



# UNECE Weekly

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

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## СПЕКА SPECA

### *First Meeting of the Economic Forum in Baku*

As part of the reform of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), member countries\* have established a forum of government decision-makers and representatives of the business and research community to discuss strategic issues of regional cooperation.

Representatives of member countries, private business – primarily energy companies – and leading economic research institutes from the region attended the first SPECA Economic Forum on “*The Energy Dividend: spreading the growth impulse for prosperity and stability to the SPECA region*”, hosted by the Government of Azerbaijan on 25-26 June in Baku, just prior to the SPECA Governing Council.



the spread of prosperity and stability to all countries of the region. In the long run, all SPECA countries would benefit from a dynamic regional market, diversification of production and increased stability.

Discussion on the role of international and regional organizations and multilateral development banks in promoting regional cooperation attracted representatives of UNDESA, UNDP, the European Union, OSCE, World Bank, IMF, EBRD, ADB, IOM and EURASEC.

*\* Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.*

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It was emphasized that energy-exporting countries – Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan – could become locomotives for the economic growth of the whole region. Improved trade relations, transport and transit links and investment in regional energy infrastructure could greatly facilitate

### *Gender Equality and Economic Growth in the SPECA region*

Gender equality is an economic asset in establishing growth strategies for SPECA member countries, underlined the participants at the roundtable held during the recent SPECA Governing Council Meeting in Baku. The roundtable addressed the need for raising gender awareness of line economic ministries, discussed the use of the energy dividends for mobilizing women’s economic potential as well as synergies with the SPECA Network of Economic Research Institutes (SNERI).

The roundtable was hosted by the Azerbaijan Commission on Women, Family and Children Affairs. Two keynote speakers were Mr. Kim Hak-Su, UNESCAP Executive Secretary and Mr. Bolat Akchulakov, Deputy Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources of Kazakhstan. The participants represented national gender machineries, line economic ministries, private sector, and SNERI members.

This was the first initiative of the newly established Project Working Group on Gender and Economy. It was organized by UNECE in cooperation with UNESCAP. The Project Working Group will follow up on some of the issues discussed, such as organizing training for line economic ministries and establishing a Regional Centre in support of women’s entrepreneurship in the SPECA member countries.

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### *Did you know ...*

*Women’s share of the economically active population in Central Asia and South Caucasus in 2003 was between 45% in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, 48% in Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, and 49.5% in Armenia.*

### *SPECA Project Working Group on Gender and Economy*

A new Working Group on Gender and Economy was officially established by the SPECA Governing Council on 27 June 2006. Co-chaired by Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan and supported by UNECE and UNESCAP, its main purpose is to mainstream gender into economic policies and relevant areas of economic cooperation under SPECA.



*Hijran Huseynova*

“Establishing a Gender Working Group is very important for Azerbaijan as well as other member States. We are very pleased with the cooperation with UNECE and I am sure

that we will be able to achieve the set of goals through our joint collaboration,” concluded Ms. Hijran Huseynova, Head of the Commission on Women, Family and Children Affairs of Azerbaijan and newly elected PWG co-chair.

### *SNERI*

*Marek Belka and Kim Hak-Su, Executive Secretaries of the two UN regional commissions jointly supporting SPECA – UNECE and UNESCAP – inaugurated the SPECA Network of Economic Research Institutes (SNERI).*

*SNERI seeks to support economic development and regional cooperation in the SPECA region by empowering local organizations and individuals to produce high quality research to inform policy and business decision-making; promote internationally accepted standards of excellence and a culture of peer review in research; and foster research-to-business and research-to-policymakers communication.*

**From recommendations to actions ...**



Recommendations are a standard component of most of the policy documents in the UNECE, including the Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs). Whether they were followed up with any actions has not been a major preoccupation of the policymakers. A situation that is changing. Kaj Bärlund, Director of the UNECE Environment, Housing and Land Management Division, and the secretariat EPR Team went at the beginning of July to the Republic of Moldova to assist the environmental authorities in launching the second Environmental Performance Review of the country, with a view to reflecting the extent to which the recommendations of the 1998 EPR have been implemented and to encourage the country to tackle the new ones contained in the recently issued 2nd review.

