



United Nations

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## Training seminar on TIR

The UNECE secretariat, in cooperation with the TIR Executive Board, organized a capacity building training seminar on the approval and control of TIR vehicles at the Palais des Nations, on 24 September, attended by about 100 representatives from Customs authorities, ministries of transport and the transport industry.



The TIR Convention, administered by the UNECE and the International Road Transport Union, facilitates the movement of goods across as many borders as necessary with limited intervention by Customs authorities at intermediate borders. To this end operators use a commonly accepted Customs transit document – the TIR Carnet – which also serves as a guarantee for the Customs duties and taxes. The transport of goods under cover of a TIR Carnet is only allowed when using vehicles which have been approved as being in conformity with the technical standards stipulated by the TIR Convention.

Currently, the TIR Convention has 68 Contracting Parties and covers Europe, North America and several countries in South America. It also increasingly reaches out to countries in North Africa, the Middle East and Asia. In providing Customs and trade with a simple, yet effective and globally applicable transit system at a competitive price, the TIR Convention has become one of the most successful transport and transit systems in the world, creating a bridge between east and west, rich and poor. Annually, more than 3 million international transports are carried out by more than 40,000 transport operations using the TIR Convention.

During the full day seminar, participants were trained on how to properly interpret and apply the technical standards of construction and approval required under the TIR Convention. It has been emphasized that vehicles should be secure to ensure that the cargo shipped at departure is the cargo that arrives at the place of destination: it is neither lost on the way in transit, nor is new “cargo” is added. Examples of vehicles that do not comply with the relevant technical provisions were presented, and delegates received hands-on instruction on how to check vehicles and loading units for compliance.

## Trade Rules, Regulations and Standards

The Committee on Trade is organising a Symposium on “Trade Rules, Regulations and Standards: Different levels of rulemaking and their impact”, which will be held in conference room XII, Palais des Nations, in Geneva on 23 October.

The Symposium will discuss:

- How can developing countries and countries with economies in transition successfully adapt international standards to their own development needs?
- How can consistency between regional and international standards be promoted?
- How is the European Union’s “new approach” helping improve competitiveness?
- How can technical cooperation help improve the regulatory framework for trade in developing and transition economies?

This Symposium fits into the UNECE activities on regulatory cooperation and is also part of the follow-up to the seminar on “International standards in the multilateral trading system: views from the civil society and business”, which was organized by the UNECE as part of the WTO Public Symposium in 2006.

To register please contact Poppy Willard ([poppy.willard@unece.org](mailto:poppy.willard@unece.org)).

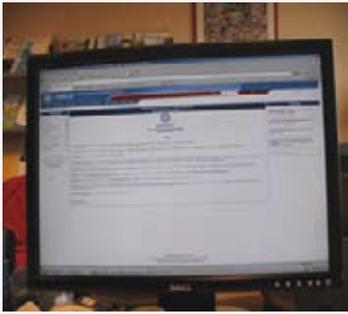
The danger of using non-compliant vehicles and containers was highlighted as a potential source of great damage to the TIR system.

The seminar called on competent national authorities to recognize the importance of technical approval and inspection and to verify and further improve their existing national standards of technical approval and inspection of TIR vehicles. Extensive staff training, by the competent technical authorities and Customs, to correctly apply the TIR Convention, was considered a priority.

For more information visit <http://www.unece.org/trans/bcf/tir/welcome.html> or contact Eva Molnar ([eva.molnar@unece.org](mailto:eva.molnar@unece.org)) or Robert Nowak ([robert.nowak@unece.org](mailto:robert.nowak@unece.org)).

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## International Experts commend innovative IPR policy\*



On 26 September, a panel of recognized Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) lawyers and standards specialists addressed a Special Session on Intellectual Property Rights held by the UN Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) during its 11th Forum in Stockholm.

This session looked at the approaches to IPR taken by a range of information technology (IT) related standards organizations, with an emphasis on the approach taken by UN/CEFACT.

An important conclusion was that the IPR Policy of UN/CEFACT provides an innovative and effective solution within the standards development context. A number of speakers noted that the policy provides significantly better protection mechanisms for users and standards development than

most of the IPR policies implemented in other IT standards organizations.

