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Cheaper, cleaner and safer cars? UNECE explains how at the Geneva Motor Show

If the same vehicle regulations applied for all manufacturers in all countries, the automotive industry would be more efficient and it would ultimately lead to cheaper cars for consumers. If existing vehicle regulations for emissions standards and safety requirements were applied in areas where such legislation is currently lacking or inadequate, the adverse effects of motor vehicles could be greatly reduced.

The World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29), a United Nations subsidiary body, provides a framework for international harmonization of vehicle requirements both in terms of safety and environmental standards at the highest level of performance.

These technical regulations have become the tools with which the motor industry develop, design and produce vehicles. In addition, they set the standards against which vehicles and parts can be certified. The slogan for the 1958 Agreement has de facto become "Certified once, accepted everywhere".

Juan Ramos Garcia, Secretary of the World Form, and Yves van der Straaten, Secretary-General of the International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA), will present the work of the World Forum at a Geneva Motor Show press conference on Wednesday, 4 March 2009, explaining how the 1958 and 1998 Agreements work, the benefits of implementing them as well as challenges ahead and projections for future developments. ■

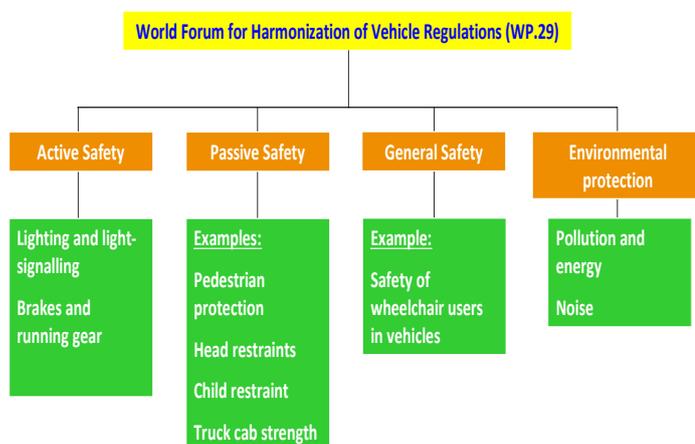
For more information, visit the website at <http://www.unece.org/trans/main/welcwp29.htm>,

or contact Juan Ramos Garcia, Secretary to the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (infotransport@unece.org).



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World Forum covers 4 main areas



+ 30 non-permanent technical groups

WP.29: How everything started

- Created in 1952 as a Working Party of experts on technical requirements for the construction of vehicles
- 1956 Rome Agreement: first step to harmonize vehicle regulations
- The 1958 Agreement (20 June 1959) on uniform conditions of approval and mutual recognition of approvals of vehicles, components and parts
 - ◆ Active and passive safety
 - ◆ Protection of the environment
 - ◆ Anti-theft protection

UN Agreements administered by the World Forum

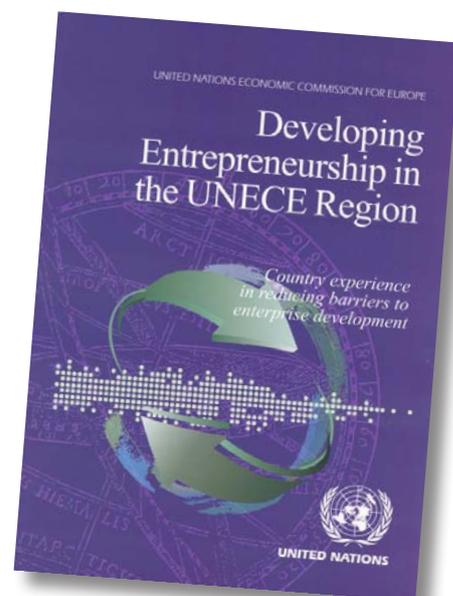
- 1958 Agreement on vehicle regulations (1959)
- 1997 Agreement on periodical technical inspections (2001)
- 1998 Global (Parallel) Agreement on global technical regulations (2000)
- In 2000, WP.29 became the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations
- In 2007, consideration of market fuel quality standards
- More than 130 vehicle regulations developed so far, which are constantly updated to technical progress

Not an official record - For information only

At advanced stages of transition to a market economy, entrepreneurship and enterprise development come to the forefront of the development agenda. With their new technologies and innovative solutions, new enterprises strengthen economic competitiveness and sustainability. They also enhance macroeconomic efficiency, as well as creating employment.

