



UNECE Weekly

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It's just happened ...

Trade facilitation as a key factor in economic development

«Trade facilitation is one of the key factors of economic development and world welfare», according to Tan Sri Abdul Halil bin Abd. Mutalib, Director General of the Royal Malaysian Customs Department, who opened the *Capacity Building Workshop on Trade Facilitation for Asia and the Pacific Region*. The Workshop, held on 17-18 March in Kuala Lumpur, was organized jointly by the United Nations regional economic commissions for Europe (UNECE) and for Asia and the Pacific region (UNESCAP), and took place under the auspices of the 6th Forum of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT). It was hosted by the Royal Malaysian Customs Department of the Ministry of Finance of Malaysia.

The Workshop discussed the current policy environment of trade facilitation, which is determined by the WTO talks on trade facilitation on GATT Articles V, VIII and X, and regional initiatives, including the APEC trade facilitation strategy and the ASEAN Single Window Initiative. It provided training in:

- Document simplification and standardization, moving from paper to better paper and to digital paper documents for trade
- Use of international codes
- Establishment and operation of a Single Window facility

Single Window facilities for trade documents and information and moving towards paperless trade were the major trade-facilitation-related issues of the region, as endorsed by participants.

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Coming up soon ...

*Launching of the AITIC Russian-language Glossary of Commonly Used International Trade Terms with Particular Reference to the WTO
7 April, Conference Room VII, 3 p.m.*

Following numerous requests of delegates from the economies in transition, most of which are UNECE member States, the Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation (AITIC) has developed a Russian-language version of its «Glossary of Commonly Used International Trade Terminology with Particular Reference to the WTO». The official WTO Glossary lists the most commonly used terms in the three official languages of the WTO (English, French, Spanish), whereas the AITIC glossary offers short definitions of WTO-related terms, some of which are not included in the WTO glossary (such as “built-in agenda”, “mailbox”, “mainstreaming”, “Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP)”, “Everything but Arms Initiative”, etc). It follows the WTO official translation of these terms, where they exist, so that for each term defined, its equivalents in French and Spanish are also given.

In addition to providing definitions of commonly used international trade and WTO-related terms, the AITIC glossary includes a compilation of international organizations, groups, associations, conferences and meetings of relevance to international trade and WTO issues, e.g. Cotonou Agreement, Miami Group, Like-Minded Group, etc. This Glossary is important for two reasons. Firstly, it will provide an important source of information on trade terms commonly used in trade negotiations and texts. Secondly, since it provides the equivalent terms in English, French and Spanish from the official WTO glossary, it will contribute to a more consistent interpretation and translation into Russian of trade related texts. This is particularly important for the translation of training materials and existing agreements into the Russian language.

For more information contact Virginia Cram-Martos (virginia.cram-martos@unece.org).

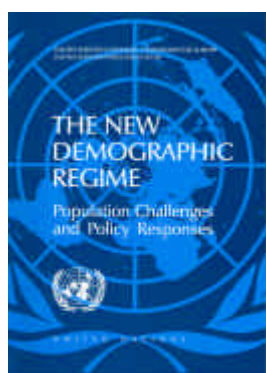
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Off the press ...

Environment and Human Settlements

A booklet just issued is intended to throw light on the UNECE's work on environment and human settlements. It explains the various conventions and programmes, and clarifies the role of international law and cooperation in improving our lives. Protecting the environment and improving the quality of life in cities and in the countryside are high among UNECE's priorities. The UNECE region is very diverse and includes some of the most economically and industrially developed countries in the world, but these same countries are the cause of two-thirds of the world's pollution, and are among the biggest consumers of natural resources and energy.

The booklet is available in English, French and Russian, from the UNECE Information Service (see address below).



The key note and background papers prepared for the European Population Forum 2004: Population Challenges and Policy Responses have just been issued in one publication, which it is hoped will serve as a valuable reference source for all those concerned with European and global population issues and policies. The Forum, held in January 2004, discussed the major challenges in the European context of low fertility – issues such as childbearing and parenting, morbidity and mortality, reproductive health and international migration, as well as global population and development trends. One of its tasks was also to appraise the implementation of the Programme of Action adopted at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo, as part of the worldwide decennial review.

Available at UN bookstores and distributors (Sales No. E.05.II.E.10)

Facts and figures:

Real GDP growth
Selected UNECE economies
(Change over same period of previous year, per cent)

	2001	2002	2003	2004			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
France	2.1	1.2	0.5	2.0	3.1	2.0	2.2
Germany	0.8	0.1	-0.1	0.9	1.4	1.2	0.6
Italy	1.8	0.4	0.3	0.7	1.2	1.2	0.8
Austria	0.7	1.2	0.8	1.4	1.9	2.5	2.4
Belgium	0.7	0.9	1.3	2.2	2.9	2.9	...
Finland	1.1	2.2	2.4	3.2	3.1	3.6	3.6
Greece	4.3	3.8	4.7	4.3	4.1	4.0	4.2
Ireland	6.0	6.1	3.7	6.1	4.1	6.3	...
Luxembourg	1.5	2.5	2.9
Netherlands	1.4	0.6	-0.9	1.0	1.6	1.8	1.0
Portugal	1.7	0.4	-1.1	0.7	1.8	0.9	0.6
Spain	2.8	2.2	2.5	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.7
Euro area-12	1.7	0.9	0.6	1.6	2.2	1.9	1.6
United Kingdom	2.3	1.8	2.2	3.0	3.6	3.1	2.9
Denmark	1.6	1.0	0.4	1.7	2.5	1.9	2.1
Sweden	1.0	2.0	1.5	2.8	3.3	3.3	2.6
European Union-15	1.8	1.1	0.9	1.8	2.4	2.1	1.9
New EU members	2.4	2.4	4.0	5.7	5.4	4.7	4.4
European Union-25	1.8	1.2	1.1	1.9	2.6	2.2	1.9
Norway	2.7	1.1	0.4	3.0	3.8	1.6	2.9
Switzerland	1.0	0.3	-0.4	1.5	2.1	1.9	1.2

Source: UNECE Statistical Database, compiled from Eurostat, OECD and national sources.
Note: Quarterly data are seasonally adjusted, unless otherwise specified.

Also coming up ...

5-8 April

Working Party on
Lighting and Light-
signalling

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