The innovative nature of UN/CEFACT's IPR policy can be attributed to the need for it to work within the context of the United Nations. The policy was developed after a review of other available IPR policies and was adopted in June 2006. Because the UN/CEFACT IPR policy is both innovative and relatively new, it was agreed that a newly created IPR Task Team would review ways to strengthen the IPR framework, which is composed of the IPR policy itself, related codes of conduct, procedures and processes.

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Website: <http://www.unece.org/cefact/>.

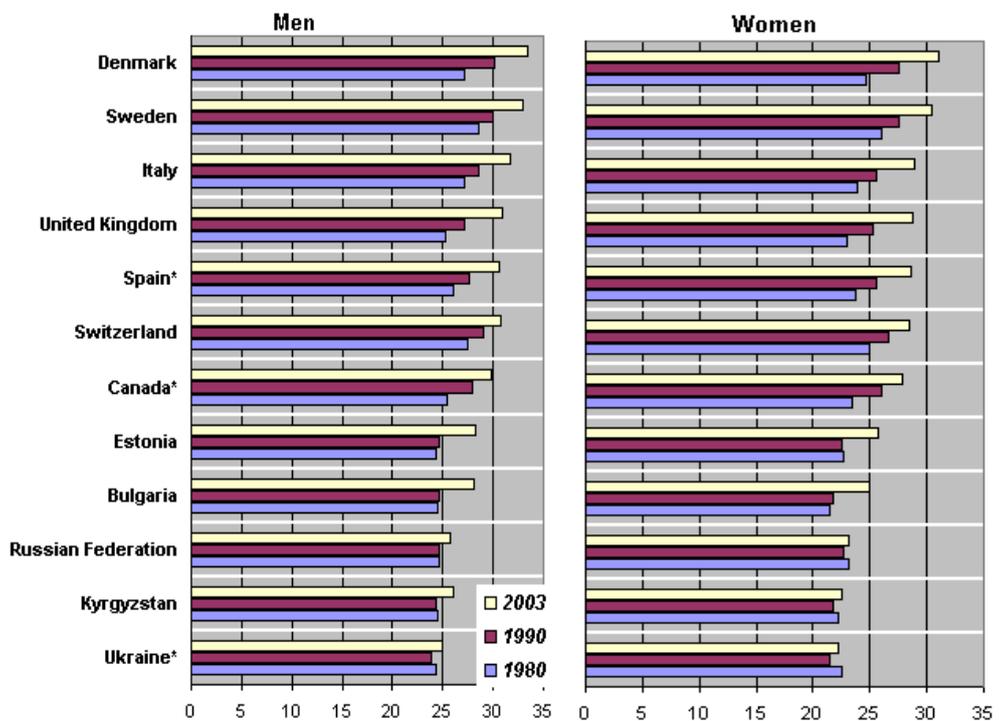
\* Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) policy for UN/CEFACT defines the rights of participants in the standards development process when they contribute Intellectual Property (IP) to a particular standard (or other output, such as guidelines) as well as the rights of users when they implement outputs containing this contributed IP.

## Facts and Figures

### Women and men get married later in most UNECE countries

Over the last few decades a tendency to postpone marriage has become more and more apparent in the UNECE region. In Northern and Western Europe, the mean age at first marriage of both women and men increased by about five years between 1980 and 2003. In fact, currently the Nordic countries are those where women and men get married latest, on average at around 31 and 33 years of age respectively. In Eastern Europe, women and men started postponing their first marriage only after 1990. By contrast, in CIS countries, the mean age at first marriage has not increased significantly in the last decades, remaining at around 22-23 years for women and 25-26 years for men.

The postponement of marriages is – together with the decline of marriage rates (see UNECE Weekly № 230) – one of the aspects of the important changes in family formation patterns experienced in many UNECE countries. Among the possible factors are the increasing time spent in education, the will to establish a career (particularly for women) and obtain financial security before creating a family.



Source: UNECE Gender statistics database ([www.unece.org/stats/data](http://www.unece.org/stats/data)) and Eurostat.

\* Data refer to 2002 instead of 2003.