



United Nations

# UNECE Weekly

Economic Commission for Europe

Issue N° 313 — 30 March-3 April 2009

## **International workshop on commercial quality standards for fresh fruit and vegetables for countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Africa**

**Nairobi, 21-24 April**

The main purpose of the workshop, organized by UNECE and the Kenya Plant Inspectorate Service, is to encourage growers in Eastern and South-Eastern Africa to apply the UNECE international commercial standards. It will also help producers and traders understand what requirements have to be met if they want to export their produce to developed markets. It will explain what legal and technical infrastructure is needed for using the standards.

The event will bring together government agencies, research institutes, producer associations, traders and growers from some 15 countries to exchange experiences and technical knowledge.

This is the third in a series of UNECE activities for development, financed from the United Nations Development Account. The next workshop is planned to take place in Kyrgyzstan. ✪

For more information visit <http://www.unece.org/trade/agr/> or contact Serguei Malanitchev ([agrstandards@unece.org](mailto:agrstandards@unece.org)).



## **Workshop on experiences with data management to improve land administration in UNECE countries**

**Sofia, 23-24 April**

Data management is a key aspect for the modernization of land administration systems in the UNECE region and it is particularly crucial for economies in transition, where the technical infrastructure is still being developed. Improved data management facilitates the everyday operations of cadastre and registration agencies, thus contributing to guaranteeing secure access to land and housing for citizens.

In many countries of Eastern Europe, South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia the establishment of reliable data infrastructure poses a series of technical, legal, financial and administrative challenges to public authorities.

The UNECE Working Party on Land Administration promotes sound land registration and cadastre data management to support security of tenure. Over the past years it has sought to evaluate the different policies implemented by member States to upgrade their surveying and data maintenance capacities, including the harmonization of national databases and the introduction of e-technologies and e-government services.

The workshop on “Experiences with data management to improve land administration in UNECE countries” will address specific challenges and opportunities related to data management. It will discuss policy guidance and develop advice on how to upgrade land administration systems through improved spatial data infrastructure.

The workshop will also review a plan to reform the cadastre and registration systems in Bulgaria, as lessons learned there are relevant for other countries in transition. New practices and technological applications for the establishment and maintenance of land administration data will also be discussed.



Other issues to be addressed include the roles of state and private actors in the funding of information maintenance and obstacles and benefits of public access to information on land and real estate assets. ✪

For more information visit <http://www.cadastre.bg/RegForm.html> or contact Ariel Ivanier ([ariel.ivanier@unece.org](mailto:ariel.ivanier@unece.org)).

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## OFF THE PRESS

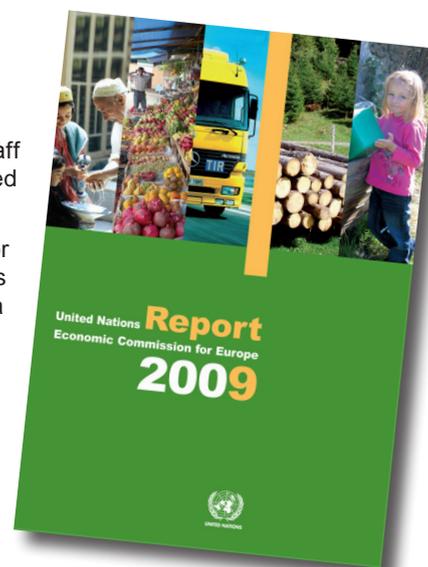
## Annual Report 2009

The first section of the annual report for 2009 is a collection of essays written by UNECE staff with the aim of facilitating a greater appreciation and knowledge of the technical work carried out by the organization.

The first six deal with the issue of climate change or global warming; it will have a major impact on our way of life, the economic structure of economies and of course the activities of UNECE. Four additional essays reflect the breadth of interests of UNECE; these include a discussion of the Aid for Trade initiative, a look at the Mediterranean region along the southern border of the European member States, an exploration of whether there is a role for UNECE in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and an essay on the rapid developments on the Internet regarding blogs, wikis and social networking and how these are related to the needs of statistical agencies.

The second part of the report provides an overview of the activities carried out during the last 12 months by UNECE in its various areas of work and technical programmes. \*

The report is available from the information Unit ([info.ece@unece.org](mailto:info.ece@unece.org)).



## Latest transport ratifications/accessions

Andorra acceded to the European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR). The Agreement will enter into force for Andorra on 9 April 2009, bringing the total number of contracting parties to 45. It also acceded to the Protocol of 1993 amending articles 1(a), 14(1) and 14(3) of the ADR, bringing the number of contracting parties to 33.

Tunisia acceded to the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972 (the Convention will enter into force for Tunisia on 11 September 2009, bringing the total number of contracting parties to 38) and

the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (the Convention will enter into force for Tunisia on 11 June 2009, bringing the total number of contracting parties to 54).

Croatia ratified the European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterway (ADN). The Agreement will enter into force for Croatia on 4 April 2009, bringing the total number of contracting parties to 11. \*

## FACTS AND FIGURES

### EU countries are more integrated in the global trade

Over the recent decades global trade has increased relative to world GDP, but the current economic crisis is about to reverse this trend. According to the World Trade Organization, global trade will suffer a 9% decline in 2009, led by even steeper falls in trade of developed economies, most of them UNECE members. The forecast is for trade to shrink much faster than GDP in the short- to medium-term due partly to the internationally highly-integrated nature of production.

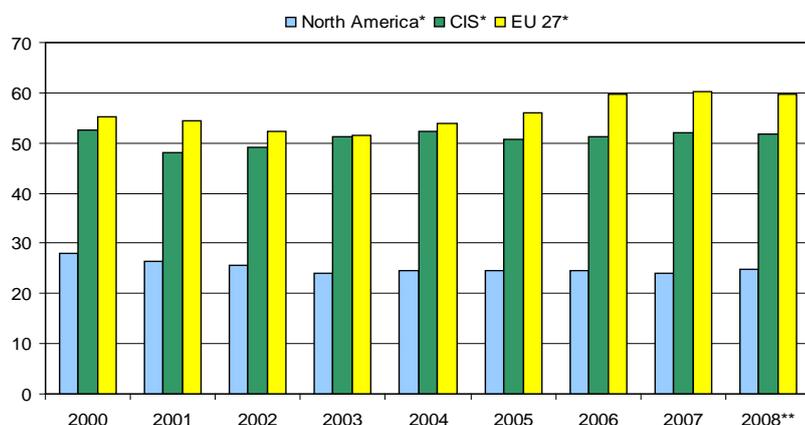
One widely used measure of integration into the world economy is the share in GDP of the average value of exports and imports of goods and services. Counting the ten most internationally integrated countries among its members,

the European Union is ahead of major UNECE subregions on this measure.

In 2003, the CIS region almost reached the EU's level, due in part to high imports to meet the rising needs of investment and consumption. But after 2003 all EU countries except Denmark, Ireland and Romania further increased their level of integration, whereas among the CIS countries only Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan did so.

Canada and especially the United States are clearly less integrated into the international trade than the EU and CIS countries. The United States is the world's largest single economy, and its huge domestic market and natural resources reduce the need for international trade. \*

Average value of exports and imports in GDP (%)



Source: UNECE Statistical Database (<http://www.unece.org/stats/data>) and national statistics.

\* Average of countries in the country group. In the CIS group no data are available for Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

\*\* In the absence of data for 2008, data for January-September were used for some countries.

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