



United Nations

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## UNECE member States join forces to design societies for all ages

The world population is passing through a demographic transition from a population characterized by large families and short lives into a population characterized by small families and long lives. Ageing will be one of the distinctive traits of this century, the share of older individuals in the population ever increasing. While ageing represents a triumph of medical, social and economic advances, it also presents challenges to existing systems of social support and affects virtually all domains of society. UNECE member countries have therefore decided to enhance efforts to implement the existing policy framework of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and its Regional Implementation Strategy for the UNECE region, and have established a Working Group on Ageing. The constituting meeting was held on 1-2 December.

The Working Group will develop indicators to measure progress in implementing ageing-related policies and programmes. Member States agreed to put more effort into translating research results into advice for policymaking. For this purpose, a new format of policy briefs is being developed to break down complex issues to the needs of policymakers, advising them on cutting-edge policy options. The meeting showed that countries already have numerous good policy practices in place.

Countries' abilities to tackle ageing-related challenges vary greatly. Capacity development will therefore be a priority during the coming two years. Two training workshops are planned in Eastern Europe and Central Asia; international experts will also make direct contributions to developing concrete action, based on an in-depth appraisal of the situation in selected countries. As an innovative approach to developing capacities, country road maps on ageing will be implemented. Preparation of these detailed action plans will be coordinated by the UNECE Population Unit and involve international and local experts. They will suggest concrete steps to be taken within specified timelines to improve countries' policy-framework on ageing. Implementation will be evaluated after one year.



Indicator development, policy briefs and capacity building – these are just three components of a very comprehensive agenda that countries have set for themselves for the next two years. The ambitious

programme shows the commitment of member States to working together to tackle ageing-related policy concerns.

Detailed information including country experiences presented during the meeting can be downloaded from <http://www.unece.org/pau/age/wg>.

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## Rail Security

The proliferation of rail operators and infrastructure managers could result in substandard rail security unless countries adopt a common international legal framework.



This was one of the points put forward at a Workshop on Rail Security on 19 November, where invited experts made forward-looking presentations, addressing security issues linked to the ongoing liberalization of the European rail market for passenger and freight services and expansion of the Schengen zone. In addition to Governments and international organizations, representatives of some railway companies were present — Russian Railways (RZD), Polish Railways (PKP), Serbian Railways (ZS), Slovak Railways (ZSR), and Turkish Railways (TCDD)

Organized by the UNECE Working Party on Rail Transport in cooperation with the International Union of Railways, participants in the Workshop emphasized the need to improve rail security through intersectoral cooperation, effective international legal instruments and the willingness to learn from experiences of civil aviation and maritime transport.

Presentations were made on rail security issues related to border crossing, status of security personnel in cross-border operations, new technology for rail security, national security programmes, and regional and international cooperation. The Working Party proposes to establish an informal task force to ensure follow-up to the major rail security issues identified by the Workshop.

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## Revised Framework Classification

aims to simplify reporting of energy and mineral reserves and resources in a globalized world

With energy security a growing issue, the United Nations Framework Classification for Fossil Energy and Mineral Resources Terminology (UNFC) may improve global communications regarding remaining quantities of non-renewable fossil energy and mineral resources. The UNFC of 2004, with its accompanying ECOSOC Resolution 2004/233 recommending worldwide application, has recently been simplified in order to facilitate global use. This new draft version – UNFC-2008 – is now available for public comment.

Establishing a complete picture of the current and future energy supply base is necessary for effective resources management. Accurate and consistent estimates of fossil energy and mineral reserves and resources are the foundation for such assessments.

A number of different standards have evolved over time in response to local needs, but they are by their very nature not built to serve all the needs that arise in a globalized economy. As a result, the interest in developing common and universally applicable standards for estimating and reporting energy and mineral reserves and resources continues to grow. The United Nations, through the UNECE secretariat, has responded to this need through the development of the UNFC.

