



UNECE Weekly

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It's just happened...

Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia

СПЕКА ^{ООН} SPECA

The 2nd meeting of the Friends of SPECA Group took place on 17 December. The members of the Group – a forum for information exchange and consultation concerning SPECA – are diplomats of the four SPECA countries with permanent missions in Geneva (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan). Liaison with the missions of Tajikistan and Turkmenistan in New York is maintained through E-mail. The Group is supported by the UNECE secretariat (Technical Cooperation Unit).

The special guests of the 17 December meeting were Ms. Esperanza Duran, Executive Director of the Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation (AITIC) and Mr. Carlos Braga, Senior Adviser of the International Trade Department of the World Bank. The representative of Azerbaijan presented an initiative on the establishment of an Informal WTO Forum within SPECA, the objective of

which would be to facilitate regular consultations among SPECA member States to share experiences relating to WTO accession and also the post-accession phase. In the framework of a three-year project, experts and Geneva representatives of SPECA member States would have an opportunity to learn about the experience of recently acceded countries, like the Baltic States, Republic of Moldova and Georgia, and seek expert advice from international experts. Participants unanimously supported the idea and agreed to continue discussion on its implementation in the second half of January 2005, in conjunction with a seminar organized by World Bank-GTZ on this issue.

For more information contact Marton Krasznai (marton.krasznai@unece.org)

This year's **Gunnar Myrdal Lecture** will be delivered by Pascal Lamy, until recently the Trade Commissioner of the European Commission. The topic will deal with Transatlantic Trade. The lecture will take place on Wednesday, 23 February 2005 at the Palais des Nations at 6.00 p.m. The conference room will be announced later.

The Lectures are named in honour of Gunnar Myrdal, first Executive Secretary of the UNECE (1947-1957), who himself received the Nobel Prize in economics in 1974. This is the third in a new series devoted to major international economic problems. The UNECE 2004 Myrdal Lecture was given by Nobel prize winner Professor Joseph Stiglitz..

For more information, contact Abdur Chowdhury (abdur.chowdhury@unece.org).

Just issued



The UNECE/FAO Timber Branch has released two new publications with data series not previously available. The data show imports and exports over the years 2000-2003 for the countries of the UNECE region of Europe, CIS and North America.

Trade of Roundwood and Sawnwood by Species (available at <http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/database/species2000-2003.pdf>)

includes both volume and value data for trade in significant temperate species. For conifers the species are fir/spruce and pine, and for hardwoods the species are oak, beech, poplar and birch. One of the most frequent requests received by the secretariat concerns the species composition of trade flows, a matter which is of the greatest interest to producers and exporters of roundwood and sawnwood.

Not an official record - For information only

Trade of Secondary Processed Wood and Paper Products (available at <http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/database/secondary2000-2003.pdf>)

includes value data for trade in 22 products such as joinery, wooden furniture, books and newspapers. Trade in secondary processed wood products is becoming ever more important. As globalization progresses, supply chains between the forest and the final consumer are becoming more complex,

involving many intermediaries and long transport distances. Thus in order to have a proper understanding of sector trends it is essential to take into consideration the trade in secondary processed wood and paper products. Until now, data on these have not been regularly published by ECE/FAO..

The information contained in these two publications has been collected in the context of the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire for the past several years but data are being published now for the first time. The secretariat hopes to publish available data from earlier years in a subsequent edition of this publication. Forest products statistics published by the UNECE Timber Branch are available at www.unece.org/trade/timber/mis/fp-stats.htm.

Facts and figures:

Unemployment rate, total

European Union and other selected UNECE economies
(Per cent of civilian labour force)

	2001	2002	2003	2004		
				Q1	Q2	Q3
France	8.4	8.9	9.4	9.6	9.5	9.6
Germany	7.8	8.7	9.6	9.6	9.8	9.9
Italy	9.4	9.0	8.6
Austria	3.6	4.2	4.3	4.5	4.5	4.5
Belgium	6.7	7.3	8.0	7.8	7.7	7.7
Finland	9.1	9.1	9.0	9.0	8.9	8.6
Greece	10.4	10.0	9.3
Ireland	3.9	4.3	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.5
Luxembourg	2.1	2.8	3.7	4.1	4.2	4.3
Netherlands	2.5	2.7	3.8	4.5	4.8	...
Portugal	4.0	5.0	6.3	6.2	6.5	6.5
Spain	10.6	11.3	11.3	11.1	10.9	10.7
Euro area-12	8.0	8.4	8.9	8.9	8.9	8.9
United Kingdom	5.0	5.1	4.9	4.7	4.7	...
Denmark	4.3	4.6	5.6	5.6	5.4	5.3
Sweden	4.9	4.9	5.6	6.2	6.5	6.5
European Union-15	7.4	7.7	8.1	8.0	8.1	8.0
Cyprus	4.4	3.9	4.5	5.0	4.7	5.0
Czech Republic	8.0	7.3	7.8	8.4	8.4	8.4
Estonia	11.8	9.5	10.2	9.8	9.6	9.1
Hungary	5.6	5.6	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8
Latvia	12.9	12.6	10.4	9.9	9.8	9.7
Lithuania	16.4	13.5	12.7	11.5	11.2	10.7
Malta	7.7	7.7	8.0	8.9	8.8	8.5
Poland	18.5	19.8	19.2	19.1	18.9	18.7
Slovakia	19.4	18.7	17.5	18.3	18.5	18.1
Slovenia	5.8	6.1	6.5	6.2	6.1	5.9
EU new members-10	14.5	14.8	14.3	14.3	14.2	14.1
European Union-25	8.5	8.8	9.1	9.0	9.0	9.0
Iceland	2.3	3.2	3.4	2.9	3.1	3.5
Israel	9.4	10.3	10.7	10.7	10.7	...
Norway	3.6	3.9	4.5	4.4	4.5	...
Switzerland	2.6	3.2	4.2	4.4	4.4	4.4
Canada	7.2	7.7	7.6	7.4	7.3	7.1
United States	4.8	5.8	6.0	5.6	5.6	5.5

Note:
Standardized Eurostat definition conforming to ILO guidelines. Estimates are based on Labour Force Surveys covering private households only. Quarterly data are seasonally adjusted.

For further information please contact:

**Information Service,
UN Economic Commission
for Europe (UNECE)
CH - 1211 Geneva 10,
Switzerland**

**Tel: +41(0)22 917 44 44
Fax: +41(0)22 917 05 05**

**E-mail:
info.ece@unece.org
Web site:
<http://www.unece.org>**

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