However, in countries with economies in transition (or “emerging market economies”), both new and operational companies often face formidable administrative and regulatory barriers to enterprise registration and operation. UNECE identifies and examines good practices in reducing or eliminating such barriers and provides a platform for sharing the accumulated country experience. UNECE also advises member Governments on policy actions.

This publication takes stock of the numerous barriers to enterprise development and highlights the regulatory changes aimed at removing such obstacles in countries with economies in transition. It assesses government policy in this area and summarizes the recommendations emanating from the 2007 *UNECE International Conference on Reducing Barriers to Entrepreneurship and Encouraging Enterprise Development: Policy Options*. ■



Publication is available from the UN Publications, Sales and Marketing Section (unogbookshop@unog.ch)

FACTS AND FIGURES

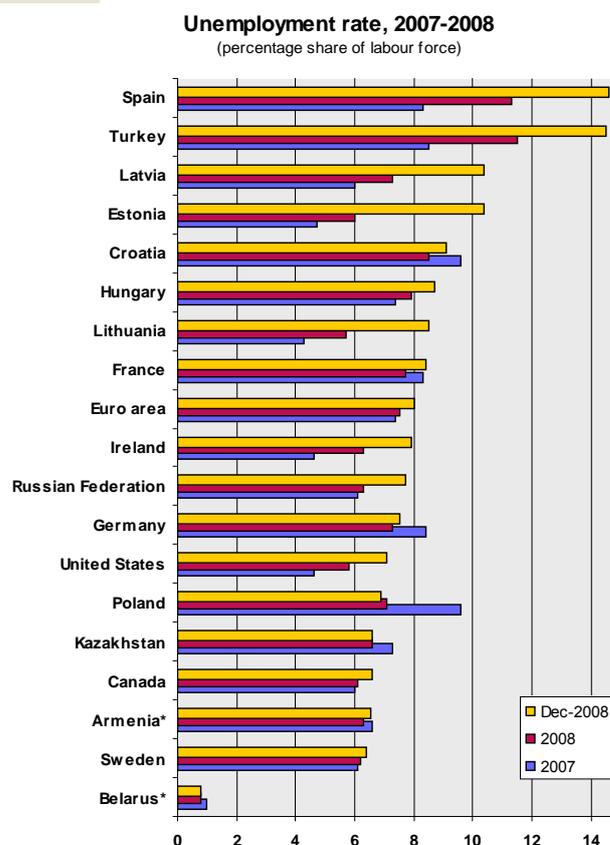
Unemployment rates leaped by the end of 2008 across the UNECE region

As the economic downturn steepened, unemployment leaped sharply in a number of UNECE countries during the last months of 2008.

The available data for January 2009 signal that the rise in unemployment rates is catching up in the rest of the region as well. Reported figures for Belarus and a few other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States might be seen as an exception, but they refer to registered unemployment only.

In Spain, Turkey, Latvia and Estonia – countries with the highest unemployment rates depicted in the chart – the rates for December 2008 were three to four percentage points higher than the annual average for 2008, and five to six percentage points up from December 2007. The increase in unemployment was important also in Lithuania, Ireland, the Russian Federation and the United States.

For the Euro area, the rise in unemployment was less sharp by end-2008, due in part to some ad-hoc measures to temporarily restrict or postpone layoffs in Germany and France; but this, most likely, just lengthened the lag between the tumbling of industrial production and its damaging impact on labour markets. In January 2009, Germany's unemployment rate went up to 8.3 % (according to the Federal Labour Agency), and in France the number of jobseekers rose by more than 4% if compared to December 2008. ■



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

* Registered unemployment instead of Labour force survey data.