

Espoo Convention

Energy issues to be at the centre of debates of the meeting of the Parties to UNECE Treaties on Environmental Assessment in June



Over 150 Government officials, representatives of international organizations, international financial institutions (IFIs), civil society, academia and other stakeholders from some 50 countries will meet in Geneva from 2 to 5 June to take stock of progress made in implementing environmental assessment procedures within the UNECE region and beyond. Such assessments are key for Governments and the public alike to ensure that projects, plans and programmes that affect the environment are developed in a most sustainable manner.

During four days of meetings, Parties to the UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will look, among other things, at how the Convention and the Protocol contribute to sustainable energy generation and use, how they can facilitate accession by countries outside the region and what role the IFIs can play in raising awareness about and increasing the implementation of the two instruments.

Aside from providing the platform for decisions on priorities and the budget for the next three years, the meeting will have three special thematic sessions in the form of seminars or a panel discussion.

On the afternoon of Tuesday, 3 June, a **seminar on wind and hydro energy** will look at good practice in the application of the Convention and the Protocol and will examine issues of landscape analysis, spatial planning and environmental challenges in the framework of environmental assessment for such activities and plans.

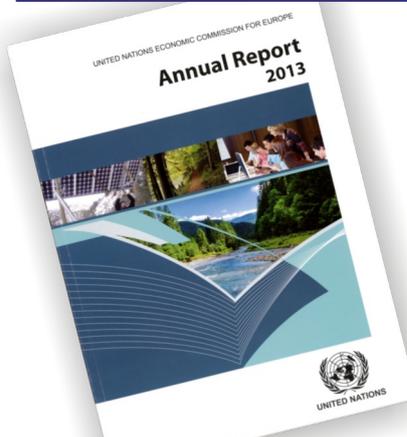
On the afternoon of Wednesday, 4 June, a **seminar on the globalization of the Convention and the Protocol and the role of international financial institutions** will be held, moderated by the European Investment Bank (EIB), to discuss the application of the Convention and the Protocol outside the UNECE region. The seminar aims to provide some insights regarding interested countries' practice and development needs for their possible future accession to the two instruments. Participants will then explore ways to raise awareness of the two UNECE treaties in other regions and how the IFIs could support the development of the necessary legislation and institutional capacity for the implementation of the Convention and the Protocol in countries outside the region. The law and practice of a number of countries in the African and Asian regions will be examined. Representatives from the World Bank, EIB, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the African Development Bank and the Department for International Development (United Kingdom) will showcase their experience in applying environmental assessment in their operations within and beyond the UNECE region, and leading civil society organizations, such as Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) Bankwatch Network and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), will give presentations to further stimulate discussion.

On the morning of Thursday, 5 June, at the high-level segment, a **panel discussion on the application of the Convention and the Protocol to energy-related matters** will be held. Under the direction of Mr. Valentinas Mazuronis, Minister for Environment of Lithuania, and Mr. Andriy Mokhnyk, Minister of Natural Resources and Ecology of Ukraine, participants will examine achievements, lessons learned and remaining challenges in this area, in particular through recent case-studies, such as the Nord Stream gas pipeline project in the Baltic Sea and the Cernavodă nuclear power plant in Romania. Participants will then reflect on how to improve implementation of the Convention and the Protocol for energy-related projects, plans and policies, looking, in particular, at the practice in the countries of Eastern-Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia in the energy sector and the role of Euratom.

The adoption of a Declaration on Thursday afternoon, focusing on the areas examined during the seminars and panel discussions over the course of the 4-day meeting, will mark the end of the joint session. □

Meeting documents are available at the Convention's website
http://www.unece.org/env/eia/meetings/mop_6.html.

Not an official record - For information only



Population

The UNECE Annual Report 2013 is now available. The interactive electronic version (available on the UNECE website at: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35658>) allows readers to navigate through the entire report by a simple click of the mouse. It will make reading on-line easier, faster and more enjoyable.

The Annual Report provides an overview of the activities carried out by UNECE in 2013 as well as an insight into some key events for 2014. These include, among others, the Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention and its Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, to be held in Maastricht from 30 June to 4 July; the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action for the Advancement of Women (Beijing+20), which will be held on 6-7 November at the Palais des Nations in Geneva; the next session of the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry, to be held in November in Kazan, Russian Federation.

The Russian version of the Annual Report will be available in the coming weeks. □

UNECE opened Ninth Congress of Gerontology in Serbia

UNECE's Population Unit, together with HelpAge International, opened the Ninth Congress of Gerontology in Vrnjačka Banja, Serbia, on 16 May 2014. The interdisciplinary Congress under the theme "Culture of ageing and old age: between traditional and contemporary models" was organized under the patronage of the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs. UNECE reminded participants that the 2002 Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and its Regional Implementation Strategy (MIPAA/RIS) recognized the important role of geriatric and gerontological professions to ensure that increased longevity is accompanied by the highest attainable standard of health, providing different care options and an environment that allows people to age in dignity. Serbia, in its National Strategy on Ageing (2006-2015), has subscribed to the MIPAA principles early on. However, as the Strategy's time span draws to a close, important challenges remain, as research presented at the Conference showed: Older people are at high risk of poverty; the availability and quality of services for older people facing disease and invalidity have to be improved; and seniors have to be better protected against discrimination and abuse.



The three-day Conference attracted 170 participants with more than 100 lectures on different areas of gerontology and geriatrics, presenting latest research and concrete project examples. This scientific gathering is organized every four years and brings together numerous eminent experts and institutions working in the area of gerontology and geriatrics in Serbia and the region. At the time when flooding affected large parts of Serbia, participants were reminded of the vulnerability of older people in emergency situations. Many of the professionals working on ageing in Serbia were involved in evacuating older people's homes, moving immobile patients from endangered zones to safe places and participating in the emergency response for entire cities. Support from the international community, including the United Nations was welcome, but clearly, more is needed to address the consequences of the disaster. □



For more information on UNECE's work on ageing, please visit: <http://www.unece.org/pau/welcome.html>.

Facts and Figures

Over-qualification among workers with tertiary education

Significant amounts of highly educated workers in UNECE countries work in lower-skilled jobs. That results in substantial underutilization of their qualifications. In 2012 the share of such workers ranged between 11 and 38 per cent among men and between 13 and 37 per cent among women.

In the chart, the upper block displays countries with higher levels of over-qualification amongst female workers compared to males. The largest gaps were recorded in Norway and Italy. The lower block is composed of countries where over-qualification is higher among male workers compared to females. In Ireland, Israel and Spain, the share of over-qualified workers was particularly high (over 30 per cent) for both males and females. The Russian Federation also had high over-qualification especially for male workers. Many countries recorded more than 20 per cent over-qualification.

This phenomenon may be a result of tough labour market conditions or, to some extent, indicate the difficulties faced by education systems to meet job market requirements.

For employed persons with higher education, over-qualification means working in one of the International Standard Classification of Occupations categories 4 to 9 (Clerks; Service workers and shop and market sales workers; Skilled agricultural and fishery workers; Craft and related trade workers; Plant and machine operators and assemblers; Elementary occupations). □

Source: UNECE Statistical Database
Note: reference year for Russian Federation: 2011; Israel and Republic of Moldova: 2010.

Not an official record - For information only

Share of workers with tertiary education who worked in occupations requiring lower skills (per cent, 2012)

