



UNECE Weekly

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It's just happened ...

Aarhus package adopted by European Commission

As the Aarhus Convention marks the second anniversary of its entry into force, the European Commission has adopted three legislative proposals to put the Convention into practice. If the European Commission's proposals are adopted, the provisions of the Aarhus Convention will apply in full to the European Union's bodies and institutions; it is also proposing a directive on access to justice in environmental matters and a decision on formally ratifying the Aarhus Convention. In effect this means that citizens' environmental rights at EU level would be strengthened – EU bodies and institutions will have to respond to requests from the public for specific environmental information and

give them access to environmental information such as on the state of the environment and the environmental media and citizens as well as their organizations will be able to play their part in the preparation of environmental policies and the enforcement of environmental law. According to the European Commission's proposals, the public will also be able to take EU bodies and institutions before the European Court of Justice if they do not comply with environmental legislation.

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Meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians

The Autumn meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) took place on 20-21 October in Washington D.C., USA. In between the plenary sessions of the CES, the Bureau coordinates the statistical activities within the UNECE region, and those of international organizations that often expand outside the UNECE region. The Bureau meeting was held first time in the United States and was chaired by Ms. Katherine

Wallman, Chief Statistician of the USA. The Bureau reviewed follow-up work to some major projects, such as measuring the activities of the multinational enterprises (the MNE project), Task Force on confidentiality and access to microdata, etc.

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Off the press ...

Ten Years of UNECE Environmental Performance Reviews

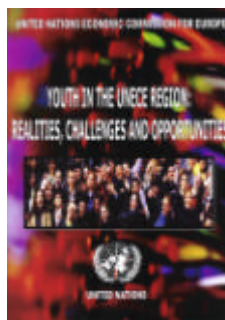
The objectives of the Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs) are to assist countries in transition to improve the management of the environment by establishing baseline conditions and making concrete recommendations for better policy implementation and performance; to promote dialogue among UNECE member countries; to integrate environmental policies into sectoral policies and to integrate further health aspects into environmental performance; to harmonize environmental conditions



and policies throughout the region and to contribute to sustainable development. Over the ten years since UNECE received its mandate to undertake EPRs, it has carried out reviews in 16 countries, and second or follow-up reviews in 7. To mark the decade, an analysis has been undertaken to review what has been learned throughout the programme and to use this analysis to determine its future scope and direction.

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Youth in the UNECE region



One of the goals of the Millennium Summit is to ensure that the risks facing vulnerable groups are minimized, while the opportunity sets available for them are widened. It was decided that UNECE would concentrate on promoting youth entrepreneurship, focusing on those countries in transition where youth unemployment was most acute and the threat of youth recruitment by

criminal and militant groupings was most real. UNECE has launched a youth entrepreneurship programme within the framework of its mandate, calling for the promotion of entrepreneurship and the development of SMEs in economies in transition; it used the First UNECE Forum on Youth held in 2002 to mobilize stakeholders in youth well-being. This publication represents a collection of presentations made by participants at the Forum.

Coming up soon ...

- 3-5 November Ad Hoc Meeting of Experts on the Convention on Civil Liability for Damage caused during the Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road, Rail and Inland Navigation Vessels (CRTD)
- 4-6 November Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

The UNECE has initiated a series of workshops on issues related to post-EU-enlargement economic cooperation and integration. The next Workshop, entitled "EU Enlargement: Regulatory Convergence in Non-acceding Countries", will take place in Athens on 7 and 8 November. The Workshop is supported by the Government of Greece. Common rules and standards are indispensable to ensure that the non-acceding countries benefit from the enlarged EU Internal Market. This Workshop will address how to increase economic cooperation and facilitate trade between the enlarged EU and non-

acceding countries through convergence of regulatory measures such as technical regulations and standards, and legislation. This series of workshops, which is being supported by the EU, is designed to help limit the prospect of new divisions arising in the region and to look at the new shape of relations between the enlarged EU and non-acceding countries. The programme and background papers for the Athens Workshop can be found at http://www.unece.org/trade/workshop/athens-1103/wrkshop_h.htm

Facts and figures:

Nominal short-term (3 months) interest rates

Selected UNECE economies

	2000	2001	2002	2002Q3	2002Q4	2003Q1	2003Q2	2003Q3
Euro area	4.46^a	4.26	3.32	3.36	3.11	2.68	2.36	2.14
United Kingdom	6.11	4.97	3.99	3.95	3.92	3.73	3.57	3.50
Denmark ^b	4.90	4.62	3.48	3.50	3.23	2.79	2.42	2.13
Sweden	3.95	4.00	4.07	4.21	3.88	3.55	3.14	2.70
European Union	4.67	4.35	3.43	3.46	3.24	2.85	2.54	2.32
Iceland ^b	11.15	10.98	8.00	7.62	6.17	5.55	4.86	5.06
Norway	6.75	7.23	6.91	7.22	6.94	5.72	4.74	3.13
Switzerland ^b	3.00	2.80	1.05	0.69	0.62	0.41	0.20	0.18
Canada	5.78	3.98	2.61	2.89	2.84	2.99	3.27	...
United States	6.46	3.69	1.73	1.76	1.49	1.26	1.17	1.07

Source: European Central Bank, *Monthly Bulletin*, OECD, *Main Economic Indicators*.

Notes: Values for the Euro Area are those applicable to all eleven countries that adopted the Euro currency as of 1 January 1999, and to Greece as of 1 January 2001. Quarterly values are averages of corresponding monthly values.

a/ In 2000 the value for Greece was 7.89, whereas the value common to all Euro area countries was 4.40, which resulted in a weighted average of 4.46.

b/ Calculated on the basis of the first two months of the quarter.

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