The following four elements are essential in providing security of supply in the form of a high

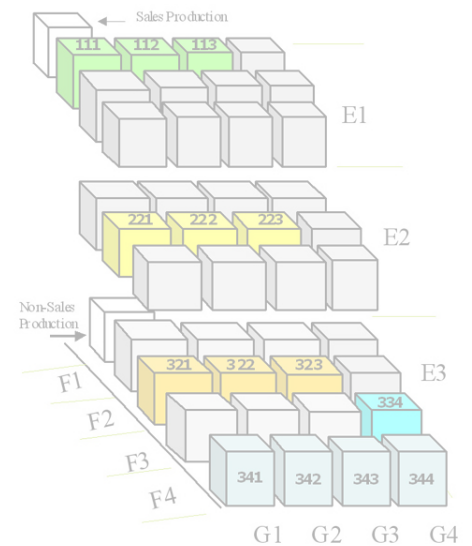
recovery from the geologic endowment: (i) long sighted international energy studies and resulting policies; (ii) government resources management guided by these studies and policies – fiscal frameworks and environmental protection form an integral part of this; (iii) business process management ensuring that technology, management and capital are used effectively within the framework conditions set by host countries and global markets; and (iv) improved financial reporting facilitating appropriate capital allocation in a competitive international capital market and minimizing the cost of capital.

The draft revised UNFC-2008 applies to fossil energy and mineral resources located in the subsoil. It serves the needs for classification at a global level (for energy and mineral supply studies), for Governments (resources management and policy formulation), for industry (business process management) and for financial reporting.

The draft revised UNFC-2008 and the accompanying Explanatory Note are both available for public comment on the UNECE website at: <http://www.unece.org/energy/unfc/Welcome.html>.

Comments are invited from all relevant constituencies – deadline for submission of feedback is 6 February 2009. All comments received will be made publicly available on the UNECE website.

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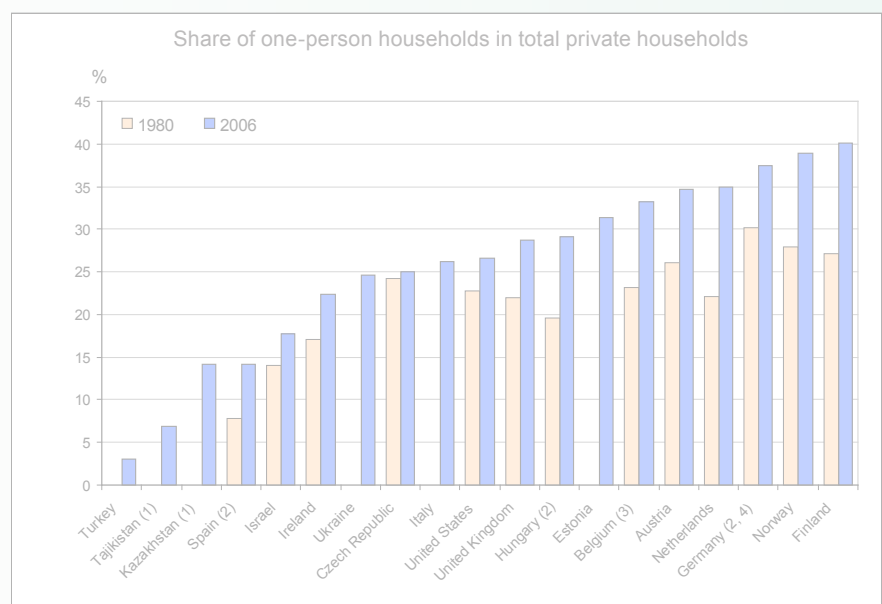


## Facts and Figures

The share of one-person households varies significantly across countries in the UNECE region. In Nordic countries, one-person households represented around 40% of the total number of private households in 2006. In other countries, they represented a much smaller share: in 2006, they were only 3% in Turkey, 14% in Spain and 18% in Israel. The share is relatively low also in Central Asian countries, where the latest data available (2000) are between 7% and 14%.

Over the last quarter century the share of one-person households has grown steadily in all countries for which data are available. The highest increases have been observed in Finland (27% in 1980 to 40% in 2006) and the Netherlands (22% in 1980 to 35% in 2006). The rising number of persons aged 30-64 living solo, either by choice or due to circumstances, has considerably affected the trend in the region. Although solo living persons are more vulnerable to adverse events (losing job, illness etc), the share of one person households may continue to grow in the future.

## More and more people live alone



Source: UNECE Gender Statistics Database

(1) Data refer to 2000

(2) Data for 2006 refer to 2005

(3) Data for 1980 refer to 1981

(4) Data for 1980 do not cover former GDR

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