



UNECE Weekly

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It's just happened ...

Seminar on Treaty Law and Practice

The main speakers at the Seminar, held in the Palais des Nations on 17 and 18 January, were Mr. Palitha Kohona, Chief, and Mr. Bradford Smith, Legal Officer, at the Treaty Section of the UN Office of Legal Affairs. Organized by the UNECE Transport Division in the framework of the substantive training programme for the Division staff, the Seminar recalled the fundamental importance of the rule of law in international relations and the contribution of the United Nations to such rule of law, and reviewed the legal procedures required by UN Treaties. These procedures included the functions of the UN Secretary-General as Depositary of UN Treaties, such as communication to States of information on all treaty actions (Depositary Notifications), registration and publication of Treaties, and provision of treaty related legal and technical assistance.

The Seminar also reviewed obligations and rights of Member States that are or wish to become Contracting Parties to a treaty, including procedures

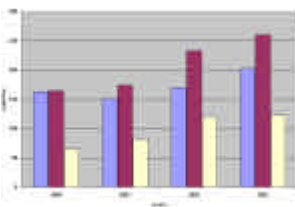


for signature, ratification, accession, acceptance or approval, the obligation of registration and the right to lodge declarations and reservations in accordance with the provisions of the treaty. In addition, the Seminar reviewed the UNECE legal instruments on transport which, according to the UN legal officers, represent 20% of all UN Treaties. Finally, the Seminar analysed in detail the ADR Agreement on the transport of dangerous goods by road as well as the 1958 and 1998 Agreements on vehicle

regulations. In addition to the UNECE Transport Division staff, some representatives of Missions of Member States in Geneva also attended the Seminar. Participants congratulated the speakers on the high quality and interest of their presentations and were unanimous in agreeing on the great usefulness of the Seminar.

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Training on international migration



International migration is increasingly important on the policy agenda, but the production and dissemination of reliable statistical data on migration still face many difficulties. One of the

problems, especially in some countries of Eastern Europe and the CIS, is the lack of a comprehensive dialogue between statisticians and policy-makers. This, in turn, has implications on the quality and relevance of the data produced. The UNECE Statistical Division and UNFPA organized a 5-day training course on migration statistics in collaboration with the Netherlands Interdisciplinary

Demographic Institute (NIDI), The Hague. The purpose of the course was to build a common understanding between statisticians and policy-makers and to clarify the needs for migration statistics. During the training session, around 40 participants from Statistical Offices and respective Ministries could familiarize themselves with issues concerning data, analysis and policy planning regarding international migration. Particular attention was devoted to ongoing international work on definitional and methodological issues, such as the 2010 Census Recommendations being prepared by UNECE.

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Paperless trade

If well implemented, electronic invoicing can bring very substantial savings to large and small companies. It can facilitate migration to paperless trade, and it could also be instrumental in fighting the "grey market" and corruption. Why then, if Governments have approved the relevant laws and regulations to encourage e-invoicing, do paper bills still account for over 95% of the total number of invoices in Europe and the U States? The main reason is the lack of a common international standard for the layout and the data elements, the legal requirements and the XML message. An initiative at United Nations level is therefore very important to remove the remaining barriers to expedite adoption. To address this issue, the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) has set up a new Trade Facilitation project to revise the existing UN/CEFACT Recommendation 6 on the Invoice for International Trade, adapting it to the business and regulatory requirements of e-invoicing. The revised Recommendation will resolve the obstacles to



electronic invoicing, providing a solution that can be easily implemented by SMEs and large companies alike. The draft will be presented during the UN/CEFACT Forum on "Paperless Trade: Setting a Roadmap for Secure and Efficient Trade" (20-21 June) (<http://www.unece.org/forums/forum05>) where relevant regulatory and business stakeholders will present their initiatives towards paperless trade and commit to a roadmap to make it happen.

The project will define what data elements are necessary to make automatic invoice reconciliation possible, and what information must be present so that financial institutions are able to process the invoice as effectively as possible. The various requirements as to the authenticity of the origin and integrity of the content of the invoice will be analysed from a legal standpoint, to define "how" a business should pursue its obligation to electronically "send" and "store" the invoice.

