



# UNECE Weekly

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

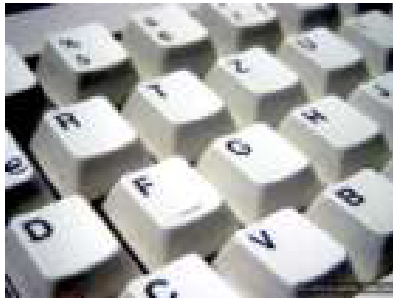
Issue N° 135 – 29 August-2 September 2005

## *It's just happened ...*

### **ITC and rural public information centres**

The UNECE Team of Experts on Internet Enterprise Development (TSIED) contributed to the organization of an international conference on the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) at rural Public Information Centres (PICs). The conference, held at Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on 16-17 August, discussed mainly the regulatory framework and use of the rural PICs for e-government, e-business, and e-education and e-health purposes. Real life examples from UNECE member countries as well as Asia, Africa and Latin America were examined. The conference further discussed issues on rural connectivity, evaluation of rural PICs projects and the establishment of an International Public Information Access Points Association.

The conference was co-organized by the Information Future Public Foundation, a non-for-profit organization headed by Mr. Nurbek A. Toichubaev, a bureau member of TSIED, the



Ministry of Transport and Communication of the Kyrgyz Republic, UNECE, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and the Soros Foundation. The Information Future Public Foundation has already set up over 30 self-sustainable PICs in rural areas in cooperation with the Government of Kyrgyzstan and the private sector.

The TSIED was established in 2000 under the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development. It provides a forum for UNECE member States for discussion on the use of the Internet for enterprise development, and assists in the creation of an enabling environment for e-commerce and Internet-based services development.

For more information contact Michiko Enomoto ([michiko.enomoto@unece.org](mailto:michiko.enomoto@unece.org)).

### **Aarhus Clearinghouse**

The [Aarhus Clearinghouse for Environmental Democracy](#) was launched just over one year ago to promote good practices in support of principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the Aarhus Convention. During its first year, the Clearinghouse has attracted more than 130,000 visits. Several thousand visitors now use the site on a regular basis to learn how the principles of the Aarhus Convention are being applied in practice. Last month (July 2005) more than 30,000 visits were made to the Clearinghouse.

The Clearinghouse's [Resource Directory](#) features 700 information resources on the laws and good practices relevant to the rights of public access to information, public participation in environmental decision-making and access to justice on

environmental issues. [Convention News](#) keeps Parties and other interested stakeholders informed of the latest developments.

Information gathered through the reporting requirements under the Aarhus Convention is fed into the Clearinghouse by national focal points of the Parties to the Convention. Non-governmental organizations may also submit information to the Clearinghouse through their national focal points or through the Aarhus Secretariat.

For more information, see the [Aarhus Clearinghouse for Environmental Democracy](#) website <http://aarhusclearinghouse.unece.org> or contact Michael Stanley-Jones ([michael.stanley-jones@unece.org](mailto:michael.stanley-jones@unece.org)).

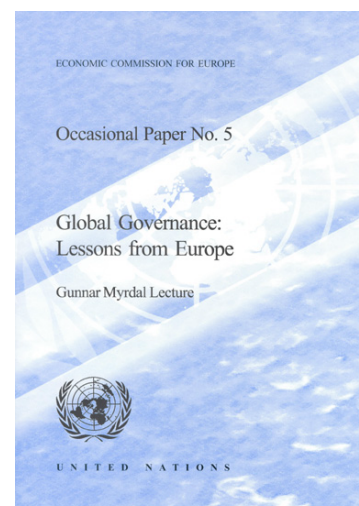
**Not an official record - For information only**

## Just issued ...

### Global governance: lessons from Europe

The text of the 2005 Gunnar Myrdal Lecture, delivered by Pascal Lamy, is now available in English and French.

**Abstract:** “[...] There are five lessons to be learnt. The first lesson teaches us that liberalization involves international cooperation. Like Janus, the globalization that has broken into our daily lives has two faces. One is all smiles and sees liberalization as a virtue and economic, social and cultural exchanges as a source of innovation and an opportunity for dialogue and understanding. The other face is far less becoming: it sees liberalization as a threat directed first at the weakest, as an irresistible pressure that destroys all identity and as an iron law of unbridled market capitalism. The free circulation of goods, services, capital and persons is nothing, then, but an unacknowledged war between national entities, multinational corporations and even civilizations. The free interplay of comparative advantage in the economic field, so dear to Gunnar Myrdal, can be but an illusion so long as norms, standards and regulations adopted by national authorities have a distorting effect on trade ...”.



## Coming up soon ...

31 August-2 September

Working Group on Effects

## Facts and figures:

Male and female smokers, 15 years and older in selected UNECE countries  
(Per cent of the total in the age group)

	1995		2000		2002	
	male	female	male	female	male	female
Austria	37.0	13.0	..	..	..	..
Belgium	33.0	24.0	36.0	26.0	30.0	25.0
Canada	27.4	23.6	21.2	18.4	20.2 <sup>1</sup>	15.9 <sup>1</sup>
Denmark	38.0	33.0	32.0	29.0	30.5	26.0
Finland	29.0	20.0	27.0	20.0	27.5	19.9
France	..	..	33.0	21.0	30.6	21.5
Germany	..	..	40.3	32.2	39.2 <sup>2</sup>	28.0 <sup>2</sup>
Greece	49.0	29.0	46.8	29.0	..	..
Iceland	26.7	26.9	23.3	22.5	24.5 <sup>1</sup>	22.8 <sup>1</sup>
Ireland	31.0	28.0	..	..	28.0	26.0
Israel	..	..	34.0	15.4	..	..
Italy	34.4	17.4	31.9	17.4	31.3	17.2
Luxembourg	28.0	28.0	34.0	26.0	35.0	25.0
Netherlands	40.7	31.1	35.9	29.2	37.9	29.2
Norway	33.7	32.1	31.3	31.1	28.8	29.4
Portugal	32.7	7.6	32.8	9.5	..	..
Spain	43.5	24.5	..	..	39.2 <sup>1</sup>	24.6 <sup>1</sup>
Sweden	22.0	26.6	16.8	21.0	16.3	19.3
Switzerland	..	..	..	..	37.0	29.0
United Kingdom	29.0	26.0	29.0	25.0	27.0	25.0
United States	22.0	18.3	21.2	17.3	..	..

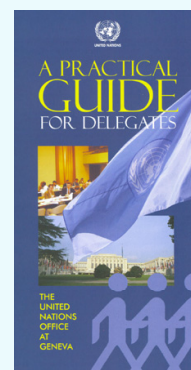
Source: UNECE Statistical Database compiled from national and WHO sources.

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> data refer to 2001.

<sup>2</sup> data refer to 2003.

The **Practical Guide for Delegates** is now available in English and French at <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm>. Information can be found there on accreditation procedures, facilities and services in the Palais des Nations, how to get there, etc.



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