



United Nations

# UNECE Weekly

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## Exhibition on UNECE

During the 60th Anniversary Session there will be an exhibition on the work and achievements of the UNECE, covering areas of its work, such as economic cooperation and integration, energy, environment, housing and land management, population, statistics, timber, trade, and transport.

The exhibition will be located on the third floor of the Palais des Nations new building, from 23 to 27 April 2007.

## “Road Safety is no Accident”



Young delegates from all over the world will gather in Geneva for the first World Youth Assembly on Road Safety on 23-24 April 2007, to discuss road safety issues under the slogan “Road Safety is no Accident.”

The World Youth Assembly, along with a Stakeholders Forum and a Road Safety Exhibition, is a key event in the First United Nations Global Road Safety Week (23-29 April 2007) jointly organized by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Regional Commissions.

The World Youth Assembly, modelled on the UN General Assembly, represents an opportunity for young people to meet, discuss and let their voices be heard. Official young delegates, nominated by member countries, will explore how road safety for young people can be improved culminating in a Youth Declaration to be adopted at the end of the two-day meeting.

The Global Road Safety Week aims to engage young people in the issue of road safety, raise awareness of the issue among the

general public, and encourage action and support from governments. In addition to the activities in Geneva, national road safety campaigns will take place throughout the week in countries all over the world, and the European Commission will celebrate the European Road Safety Day in Brussels on 27 April 2007.

The Road Safety Week events in the Palais are open to the public, especially young people involved in road safety work, subject to registration before 17 April.

For more information and to register visit [www.who.int/roadsafety/week](http://www.who.int/roadsafety/week) and/or [www.unece.org/trans/globalroadsafetyweek](http://www.unece.org/trans/globalroadsafetyweek)

For more information please contact Marie-Noëlle Poirier ([marie-noelle.poirier@unece.org](mailto:marie-noelle.poirier@unece.org)) or Laura Ann Sminkey ([sminkeyl@who.int](mailto:sminkeyl@who.int)).

## UNECE Releases Recommendations on Radioactive Scrap



Recycled scrap metal is a commodity that crosses most of the world's borders, with 184 million tonnes traded internationally in 2004. Up until now however, no unified guidelines on checking for radioactivity in recycled scrap metal have existed. The first set of internationally agreed Recommendations to monitor and reduce the risks involving radioactivity in scrap metal has been published by UNECE,

representing a critical first step to address this problem.

A UNECE survey of 55 countries found that while a growing number of States are checking imports and exports of scrap metal for radiation, less than half of the scrap yards do so, and there is no consistency in the approaches. Yet with 50% of steel being produced from numerous recycled sources, monitors are increasingly





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detecting radiation in scrap metal. In the US alone over 5000 radiation monitor alarms rang in 2004 as a result of detections in metal scrap. Many of these detections are from natural sources and represent low levels of radiation. Others, however, may be from losses, accidents or inadvertent disposal of radioactive material. All alarms must be taken seriously.

In addition to potential health and environmental risks, the economic ramifications involved are significant. The cost of search, decontamination and clean up can amount to millions of US dollars and put companies out of business altogether. In the words of a representative from the scrap metal processing industry "not a single normal client in the world has any interest in scrap with radioactively contaminated material."

The UNECE Recommendations provide an important tool for scrap yards, metal smelters, Customs, regulatory authorities and transporters, amongst others, to prevent incidents and better deal with them should they happen. While these Recommendations are not legally binding, they provide guidance to all interested parties based on existing best practice. The UNECE has already received requests for capacity building to better implement these Recommendations and is currently working with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) to support countries in this respect.

The Recommendations are available in English, French and Russian and may be obtained from the UNECE secretariat. They can also be downloaded from the UNECE website (see contacts below). Their production was made possible thanks to support from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

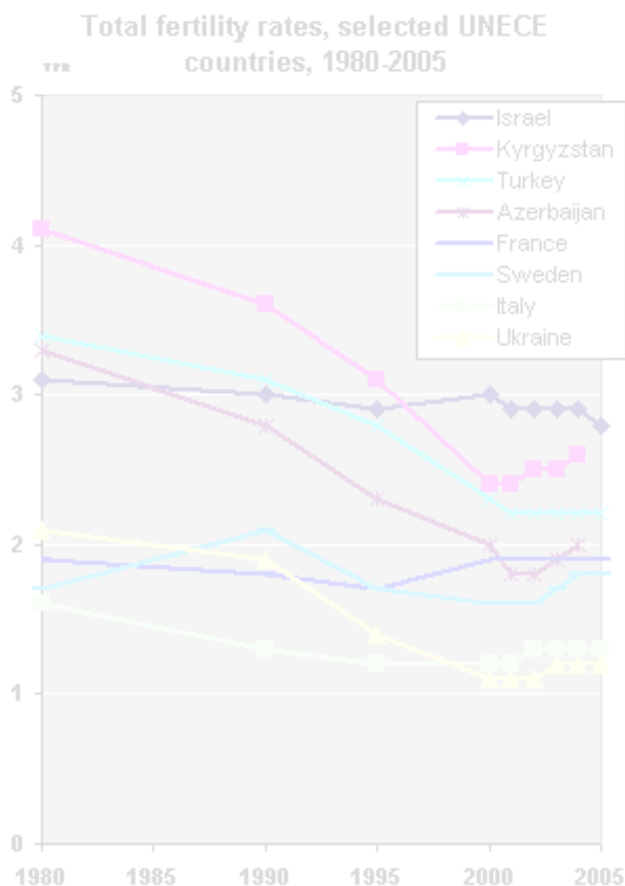
For more information contact José Capel Ferrer or Martin Magold ([radiation@unece.org](mailto:radiation@unece.org))

Website: <http://www.unece.org/trans/radiation/radiation.html>.

## Facts and figures

### Signs of fertility recovery in some UNECE countries

Prompted by increasing access to contraception and more advanced age at marriage, among other factors, fertility decreased steadily during the 1980s and 1990s in the UNECE region. In fact, already by 1990, the total fertility rate (TFR) had dropped in many countries below the mark of 2.1, which is considered to be the replacement level that permits the population size to remain constant. By 2000, the median value of the TFR for 50 UNECE countries was 1.5. However, in the last few years, fertility started to increase slowly in some of the UNECE countries, including those with very low fertility rates (Italy and Ukraine, around 1.3) and countries with medium or high fertility (Sweden and Azerbaijan, around 2; Kyrgyzstan 2.6). In other countries, fertility seems to have stabilized: at a rate of 1.9 it stays around the medium level in France, while a high level of 2.9 is sustained in Israel.



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

Note: Total fertility rate (TFR) refers to the average number of children per woman.