

Trade Solutions



Towards a port community system in the Odessa region

UNECE organized a seminar on trade facilitation, with special focus on the establishment of a Port Community System (Single Window) in the ports of the Odessa region on 30 May 2012 in Odessa.

The seminar, organized in cooperation with PLASKE JSC, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine and the National Institute for Strategic Studies, also discussed the development of links between the ports of the Odessa region and trade transport corridors leading to Central, Eastern and Northern Europe.

With the assistance of the European Association of Port Community Systems (EAPCS), the seminar built on the experience of the most developed European ports in the implementation of the Single Window principle, including through a Public-Private Partnership.

Following the first UNECE seminar in Odessa on 1 June 2011, an interagency Working Group had been established to support the Odessa project. The Prime Minister of Ukraine confirmed his Government's will to support this project.

The key objectives of the Seminar were to:

- raise awareness about new concepts, tools and best practices from European countries in the context of transit development and applications of the Single Window concept;
- review the developments in Ukraine with regard to the concept of a "local Single Window" in Odessa for export, import and transit clearance after the first UNECE seminar on 1 June 2011;
- examine the ideas of introducing the electronic CIM/SMGS consignment note in the context of a Port Community System (Single Window).

Trade facilitation has moved to the centre stage in Ukraine, in the context of the country's integration into the European and world markets. Ukraine urgently needs improvement in its logistics for trade and transport, and Odessa is well placed to give a good example with an advanced pilot project. Fostering economic growth through trade facilitation measures, notably by making use of the Single Window concept, is a way to enhance the competitive potential of Ukrainian businesses.

The outcomes and recommendations from the seminar include:

- The creation of a joint enterprise by the Port of Odessa and PLASKE JSC, to develop a port community system.
- The introduction in the new Customs Code (which entered into force on 1 June 2012) of an article (art. 319) relating to the implementation of documentary control on the basis of the Single Window principle. Mr Leonid Muromtsev, Head of Department of Non-tariff Regulation, Ukrainian Customs, stressed at the seminar that this was the result of the fruitful cooperation between his organization, the business community and UNECE.
- An updated plan for the next steps in implementing a local Single Window in the ports of the Odessa region – notably, renewed correspondence with the Prime Minister to ensure political support; analyses of possible changes in the fields of business processes, legal background, data exchange, etc.
- Recommendations on the trade facilitation measures, international and pan-European standards for data exchange, and the electronic business tools that should be implemented, in order to create an enabling environment for an operational Single Window for export, import and transit clearance. □

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Innovation



UNECE signs Memorandum with the National Agency for Technological Development of Kazakhstan

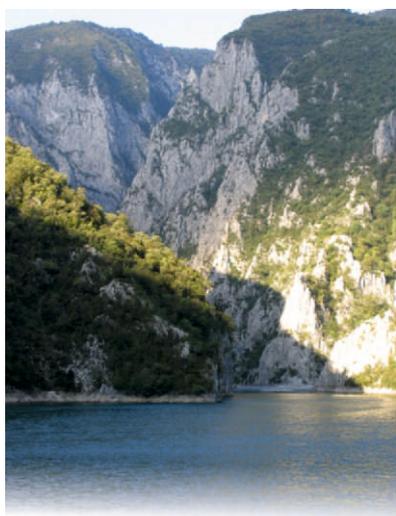
Following the completion of the Innovation Performance Review of Kazakhstan, UNECE has concluded a Memorandum with the main partner in the realization of this project, the National Agency for Technological Development. The signature of the agreement took place as part of the V Astana Economic Forum (23-24 May 2012), where the Director of the Economic Cooperation and Integration Division, Mr. Rumen Dobrinsky, presented the final English version of the Review.

The Review considered possible policy actions aimed at stimulating innovation activity in the country, enhancing its innovation capacity and improving the efficiency of the national

innovation system. This participatory policy advisory project highlighted important achievements accomplished by Kazakhstan in the area of innovation but it also identified areas where there exists a potential to raise the efficiency of the innovation process.

The Memorandum acknowledges that the implementation of the recommendations of the Review would contribute to an accelerated and more intensive innovation performance in the country. It envisages different forms of future cooperation between both organizations to support the implementation of these recommendations, including consultations in the preparation of new legal, regulatory and policy documents and the organization of specialized seminars and training sessions. □

Water Convention



UNECE supports international cooperation on Drin River Basin to prevent floods and protect waters

With the support of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean, the first meeting of the Drin Core Group took place on 30 May 2012 in Ohrid, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. This was the first meeting of the Core Group as the official joint body according to the memorandum of understanding signed on 25 November 2011 in Tirana by the five Drin River Riparians — Albania, Greece, Kosovo (United Nations administered region under security council resolution 1244), Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The representatives discussed and agreed on joint actions for the period 2012-2014, including improving access to comprehensive data and adequate information, developing cooperation and measures to minimize flooding and coordinating activities related to water management in the accession to the European Union.

The memorandum of understanding guiding the work of the Core Group outlines a Shared Strategic Vision for the Sustainable Management of the Drin River Basin to protect the shared resources of about 1.5 million people relying on the basin for drinking water, agriculture, fisheries, industry and hydropower. Recent floods, in particular, have highlighted the need for such closer transboundary cooperation.

UNECE support for the Core Group is carried out within the framework of the Drin Dialogue, a joint project of the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and the Environment and Security Partnership (ENVSEC), set up to support the establishment of cooperation to deal with the competing interests and challenges facing Riparians. □

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Water Resources



UNECE prepares to launch the National Policy Dialogue on water in Kazakhstan

A joint UNECE-OECD preparatory mission to Kazakhstan took place on 24-26 May 2012 to discuss the launch of the National Policy Dialogue (NPD) in this country.

NPDs on integrated water resources management (IWRM) and water supply and sanitation (WSS) are the main operational instruments of the EU Water Initiative in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. UNECE is the strategic partner to support the policy dialogues on IWRM, whereas OECD is the strategic partner for WSS and financial aspects of IWRM.

UNECE-led NPDs on IWRM are currently implemented in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Ukraine. The second phase of the EU Water Initiative (2012-2015) includes Kazakhstan in the list of participating countries.

Bilateral meetings were held with the Ministry of Environment, the Committee of Water Resources under the Ministry of Agriculture, the Sanitary-Epidemiological Service of the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economic Development, Kazhydromet, the Anti-Monopoly Agency, Center for Public-Private Partnership and EU Delegation in Kazakhstan.

Possible themes for the future NPD were identified. One of the key topics is water and health, including the issues of rural water supply and sanitation and equitable access/affordability, monitoring of water quality, methodologies to assess the links between water quality and diseases, and business models for water supply and sanitation. Another area is the Ural River basin, where the NPD could facilitate the strengthening of cooperation with the Russian Federation. Also, public-private partnerships on water supply and sanitation emerged as a possible focus.

The final decision on the thematic priorities of the NPD will be taken by a joint meeting of interested ministries and agencies in summer 2012. □

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