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BEIJING +15 — SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES REMAIN

On 2-3 November, the Beijing+15 Regional Review Meeting on [“New Challenges and Opportunities for Gender Equality in the ECE Region: Key Issues and Policy Responses”](#) brought together over 350 representatives, including at ministerial level, from the 56 UNECE member States as well as from NGOs and international organizations, to review the progress made during the past years in implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action for the advancement of women.

“The UNECE region is diverse – diverse but united”, said Ján Kubiš, UNECE Executive Secretary during his introductory remarks to the regional review. “United in the common commitment to advancing women and promoting gender equality as reflected in the Beijing Platform for Action adopted in 1995. Diverse in the variety of historical, political and economic contexts in which this Platform is being implemented.”



Ján Kubiš, UNECE Executive Secretary, and Jolanta Fedak, Polish Minister of Labour and Social Affairs

This review, which takes place every five years, showed that while some progress has been achieved, especially regarding the criminalization of violence against women, significant challenges remain in all countries and areas of concern, notably with respect to the implementation of existing legislation.

On the eve of the 30th anniversary of CEDAW (*Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*), UNECE member States renewed their commitment to the eradication of all forms of discrimination against women and girls that restrict their full participation in development processes. Participants emphasized that the achievement of gender equality is an essential condition for sustainable economic growth, and reaffirmed the centrality of gender equality for the universal achievement of all MDGs. In this context, conference participants welcomed the forthcoming UN gender entity and called for its prompt establishment at both international and country level.

As a side event to the conference, UNECE staff members working on gender in different divisions jointly gave a comprehensive overview of the work of UNECE in gender. The presentation was introduced and led by Malinka Koparanova, the new gender focal point. ■

For more information contact Malinka Koparanova (gender@unece.org)

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO ENERGY EFFICIENCY INVESTMENTS



A [Workshop on case studies on overcoming barriers to investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy projects through policy reforms](#) will be held in Kiev, 10-11 November, organized under the Financing Energy Efficiency Investments for Climate Change Mitigation Project in which 12 countries participate.*

This is a follow-up to the [Seminar on policy reforms to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy investments](#), held in October 2009, during which information was exchanged on the status of energy efficiency and renewable energy legislation, and the existing barriers to financing energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

The Workshop in Kiev will explore, using the example of case studies, how some participating countries have overcome legislative barriers and how the adoption of specific reforms in these and neighbouring countries have made potentially economically viable energy efficiency or renewable energy projects attractive to investors.

The Workshop is being organized in cooperation with the Agency for Rational Energy Use and Ecology (ARENA-ECO), National Participating Institution in Ukraine, and Pöyry Energy Consulting AG, which is carrying out a regional analysis of policy reforms to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy investments for the Project. ■

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* Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kazakhstan, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Ukraine

POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS — 2010 CENSUS ROUND

Population and housing censuses are usually the biggest statistical collection a country undertakes. Having accurate population estimates is vital for many strategic and policy initiatives. Nearly all countries in the UNECE region conduct a census every 10 years and, for most, the census date will be during 2011.

Planning for the next round of population censuses is well advanced, so the meeting of the joint UNECE-Eurostat Group of Experts on Population and Housing Censuses on 28-30 October was particularly timely: 41 countries across the UNECE region came together with experts from international organizations to share experiences on progress with their censuses. Most countries are taking seriously their obligations to comply with the *Conference of European Statisticians recommendations for the 2010 censuses of population and housing*.

One of the most difficult groups to measure in a population census is the “homeless” since they do not live in traditional households. Countries shared experiences of the special arrangements they are making to ensure that this group is counted.

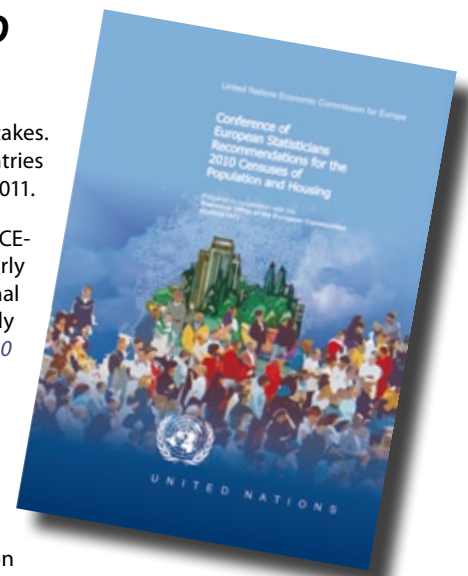
Many countries are introducing innovative collection methods for the 2010 census round with the aim of reducing costs and improving quality. The use of the internet for online census collection will be far more extensive than in the past. Testing has shown that in many countries a significant proportion of the population will complete census information on line.

In past censuses, Nordic countries and a few others have used registers to obtain census information. Many more countries are looking to use registers to assist in their next population census.

In spite of all the changes, the traditional census method where respondents complete a census form, either by self enumeration or with the assistance of an interviewer, still remains the most common form of census collection. ■

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Meeting documents are available at: <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2009.10.census.htm>.



Available in English, French and Russian at <http://www.unece.org/stats/archive/01.01a.e.htm>.

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UNECE TRANSPORT CONVENTIONS IN TAJIKISTAN

A workshop was organized on 21 October in Dushanbe by USAID (United States Agency for International Development) and the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Tajikistan, dedicated to the role of UNECE Transportation Conventions in the Development of the Tajik Transportation Sector.

The workshop was attended by senior government officials as well as by stakeholders from the transport sector of Tajikistan and was opened by the newly appointed Minister of Transport, Olimjon Boboev.

Participants were acquainted with the most relevant aspects of the 57 international transport conventions and agreements managed by UNECE. An outcome of the extensive introductions and lively discussions was agreement on a resolution underlining the importance of UNECE Conventions for the development of international transport throughout the Central Asian region and participants recommended to the Tajik authorities to accede as soon as possible to the following conventions:



Olimjon Boboev, Minister of Transport of Tajikistan

- ▶ *European Agreement concerning the Work of Crews of Vehicles engaged in international Road Transport (AETR), 1970*
- ▶ *Agreement concerning the Establishing of Global Technical Regulations for Wheeled Vehicles, equipment and parts which can be fitted and/or be used on wheeled vehicles, 1998*
- ▶ *International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Control of Goods, 1982*
- ▶ *Agreement on the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs and on the Special Equipment to be used for such carriage (ATP), 1970*
- ▶ *European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), 1957*

The workshop profited from the attendance of representatives from the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Kazakhstan, who shared their experience in the implementation of several of these conventions.

Part of the workshop was also dedicated to the implementation of the [TIR Convention, 1975](#), in Tajikistan and its neighbouring countries. The main TIR issues explored included the role of the guarantee, the increased requirement by Customs to use escorts, the recent economic crisis and its impact on the development of the TIR system, the introduction of computerization and some recurring problems in specific countries.

Overall positive feedback and good cooperation indicated that the workshop will be repeated in other countries of the region. ■

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