



# UNECE Weekly

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## *It's just happened ...*

### **Air Pollution Convention holds annual scientific meetings**

The *Working Group on Effects* of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution held its 23<sup>rd</sup> session in Geneva on 1-3 September. It reviewed the work of its six International Cooperative Programmes and the Joint Task Force (with WHO) on the Health Aspects of Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution. Recent analyses showed that continued improvement in the chemical status of acid-sensitive lakes and streams has led to signs of biological recovery in many countries. However, new critical loads data and the results from the new EMEP model show 8% of European ecosystems will still be at risk from acidification in 2010. Furthermore, the Health Task Force identified the significant health impacts of fine particulate matter leading to a shortening of life expectancy in the more polluted part of Europe up to one or two years; long-range transported air pollutants were an important source of the risk.

Documents are available at the web site:

<http://www.unece.org/env/wge/documents.htm>

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The Convention's *Steering Body to the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP)* held its 28<sup>th</sup> session in Geneva on 6-8 September. Good progress on modelling

atmospheric transport was reported with model development by the EMEP centres being described as state of the art. A new strategy on monitoring was agreed. Its aim is to ensure effective measurements that show trends in pollution levels across the region and provide data for underpinning the pollution transport modelling. The Steering Body also discussed countries'

reporting of their emissions and noted the shortfalls in reporting by many countries for some pollutants. It stressed the need to improve emission data quality. Work on integrated assessment modelling reported the major savings that countries could make if they integrated air pollution and climate change abatement measures.

Further information and documents can be found at:

<http://www.unece.org/env/emep/welcome.html>.

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### **Finland becomes 30<sup>th</sup> Party to environmental rights treaty**

Finland has become the latest country to ratify the UNECE Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters. Following the ratifications by the Czech Republic and Slovenia, this brings the total number of Parties to the Convention to thirty. The Aarhus Convention is the world's most far-reaching treaty on environmental rights. It seeks to promote greater transparency and accountability among government bodies by guaranteeing public rights of access to environmental information, providing for public involvement in environmental decision-making and

requiring the establishment of procedures enabling the public to challenge environmental decisions. The Convention, adopted in Aarhus, Denmark, in June 1998 and signed by 39 European countries and the European Community, entered into force in October 2001. Its Parties now include most of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and slightly more than half of the EU Member States. The European Community itself is preparing for ratification and is currently negotiating the necessary implementing legislation.

For more information visit [www.unece.org/env/pp](http://www.unece.org/env/pp) or contact [jeremy.wates@unece.org](mailto:jeremy.wates@unece.org).

## Off the press ...

*Energy Efficiency Policies and Measures in Europe: The impact for major end uses* (UNECE Energy Series N°27) This CD-ROM contains the results of the E-GRIDS project (Enhancing the Government Regulatory Energy Measures Impact and Diffusion Speed Appraisal Method) which aims to provide the stakeholders involved in the



negotiation of energy efficiency policies with a common set of analytical tools and a shared platform of technical and economic information. The CD-ROM contains in particular a description of methods used in the analysis of the energy efficiency of major domestic end-uses and a number of results based scenarios.



*Energy Security Risks and Financial Markets* (UNECE Energy Series N°29) Energy security today is a key concern of policy makers, energy industries and the general public. There is an increased sense of vulnerability about the future availability of reasonably priced energy. In 2003 the UNECE Committee on Sustainable Energy launched the

Energy Security Forum which brings together a unique group of senior executives from energy companies, OPEC, key consuming countries, major non-OPEC hydrocarbon exporters and leading financial institutions to determine how energy security risks are perceived by different constituencies and how such risks can be mitigated through dialogue. This interactive CD-ROM captures the views of the Energy Security Forum members of how energy security risks and the financial markets affect each other.

Both eBooks are obtainable from the UN Sales and Marketing Section (<http://www.un.org/publications>).

## Coming up soon ...

13-15 September	Expert Group on Environmental Performance Reviews
13-16 September	Working Group on Strategies and Review
13-17 September	Joint Meeting of the RID Safety Committee and the UNECE Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods
14 September	Public Private Partnership Alliance (Barcelona, Spain)
16-17 September	Workshop on Illegal Logging and Trade of Illegally-derived Forest Products in the UNECE Region
16-17 September	Legal Board of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes

## Facts and figures:

Total Expenditure <sup>1</sup> on Education and Health as % of GDP in 2000									
Selected UNECE countries									
	Education	Notes	Health	Notes		Education	Notes	Health	Notes
<b>European Union</b>					<b>Southeast Europe</b>				
Austria	...		8.0		Albania	2.7		...	
Belgium	5.8	2	...		Bulgaria	4.8		4.3	
Cyprus	5.6	3,5	6.0	5	Croatia	5.3		6.5	
Czech Republic	4.6	3	7.1		Romania	3.1	3	4.1	3
Estonia	6.8	2,3	6.0		<b>CIS</b>				
Finland	5.6	4	6.6		Armenia	4.1		1.0	3
Germany	...		10.6		Belarus	...		5.5	
Hungary	5.2		6.8		Georgia	3.5		5.1	
Ireland	4.5		7.2		Kyrgyzstan	3.5		2.0	3
Italy	4.6	3	8.1		Republic of Moldova	5.7		3.4	
Lithuania	...		6.2		Ukraine	...		5.1	
Netherlands	5.1		8.2	4	<b>Other UNECE countries</b>				
Poland	5.1	3,4	4.2	3,4	Canada	...		9.2	2
Slovakia	4.3	3	6.4		Iceland	6.6		9.3	4
Slovenia	...		7.9		Israel	...		8.3	6
Spain	5.7		7.7		Norway	...		8.5	2
Sweden	7.1		...		United States	...		13.2	7
United Kingdom	...		7.3						

Source: UNECE Gender Statistics Database

- 1 Includes public and private expenditure.
- 2 Data refers to 1999.
- 3 Public expenditure only.
- 4 Provisional data
- 5 Refers to government controlled area only.
- 6 Excludes health services supplied by government to armed forces.
- 7 Expenditures on construction, as part of the total expenditure on health, refer to hospitals and nursing homes only. Investment in commercial buildings used by physicians and other medical professionals not included. US Territories are excluded.

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