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Facts and figures:

Consumer price index, total

European Union and other selected UNECE economies
(Change over same period of the previous year, per cent)

	2001	2002	2003				2004			
	Y	Y	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
France	1.6	1.9	2.4	1.9	1.9	2.2	1.8	2.4	2.3	..
Germany	2.0	1.4	1.2	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.8	1.9	..
Italy	2.8	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.2	..
Austria	2.7	1.8	1.8	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.4	2.0	2.2	..
Belgium	2.5	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.7	1.7	1.3	2.3	2.2	2.6
Finland	2.6	1.6	1.6	0.9	0.6	0.5	-0.1	-0.2	0.4	..
Greece	3.4	3.6	3.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	2.7	2.9	2.8	..
Ireland	4.9	4.7	4.9	3.8	3.1	2.1	1.6	1.8	2.6	..
Luxembourg	2.7	2.1	2.5	2.0	1.9	1.9	2.0	2.3	2.2	..
Netherlands	4.2	3.3	2.4	2.0	2.1	1.9	1.2	1.4	1.1	..
Portugal	4.3	3.6	4.0	3.6	2.9	2.6	2.2	2.5	2.4	..
Spain	3.6	3.1	3.8	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.2	3.2	3.3	..
Euro area-12	2.6	2.2	2.3	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.7	2.2	2.2	..
United Kingdom	1.8	1.6	3.1	3.0	2.9	2.7	2.6	2.8	3.1	..
Denmark	2.3	2.4	2.8	2.3	1.8	1.5	0.9	1.1	1.2	..
Sweden	2.6	2.4	3.0	1.9	1.6	1.3	0.1	0.4	0.6	..
European Union-15	2.4	2.1	2.5	2.2	2.2	2.1	1.8	2.3	2.3	..
Cyprus	2.0	2.8	4.8	4.9	3.3	3.5	1.4	1.6	3.0	..
Czech Republic	4.7	1.8	-0.3	0.2	0.0	0.9	2.4	2.6	3.3	3.1
Estonia	5.8	3.5	2.0	0.3	0.9	1.1	0.7	3.4	4.1	4.5
Hungary	9.2	5.4	4.8	4.1	4.9	5.6	6.9	7.4	7.0	5.9
Latvia	2.4	1.9	1.9	2.9	3.5	3.5	4.4	5.9	7.5	7.3
Lithuania	1.5	0.4	-1.6	-0.8	-1.0	-1.3	-1.3	0.4	2.3	3.0
Malta	2.9	2.2	-0.4	0.6	0.1	1.9	2.7	2.7	3.1	..
Poland	5.5	1.9	0.3	0.3	0.8	1.5	1.7	3.3	4.6	4.4
Slovakia	7.0	3.3	7.5	7.8	9.1	9.5	8.4	8.1	7.5	6.3
Slovenia	8.6	7.6	6.5	5.7	5.6	4.9	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.4
EU new members-10	5.8	2.7	1.7	1.7	2.1	2.7	3.1	4.1	4.9	..
European Union-25	2.7	2.1	2.4	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.9	2.4	2.5	..
Iceland	6.4	5.2	1.7	2.1	1.9	2.5	2.1	3.1	3.6	..
Norway	3.0	1.3	4.5	2.2	1.9	1.2	-1.4	0.9	1.2	..
Switzerland	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.1	0.9	0.9	1.4
Western Europe	2.7	2.1	2.4	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.8	2.4	2.5	..
Canada	2.5	2.3	4.5	2.8	2.1	1.7	0.9	2.2	2.0	..
United States	2.8	1.7	2.9	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.8	2.8	2.7	..
North America	2.8	1.7	3.0	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.7	2.8	2.7	..
Israel	1.1	5.7	5.2	1.4	-1.6	-2.1	-2.5	-0.7	0.6	..

Coming up soon ...

31 January-4 February

Working Party on Brakes and Running Gear

31 January-4 February

Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport

1-4 February

Working Group of Parties to the Aarhus Convention

Source: UNECE Statistical Database, compiled from Eurostat, OECD and national sources

Note:
Regional aggregates are weighted averages of country indices. Weights are derived from private consumption expenditure converted from national into a common currency using 2000 Purchasing Power Parities.

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