



UNECE Weekly

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

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It's just happened ...

Sixtieth session of the Economic Commission for Europe

Highlights of the session, 22-25 February, included the release of the *Economic Survey of Europe 2005 No. 1* and a discussion on its findings, two round tables on the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development (ICFfD) in the UNECE region, as well as debates on sustainable development, on the UNECE's cooperation with OSCE and on UNECE reform.



In her introductory statement, Mrs. Brigita Schmögnerová, the UNECE Executive Secretary, stressed that as part of the United Nations, the UNECE has a role to play in helping countries to achieve internationally agreed goals. The UNECE contributes to the achievement of those goals through its work in fostering regional integration, but also provides a neutral forum where all countries can exchange experiences and participate in decision-making on an equal footing. Furthermore, UNECE ensures the links between the development challenges of the region and the global agenda of the United Nations.

Member States stressed that the UNECE is a valuable framework for policy dialogue and cooperation, making a useful contribution to economic cooperation. It was further stressed that the UNECE is an important institutional medium between the different economies in

the region, through the initiation and implementation of various activities such as development and harmonization of legislation and procedures, training activities and sharing technical knowledge.

The findings of the *Economic Survey of Europe, 2005 No. 1* served as background for a discussion on economic developments in the UNECE region. In his presentation, the Director of the Economic Analysis Division noted that the short-term outlook for Europe and the CIS is for economic growth to continue in 2005, albeit at significantly different rates in the major subregions. The euro area will continue to have a slower growth rate than the other major regions of the world economy. Within Europe, central and eastern Europe will continue to perform significantly better than the euro area. Economic growth will weaken somewhat in the CIS, but average rates will remain well above the European average. Despite these overall relatively favourable short-term growth prospects for Europe

and the CIS, there are a number of important issues that need to be addressed by economic policy to ensure that the basic conditions are in place for sustained and robust growth in the medium- and longer term.

Two round tables were held to discuss the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development (ICFfD) in the UNECE region.



Pascal Lamy, former Trade Commissioner of the European Commission, who gave the Gunnar Myrdal Lecture on the topic "Global Governance: Lessons from Europe"

In the context of sustainable development in the UNECE region, the Commission examined major policy options for water, sanitation and human settlements. It stressed that despite the progress achieved, there was a need for action-

oriented local and national measures as well as regional cooperation to speed up efforts to meet the internationally agreed development goals and Johannesburg Plan of Implementation commitments, particularly in countries in Eastern

Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia (EECCA) and some South-East European (SEE) countries.

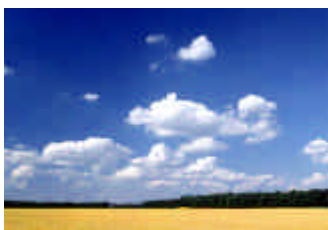
For more information contact UNECE Information Service (info.ece@unece.org)

New ...

Capacity Building for Air Quality Management and the Application of Clean Coal Combustion Technologies in Central Asia (CAPACT)

The first edition of the CAPACT Project newsletter is available in English and Russian on the web site <http://www.unece.org/ie/capact/>.

Implementation of the Project, developed by UNECE, UNESCAP and UNEP in collaboration with energy and environmental authorities in Central Asia, began in mid-2004 and its estimated duration is 3 years. Its aim is to help to identify the appropriate combustion technologies for the cleaner use of coal in the region, and also to raise the awareness of air quality management within the



institutions in Central Asia – air pollution, in particular from the energy sector and transport, is a significant problem in Central Asia. The Project deals specifically with implementation of the UNECE Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP). The participating

countries are Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

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A unique free database

Free Internet access to macroeconomic statistics on countries in the UNECE region is now publicly available on the web site of the UNECE Statistical Division: http://www.unece.org/stats/stats_h.htm.

The data are clearly and succinctly documented and explained, and updated on a daily basis, while downloads in a variety of formats are also available. Emphasis has been placed on making the data ready for immediate analytical use. Methodological breaks have been smoothed backwards to provide long continuous series. Data have been structured in themes to make them easy to find and use.

A variety of pre-calculated common transformations, such as growth rates, indices, shares etc., enhance its immediate usability.



Users may be particularly interested in the data on CIS and central and eastern European countries, which are difficult to find elsewhere in a single integrated database.

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Facts and figures:

Economic Growth in the UNECE Region
(Percentage change in real GDP)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
UNECE Region	1.5	2	2.5	3.9	3.2
European Union-15	1.8	1.1	0.9	2.3	2.2
EU new members-10	2.4	2.4	3.9	5.0	4.7
Other western Europe ¹	1.8	0.8	0.1	2.3	2.6
South-east Europe ²	-2.6	6.5	5.2	7.9	5.2
Commonwealth of Independent States	6.1	5.2	7.7	8.1	6.4
Canada & USA	0.8	2.0	3.0	4.3	3.3

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

1 Iceland, Norway, Switzerland.

2 Including Turkey.

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