



UNECE Weekly

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It's just happened ...

New work on air pollution agreed

The 21st session of the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, 15-18 December, agreed on new work on persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and heavy metals for the coming year, in addition to its continuing programme addressing acidification, ozone and particulates.



This was also the 1st meeting of the Parties to the POPs Protocol that entered into force in October, it was thus important to ensure that the necessary steps were taken to initiate the review processes required by the Protocol. The session established a new Task Force to carry out the technical work, and procedures to link the Task Force's work to the decision making process; these will be used both to carry out reviews and assess new POPs proposed for addition to the current list of those banned or restricted under the terms of the Protocol. Already Norway has nominated pentaBDE, while other countries are lining up to suggest other POPs to add to the list. The Convention's Protocol on Heavy Metals will enter into force on 29 December. The POPs and heavy metals in these two Protocols have a wide range of harmful effects on man and wildlife. Some POPs are believed to cause birth defects or affect physical and intellectual development, some are carcinogenic, whilst others may harm the

immune system. Foetuses and infants are particularly at risk, exposed through the placenta or breast milk. The metals lead, cadmium and mercury have all been identified as having long-term effects on human health

The Executive Body also considered progress made towards review of the Gothenburg "multi-pollutant" Protocol that addresses the more traditional air pollutants – sulphur, nitrogen and volatile organics. This work is linked to the European Community's Clean Air for Europe (CAFE) programme and plans for future work are running in parallel as the European Community is a Party to the Convention and last June ratified the Gothenburg Protocol. Scientific reports to the Executive Body showed that most work was on track, and detailed plans for the coming year were agreed. The Executive Body considered cases of non-compliance with protocol obligations for Protocols already in force and took a number of decisions requesting some Parties to take steps to improve and/or explain the measures being taken to address their current shortfalls.

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e-WARD 2003-A signal towards Russia

On the occasion of this year's UN climate conference COP9 in Milan, the European Business Council for a Sustainable Energy Future (e5) and the Business Council for a Sustainable Energy (USA) awarded on 11 December the prestigious "Climate is Business e-WARD 2003". Zdravko Genchev, Vice-Chairman of the UNECE Energy Efficiency 21 Project received the special prize for the public sector. The Project establishes a very important Green Fund for energy efficiency projects in Eastern Europe and the Russian Federation. Since 2000 the business councils have awarded a "CLIMATE IS BUSINESS e-WARD" to two well-

known personalities, from politics and business respectively. The candidates are honoured for their willingness to dialogue and their achievement in finding consensus. Sending a positive business signal towards the Russian Federation is one driving force behind this year's nominations. The eWARD symbolises the union between economy and environment and focuses on e-energy, e-nvironment, e-efficiency, emissions, economy according to the spirit and the objectives of the business councils.

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Not an official record - For information only

Off the press ...



The EU is preparing for its biggest enlargement ever in terms of scope and diversity; it has recently launched a Wider Europe initiative so as to deepen its relation with the future neighbouring countries and reduce the economic and social impacts of enlargement. The UNECE has for over 50 years played an important role in

fostering European integration, inter alia by instruments to facilitate trade, transit and customs matters and promoting common legal instruments for transport, energy and environment. To address major issues regarding the new shape of relations between the enlarged EU and its future

neighbouring countries, the UNECE has, with the support of the EU, initiated a discussion on a Wider Europe through a series of workshops whose scope includes the non-acceding countries in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Caucasus and the Balkans.

This publication is based on the presentations and contributions to the Workshop on "Trade, Business and Investment in a Wider Europe", held on 7 April 2003 and papers relating to the topic. It presents to policy-makers the opportunities for further economic integration within the region after enlargement and provides a basis for further discussions on such important topics as the future integration process in the region.

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Facts and figures:

Gross wages per employee, total economy, growth rates

selected UNECE economies

	2000	2001	2002	2003	
				Q1	Q2
Bulgaria	15.0	9.1	7.0	6.1	6.5
Croatia	7.0	3.9	6.0	6.3	4.2
Czech Republic	6.5	8.4	7.3	8.2	7.9
Estonia	10.6	12.9	10.7	11.0	9.0
Hungary	13.5	18.2	18.1	15.3	13.1
Latvia	7.8	6.5	11.2	10.4	14.2
Lithuania	1.2	-2.1	5.0	3.4	4.5
Poland	12.7	7.0	3.4	1.8	2.4
Romania	46.7	48.8	27.3	26.0	22.4
Slovakia	6.4	8.3	9.3	6.5	...
Slovenia	10.6	11.9	9.8	8.2	8.0
Armenia	14.1	11.0	12.0	18.5	20.0
Azerbaijan	15.0	26.7	21.3	20.2	21.4
Belarus	201.9	110.3	53.5	33.2	31.3
Kazakhstan	25.9	25.6	17.4	14.2	14.3
Kyrgyzstan	21.7	18.1	16.1	18.3	...
Republic of Moldova	32.3	25.8	31.1	34.0	31.6
Russian Federation	42.5	45.7	34.5	24.9	24.4
Tajikistan	30.7	50.7	38.2	33.8	...
Turkmenistan	98.7	1.5
Ukraine	30.2	34.9	20.7	20.2	28.6
Uzbekistan	39.0	36.0

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Source: UNECE secretariat estimates based on national statistics.

Notes: Quarterly growth rates are changes over the same period of the previous year. Rates are not adjusted for inflation.