Mr. Mihailescu, Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources (MoENR) of Moldova, who organized the event, made of it an opportunity to remind high officials



left to right: Kaj Bärlund, Constantin Mihailescu, Catherine Masson

of other ministries and representatives of the international community that environmental problems cannot be solved by one institution alone, and therefore cooperation and coordination were necessary. The Ministry is not only seeking their financial and technical help, but also looking for their commitment for a better environment by helping the MoENR in implementing the EPR recommendations.

Mr. Bärlund wished the Government of the Republic of Moldova further success in carrying out the tasks before it to meet its environmental objectives and policy, including implementation of the conclusions and recommendations contained in the 2nd EPR. The launch in Moldova is the second event of this kind, and is strongly encouraged by the Committee on Environmental Policy. The 2nd EPR of Belarus will be launched in next September.

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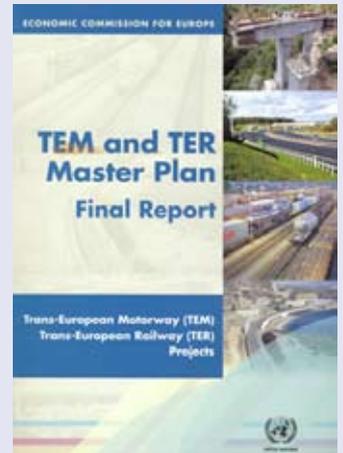
**Main transport infrastructure needs identified**

The TEM and TER Master Plan has been published, reflecting the priority transport infrastructure needs of 21 Central, Eastern, and South-Eastern European countries. It has identified the backbone road and rail networks in those countries and elaborated a realistic investment strategy to gradually develop these networks.

Funded by the TEM (Trans-European Motorways) and TER (Trans-European Rail) Projects' own budgets and a contribution from the International Road Transport Union, the Master Plan provides a useful tool and framework for intergovernmental cooperation towards the coordinated development of coherent international transport infrastructure networks in those countries, and their integration into the pan-European networks. Next steps will be the implementation of the Master Plan and its monitoring.

The TEM and TER Projects are subregional intergovernmental cooperation frameworks established in 1977 and 1990, respectively, under UN Trust Funds by the Governments of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern European countries without precedent in the history of European transport. They are working for the development of modern systems of motorways, railways and combined

transport infrastructure in the region and are committed to assisting European integration and economic development through the facilitation of road and railway traffic in Europe.

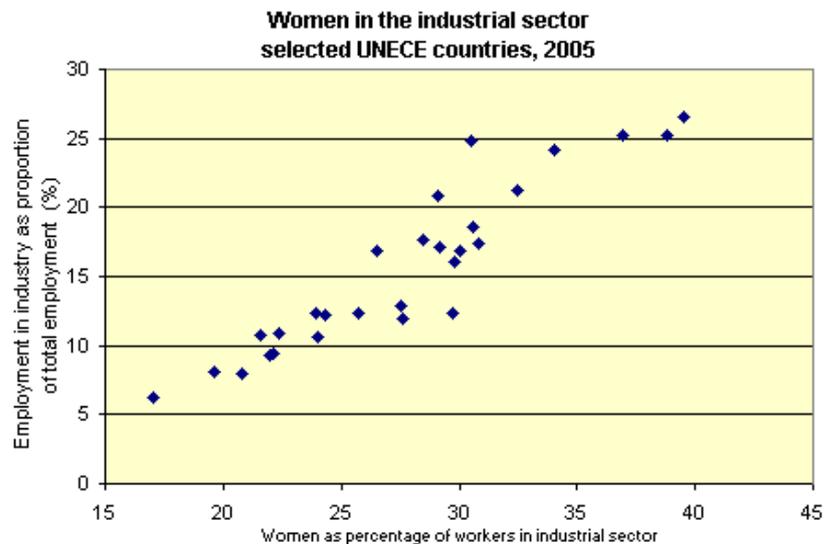


For the Final Report of the Master Plan visit: <http://www.unece.org/trans/main/temtermp/news.html>.

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**Facts and figures**

**Women in the industrial sector**



Source: UNECE Gender database.

As can be seen from the chart, in 2005, among 27 selected UNECE countries \*, women made up from 17% to 39.5% of industrial employment. This shows the diversity of women's involvement in the industrial sectors of these countries.

\*Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden