Global Vehicle Regulations. At present, Contracting Parties include not only many European States but also the USA, Canada, the European



Community, Japan, China, Republic of Korea, India, Malaysia, South Africa and New Zealand.

The 1998 Agreement, administered by the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29), is the legal framework for the development of

global technical regulations for vehicles and their components, with the aim of increasing their active and passive safety, reducing their emissions and improving their security (anti-theft) performance.

To date, two global technical regulations have been adopted in the framework of the 1998 Agreement, addressing door locks and door retention components and the measurement procedure for emissions and fuel consumption of motorcycles. WP.29 is currently developing global technical regulations on other vehicle regulatory issues, including the measurement procedure of emissions of heavy-duty vehicles, on-board diagnostic of emissions of heavy-duty vehicles, motorcycle brakes, pedestrian safety and hydrogen and fuel-cell vehicles. It is expected that the third global technical regulation will be adopted in November this year. ❖

For more information contact José Capel Ferrer ([jose.capel.ferrer@unece.org](mailto:jose.capel.ferrer@unece.org)) or Juan Ramos García ([juan.ramos.garcia@unece.org](mailto:juan.ramos.garcia@unece.org)).



**cont.** development of effective self-monitoring systems. Another workshop will be held in Poland in September to prepare guidelines for EECCA and other interested countries on the basis of good practices developed in various parts of the UNECE region. The guidelines will be submitted for endorsement to the Sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (Belgrade, 10-12 October 2007).

### Framework for monitoring requirements

If adopted, public authorities can use these guidelines to create a framework for enterprise environmental monitoring requirements. Establishing this framework will assist all parties in upholding a higher level of environmental protection. More specifically, industrial operators will be able to develop and implement effective enterprise environmental monitoring

programmes that have value added for them. Better enterprise environmental data collection would help the management to understand the effects of the company's environmental performance on profitability, market value, and investment decisions. The guidelines may also help to establish similar or compatible conditions for business and industry throughout the region in their environmental monitoring and reporting, thus avoiding impediments to investments and trade.

### Stakeholders share responsibility

This initiative reflects the general need to make the environmental protection a shared responsibility of different stakeholders and the goal of authorities to establish strategic partnerships with stakeholders. Another factor is the increased need for socially responsible behaviour by industry especially in the environmental field. ❖

For more information contact [monitoring.wgem@unece.org](mailto:monitoring.wgem@unece.org).

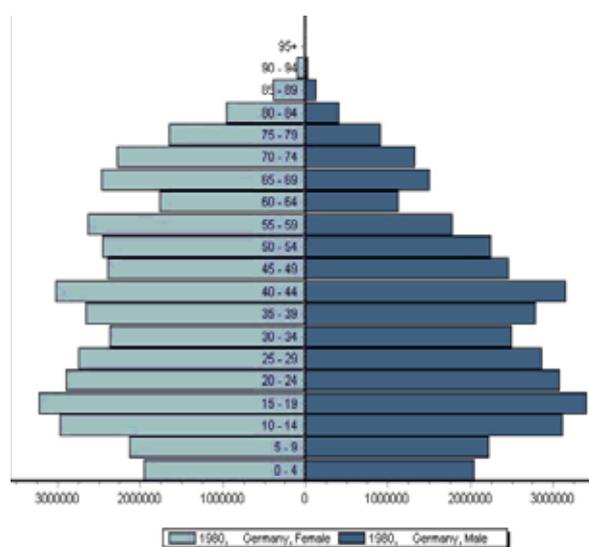
### Statisticians (cont.)

performance of any modern institution, included the question of the role that the statistical offices have to play in educating the general public as users of statistics. Understanding statistics and using them effectively require the fostering of statistical literacy. ❖

For more information on the CES and the side meetings that also took place last week, visit <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2006.06.ces.htm>, or contact Lidia Bratanova ([lidia.bratanova@unece.org](mailto:lidia.bratanova@unece.org)) or Tiina Luige ([tiina.luige@unece.org](mailto:tiina.luige@unece.org)).

### Facts and figures

#### Demographic change in Europe: the case of Germany



### Off the press

**Forest certification** – a voluntary system to inform the final consumers that they are buying the product of a sustainably managed forest – has transformed forest products markets over the last 10 years. Although the system is "voluntary market-based", its development has also drawn Governments into discussions of how they should, or should not, intervene to promote their broader policy objectives. Different Governments have responded in different ways. In September 2005 the UNECE Timber Committee and FAO organized a policy forum on "Forest Certification – Do Governments have a role?" This discussion paper includes all the presentations, a summary of the discussion and the agreed conclusions of the forum. ❖



For more information contact [info.timber@unece.org](mailto:info.timber@unece.org).

### Coming up ...

26-27 June

Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management

27-30 June

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

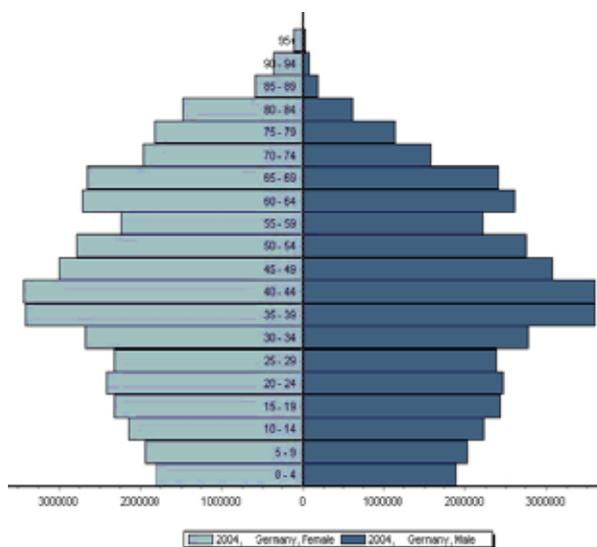
29-30 June

Ad Hoc Preparatory Working Group of Senior Officials "Environment for 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](mailto:info.ece@unece.org)  
Website: <http://www.unece.org>



Source: UNECE Gender database.

In several countries of the UNECE region, the age structure of the population has dramatically changed over the last decades. The age structure of a country results directly from the past and present trends in fertility, mortality and migrations. The combined effect of these factors can be observed, for example, in the change of the population structure of Germany over the last 25 years. In 2004 as compared to 1980, the decrease of the population under the age of 20 is due to a persistently low fertility rate while the increase of the middle age population 35-40 reflects the contribution of immigration.