



UNECE Weekly

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Future of economic cooperation in South-East Europe

Have we reached the end of partition and transition in the Balkans? Has the region embarked on the promised road to regional cooperation, integration and full EU enlargement? What is the role of the United Nations and UNECE as a pan-European organization?

These and other related questions will be addressed at a presentation in Sofia on 26 February by Goran Svilanović, Chair of Working Table I of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and former Serbian Foreign Minister.

Discussants will include UNECE Executive Secretary Marek Belka, Bulgarian Foreign Minister Ivaylo Kalfin, political analyst Ivan Krastev, and others.

The event is being held on the eve of the final meeting of the Stability Pact and the establishment of the Regional Cooperation Council, a regionally owned organization with its secretariat in Sarajevo.



Members of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe

Great potential

Mr. Svilanović is convinced of the great potential of the Balkans. A communication, transportation and energy hub, bordering the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, it is a gateway to Russia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Middle East, regions that are growing in geopolitical importance.

As Europe's most dynamic subregion, in 2007 it boasted 5.7% growth in real gross domestic product (EU average was just 2.9%). In the same year its net foreign direct investment



South-East European Cooperation Process Member States

inflows for the first time exceeded those to Central Europe and the Baltic States.

Nevertheless, fast economic growth implies certain risks. Strong domestic demand leads to wider external imbalances and vulnerability to economic shocks, for example due to the fragile housing market. Rising unit labour costs and fiscal loosening in 2007 have created risks of inflation and falling international competitiveness. Political risks to internal and regional stability are also evident.

Mr. Svilanović recommends that the United Nations keeps on providing support to the economic cooperation and stabilization of the region; and that the EU relies on the work of the United Nations in this subregion.



Users appreciate expanded UNECE statistical database

Monthly data downloads from the UNECE statistical database more than doubled during 2007, confirming the growing public interest in our data. Last autumn the database expanded to include transport statistics, and regular updates constantly extend time series for all topics. The database (www.unece.org/stats/data) is available free of charge via English and Russian interfaces, and covers all countries within the UNECE region. The Russian interface is unique for this sort of database, and is greatly appreciated by users in the eastern part of the region.

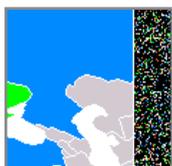
Country data at a glance

The database includes a new "Country Overview" section, which offers users a choice of around 50 key economic, social and transport indicators for each UNECE member country, as well as easy cross-country comparisons. More detailed data are grouped into three main topics:

- Economic statistics – including national accounts, employment, price, production and balance of payments data
- Gender statistics – a range of social and socio-economic data with separate figures for men and women wherever possible



Not an official record - For information only



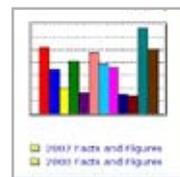
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He suggests areas and mechanisms for enhanced cooperation between the Regional Cooperation Council and UNECE. As a politically neutral expert organization that sets norms, standards and recommendations to promote cooperation, UNECE can offer valuable and concrete help to the South-East European countries.

UNECE should explore possibilities for continuous support in trade, transit and border-crossing facilitation, e-business, energy security, environmental protection, sustainable development of the timber sector, and public-private partnerships.

It was UNECE that provided the expertise for the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative after the Dayton Accords in 1995.

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- Transport statistics – data on road safety, transport by road, rail, water and pipelines, and transport infrastructures

A flexible interface allows users to select data for one or more countries, indicators or periods. The results can be displayed on screen, or downloaded in various formats for further processing.

User survey

A user survey during autumn 2007 indicated that the most sought after data were economic indicators (59% of respondents), followed by population (54%), employment (50%) and National Accounts (49%).

The survey also generated useful suggestions for enhancements, which will be included in the quality improvement plan, and implemented during 2008.

Database
www.unece.org/stats/data

Ratifications ... Accessions ...

Protocol to the Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR), of 5 July 1978

Accession: **Slovakia** (20 February 2008)



ADN

European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ADN), of 26 May 2000

Ratification: **Germany** (31 January 2008) and **Moldova** (19 February 2008)

Entry into force: **29 February 2008**

European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and related Installations (AGTC), of 1 February 1991

Accession: **Lithuania** (8 February 2008)

Facts and Figures

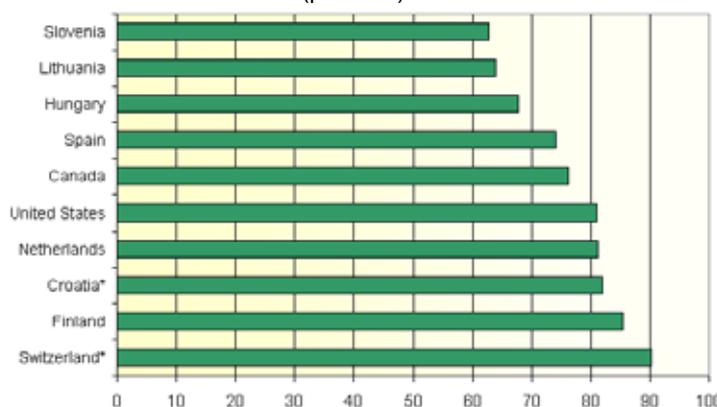
Lethal violence is known as a predominantly male phenomenon on both the perpetrator and victim count. In the UNECE countries, where the homicide incidence currently ranges from one to more than ten persons per 100,000 population, on average three out of four homicide victims were males in the last several years.

But marital homicide, which accounts for 3% to 30% of total homicides in the sample of countries (with a median value of 11%), stands somewhat apart: in these cases the highest toll is paid by women, as the chart attests. In 2004-2006, in half the countries under consideration, eight out of ten victims of marital homicide were women, and in the rest, the proportion was from above six to above seven out of ten.

It is worth noting, however, that over the last several years the incidences of marital homicide have been gradually declining in the UNECE region, with the homicide rate for women declining faster than that for men.

Marital violence leads to more homicide victims among women

Share of women victims of marital homicides in 2004-2006 (per cent)



Source: UNECE, compiled from national statistics.

* For Croatia, data refer to 2006 only, and for Switzerland, to the average of 2002-2004.