

Sustainable Development



UNECE participated in 7th European Conference on Sustainable Cities and Town

UNECE Executive Secretary Sven Alkalaj delivered a speech at the Mayors' Session of the 7th European Conference on Sustainable Cities and Towns, on 17 April in Geneva. In [his address](#), he stressed that local governments continue to feel the consequences of the financial and economic crisis of 2008 in the form of declining revenues, rising expenditures and shrinking financial capabilities.

As a result, and as shown in the survey recently conducted by UNECE, a trend towards privatizing services previously considered as public has been emerging. New models for financing public services, such as through Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), should therefore prioritize sustainable and inclusive economic growth and the mitigation of Greenhouse gas emissions.

The UNECE International PPP Centre of Excellence promotes PPP in green municipal projects in areas such as waste-to-energy, street lighting and energy efficient public buildings, as well as in areas such as education, healthcare, telecommunications and transport.

The UNECE report [Climate Neutral Cities](#) published in 2012 provides practical insight on how to make cities less energy and carbon intensive and more resilient to climatic challenges.

The Executive Secretary said that the outcomes of the conference will provide valuable input to the UNECE Strategy on Sustainable Housing and Land Management for 2014-2020 to be presented at the 74th session of its Committee on Housing and Land Management. This session will take place back-to-back to the Ministerial Meeting on Housing and Land Management from 7 to 9 October 2013 in Geneva.

The secretariat of the Aarhus Convention also participated in the session "Local relevance of human rights: implementation, compliance and enforcements". The secretariat's presentation showcased how the Convention and its PRTR Protocol can help authorities and businesses manage planning, construction and maintenance sustainably, while helping the public exercise effectively their rights to information, public participation and access to justice in these areas. Participants also discussed ways in which cities can act as laboratories for global human rights legal instruments. □

For more information, please visit: <http://www.sustainablegeneva2013.org/>.

Road Safety

UNECE to commemorate 2013 United Nations Global Road Safety Week

To commemorate the United Nations Road Safety Week (6-12 May 2013), UNECE and key partners are organizing a series of events at the Palais des Nations in Geneva on 6 and 7 May 2013.



The key events will include:

- a **symposium on regional perspectives on drinking and driving** organized by UNECE and the International Center for Alcohol Policies, which will gather experts from Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East to discuss the main issues influencing alcohol-related accidents involving pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists.
- an **interactive youth and young leaders session "Scouting for Global Road Safety"** organized in partnership with the World Organization of the Scout Movement, the Hellenic Road Safety Institute "Panos Mylonas" and Scouting Ireland, which will give young leaders from the Rover Scouts Programme an opportunity to participate in an interactive lecture by Professor Claes Tingvall, one of the creators of Sweden's "Vision Zero" concept.
- a **roundtable to celebrate the 2013 International Level Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD) on 7 May**, which will emphasize the importance of road safety at level crossings, in cooperation with the International Union of Railways.
- a **discussion forum on insurance and road safety focusing on victims' rights**, organized in cooperation with the Council of Bureaux, the key international organization handling and settling claims arising from accidents caused by visiting motorists.

Side events will include two poster signing ceremonies, an exhibition showcasing the top entries from an international drawing contest on safety at level crossings, and testing for driver fatigue using top-of-the-line equipment.

Commenting on the programme, UNECE Executive Secretary Sven Alkalaj said: "Many UNECE member States continue to make good progress in addressing road safety as

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reflected in declining or stabilized low numbers of road fatalities at the national level. However, road safety is a timeless message that needs to be raised continuously and reaffirmed to everyone in society, be they part of the younger generation, experienced decision makers in government, or retirees. It is also important that member States around the world that have not yet done so consider becoming contracting parties to the UN road safety-related legal instruments such as the 1968 Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals." □

The programme of the various events as well as registration details may be obtained at: http://www.unece.org/trans/roadsafe/2nd_grs_week/programme.html

For further information, please contact Robert Novak at: robert.nowak@unece.org.

Statistics

With production going global, how can we compile reliable economic statistics?

As production grows more global and fragmented, statisticians need new knowledge on how to compile economic statistics. They also need to review the methods applied by national statistical offices and international organizations. To help them do so, UNECE has set up a special Task Force on Global Production.

The Task Force is developing a Guide on Global Production with conceptual and practical guidance to help countries produce statistics that better reflect today's economic realities. Meeting recently in Geneva, the UNECE Group of Experts on National Accounts reviewed the draft Guide. In addition to the UNECE members, other countries such as China, Chile, India, Mexico and Republic of Korea, which play an important role in global value chains, participated in the meeting.

The Guide, to be issued soon, will deal with specialized topics. These include a typology of global production arrangements; guidance on defining economic ownership in the production chains; and economic ownership of Intellectual Property Products (IPP) inside multinational enterprise groups.

The publication will also examine how to measure goods for processing, transit trade and merchanting in global production chains, including how to identify and measure inventories held abroad.

The work of the Task Force will be an important contribution to implementing the new international standard, the 2008 System of National Accounts. □

For further information, please contact Tihomira Dimova at: tihomira.dimova@unece.org.

UN/CEFACT

UN/CEFACT to step up global tracking of food products for increased food safety

From 15 to 19 April 2013, the 21st UN/CEFACT Forum took place in Geneva – this is a large meeting of experts from around the world that works within the global remit of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT), which is an intergovernmental body of the UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe).

Over 140 business and technology experts attended. They came from both the public and private sectors, from more than 20 UN Member States as well as from a range of intergovernmental and international organizations. In addition, a large number of experts, located around the globe, participated and contributed through teleconferencing.

Efforts focused on business processes both for governments and for the private sector in electronic business and trade facilitation. A special session of the Forum was dedicated to exchanging information and knowledge with the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) in order to better understand the needs of CIS Countries.

Experts contributed their skills and experience to work in a wide range of domains including: accounting/audit; agriculture; customs; finance/payments; government; insurance; international trade procedures; procurement; supply-chain management; transport; and logistics. A large number of highly cross-sectoral standards and projects were also developed and maintained during the Forum, for example: UN/EDIFACT (United Nations Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport); the Core Component Library; the Cross-industry invoice; e-Tendering; and Contract Financial Execution Management.

Consumers and governments expressed strong demands for work concerning food safety. In a complex agricultural supply chain, these food safety demands require accurate tracking and tracing systems as well as good product information. UN/CEFACT is addressing these concerns through a number of projects. UN/CEFACT standards are already being increasingly used in the agricultural sector. For example, eCertification (eCert) for agricultural products has already been adopted by 42 countries.

The Forum also made progress on current projects and plans for future developments (i.e. public-private partnership and consultation models), as well as in the maintenance of existing recommendations and standards, including the ongoing revision of the UN/CEFACT Recommendations on the authentication of trade documents by means other than signature and on Single Window Interoperability. □

Further Information on UNCEFACT may be found at: <http://www.uncefact.org> and on YouTube at: <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLA638E5AF42216CFD>.

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