



United Nations

# UNECE Weekly

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## UNECE at the International Transport Forum 2009

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) will showcase its various activities in the field of transport at the International Transport Forum 2009, held in Leipzig from 26 to 29 May.

The forum is a global event for transport, logistics and mobility, gathering every year in Leipzig key figures from government and politics, business and industry, research and civil society. An heir to the European Conference of Ministers of Transport, the forum is an inter-governmental organization within the family of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Under the motto, "Transport for a Global Economy: Challenges & Opportunities in the Downturn", this year's conference will discuss topics like:

- What does the present economic crisis mean for globalisation?
- Transport and globalisation - Who stands to lose and win?
- High transport costs - What impact for a globalised economy?
- How will the global credit crunch affect transport investment programmes?
- Is transport a driver of globalisation or is it rather driven by it?



On Wednesday 27 May, Eva Molnar, Director, Transport Division, will highlight UNECE's contributions to "Road Transport: Promoting Global Trade, Travel and Development". She will also moderate a panel discussion on "Railways in a Globalised World".

On Thursday 28, which is the main day of the ministerial event, Ján Kubiš, UNECE Executive Secretary, will present UNECE's role in transport facilitation in a session discussing "Supply Chains and Gateways in Volatile Markets", alongside Igor Levitin, Minister of Transport, Russian Federation, Kunio Mikuriya, Secretary General, World Customs Organisation, Scott Price, CEO, DHL Express Europe, Etienne Schoupe, Secretary of State for Transport, Belgium and Vincenzo Soprano, Managing Director, Trenitalia.

Other UNECE activities during the forum will include a questions and answers session about the TIR, in cooperation with the International Road Transport Union (IRU), and an exhibition booth displaying its activities as well as those of other United Nations organizations active in the field of transport. ❄



## 2nd issue of the UNECE Transport Review: *Transport without borders*

The second edition of the UNECE Transport Review, *Transport without borders*, looks at border crossing facilitation issues from a variety of angles.

The UNECE Transport Review is available electronically from the UNECE website at: <http://www.unece.org/trans/transportreview.html>

To subscribe to the Review, please send an email to [infotransport@unece.org](mailto:infotransport@unece.org)

*Not an official record - For information only*

## International Conference on Knowledge-based Development, Minsk, Republic of Belarus, 10-12 June 2009

Knowledge and innovation increasingly determine the performance of modern economies, the new employment opportunities and the competitiveness of industries and nations.

The objective of the conference is to stimulate a broad exchange of practical experiences and lessons learned among policy makers, representatives of businesses and academia, and other experts and practitioners on good practices and policies of promoting knowledge-driven economic development. The conference will cover thematic areas such as innovation and competitiveness policies, financing of innovation, intellectual property and public-private partnerships.



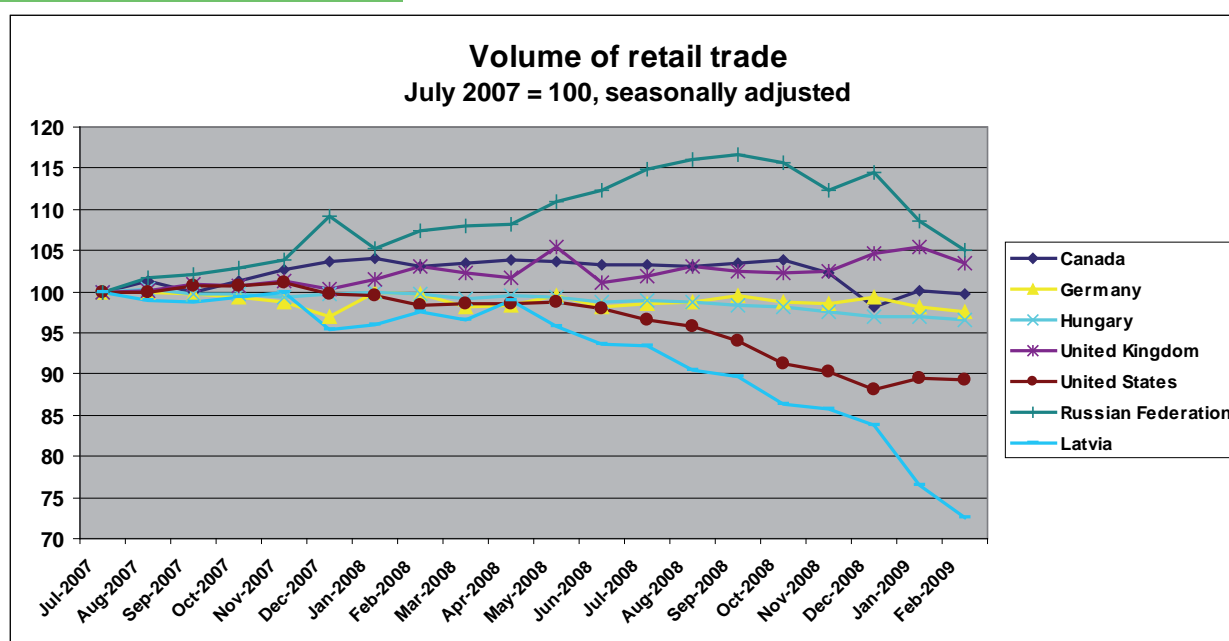
The issues to be considered are of practical relevance to policy makers in countries with economies in transition striving to modernize and diversify their economies and seeking effective policy responses to the challenges of the global economic and financial crisis.

The conference is organized in cooperation with the State Committee on Science and Technology of the Republic of Belarus.

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## FACTS AND FIGURES

### Retail trade bears the brunt of the economic crisis, with a lag



Source: OECD and national statistics.

If judged by the dynamics of retail trade, the credit crunch that gripped financial markets in many UNECE economies in the second half of 2007 had no visible impact on consumer spending until mid-2008. In fact, the retail trade volumes picked up in a number of countries (Russian Federation, Canada and United Kingdom) or fluctuated around current levels for a while.

The United States was the first big economy to see retail trade volume drop markedly beginning July 2008. In December 2008, it was some 12 per cent below the level of July 2007 and remained by a tenth lower in the first months of 2009. Among the UNECE emerging economies, Latvian consumers seemed to be hit earliest and probably the hardest: Latvia's retail trade volume shrank by a quarter since July 2007. In Hungary, retail trade weakened too, albeit less sharply.

The available preliminary March and April 2009 figures indicate that many UNECE countries might be braced for a drop in retail trade sales. The consumer sentiment is low, and the negative trends that became apparent first in the exporting sector of these countries, then in industrial production, have started, with a lag, to affect household consumption. \* \*