



United Nations

UNECE Weekly

Economic Commission for Europe

Issue N° 324 — 22-26 June 2009

South-Eastern Europe risks missing its road safety target, UNECE warns

Despite encouraging results in reaching road traffic casualty reduction targets in some parts of Europe (e.g. France, Germany and the Netherlands), South-Eastern Europe is lagging behind. European Union countries have agreed to halve the number of fatalities between 2001 and 2010, and International Transport Forum Member States have committed to a 50% reduction by 2012 compared with 2000. But countries such as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Turkey have seen an increase in the number of casualties between 2000 and 2008. In Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia the numbers have stayed roughly the same (source: UNECE and WHO).

A regional road safety conference organized by UNECE in Halkida, Greece, on 25-26 June, will examine the road traffic safety situation in South-Eastern Europe. Representatives from all the countries in the region will discuss the global and European road safety contexts, report on national progress and share best practices.

This event is part of a series of United Nations regional commissions' workshops to promote the setting and implementation of regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets, the idea being that specific targets can help focus and motivate action.

"Road traffic casualties can be prevented with the political will to commit to specific targets and implement the necessary regulatory framework," said Eva Molnar, Director of the UNECE Transport Division. "With the heavy social, economic and financial burden that road traffic crashes represent, the question is whether countries can afford not to do so."



Countries which enforce the road traffic safety "basics" – the wearing of seatbelts and helmets, moderate speeds, limited permissible alcohol levels, etc. – all see a dramatic reduction in the number of people injured and killed.

The Conference is hosted by the Evia Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Hellenic Chambers Transport Association, with the support of the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Greece. ■

For more information about the conference in Greece or on UNECE road safety work visit <http://www.unece.org/trans/main/welcwp1.html>.

UNECE to participate in International Energy Conference, Vienna

UNECE will actively contribute to policy discussions at the International Energy Conference 2009 (Vienna, 22-24 June).

Organized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization in cooperation with the Austrian Development Cooperation and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, the conference will provide a platform for high-level policymakers, private sector and civil society representatives from developing and industrialized countries to discuss energy issues in the context of the current global financial and economic crisis.

Executive Secretary Ján Kubiš will be a discussant at a high-level panel on *An Integrated Energy Agenda Beyond 2020*. He will stress the need for increased international cooperation and highlight the contribution that UNECE initiatives can bring to address some of the world's most pressing challenges: sustainable development, climate change, and global, environmental and food security.

UNECE's Energy Efficiency 21 project will be presented in a session on energy efficiency in industry. UNECE is establishing a privately-managed €250 million public-private partnership equity fund which will target energy efficiency and renewable investment projects in 12 countries in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe.

It recently launched the Global Energy Efficiency 21 Project (GEE21), which aims at transferring its experience to other regions of the world through cooperation with the United Nations regional commissions.

UNECE's energy efficiency market formation activities also involve capacity building of local experts to develop investment projects, work with local authorities on government policy reforms and to facilitate opportunities for project finance through externally managed public-private partnership investment funds.

The conference aims at contributing to the shaping of global climate policy by providing input to the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, 7 to 18 December. ■

For more information contact [Gianluca Sambucini](mailto:Gianluca.Sambucini@unece.org) (info.energy@unece.org).



Information Service
UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
CH - 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Tel: +41 (0) 22 917 44 44
Fax: +41 (0) 22 917 05 05

E-mail: info.ece@unece.org
Website: <http://www.unece.org>

Not an official record - For information only

Trade facilitation and the Single Window

UNECE is organizing a regional seminar on trade facilitation, the Single Window for export and import clearance, and data harmonization, for countries of the South Caucasus and their immediate neighbours on 23-24 June 2009, in Tbilisi, Georgia.

The seminar is part of a series of regional initiatives on the Single Window and alignment with international standards, which UNECE is organizing together with the other key international organizations working in this area. Similar initiatives have already been launched in South-East Europe, the countries of the Eurasian Economic Community and in Central Asia. Linking the countries of the South Caucasus to the broader European integration processes, and fostering harmonized trade information flows between Europe and South and Central Asia via the Caucasus region, are two long-term objectives of this initiative.

The Single Window is a system that allows all participants in international trade and transport to file the requested information in only one place, in a standard format, in order to carry out import, export and transit operations. It contributes to fostering legitimate trade flows, economic growth and sustainable development.

Most of the countries in the South Caucasus have already developed projects for Single Window systems or electronic Customs, but a key issue is the need to use the same standards and codes for the exchange of information. UNECE and its subsidiary body — the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) — have developed a series of recommendations, standards and codes which provide the lingua franca allowing various trade control bodies, businesses and Single Window systems to exchange information smoothly, using modern automated information and communication technologies. ■

For more information contact Mario Apostolov (mario.apostolov@unece.org).

FACTS AND FIGURES

Number of persons killed in road traffic crashes

	2000	2001	2005	2008
Albania	280	297	307	499
Bosnia and Herzegovina	302	254	..	428
Bulgaria	1 012	1 011	957	1006
Croatia	655	647	597	619
Cyprus	111	98	102	89
France	7 643	7 720	5 318	4620
Germany	7 503	6 977	5 361	4949
Greece	2 037	1 880	..	1657
Hungary	1 200	1 239	1 278	1232
Montenegro	122
Netherlands	1 082	993	..	791
Republic of Moldova	406	420	391	571
Romania	2 499	2 461	2 641	2712
Serbia	962
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	162	107	143	140
Turkey	5 510	4 386	4 496	6022

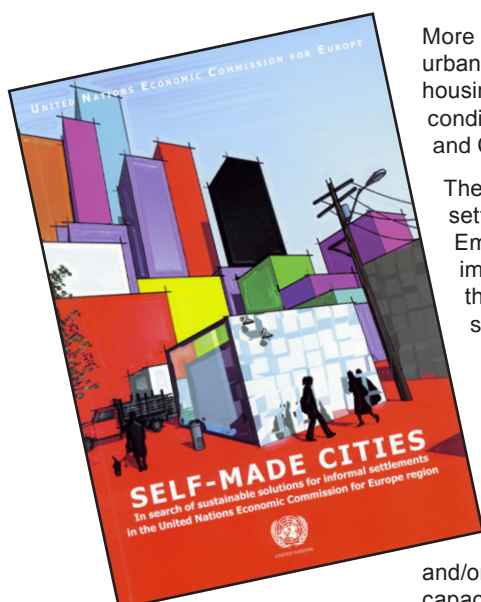
Source:

UNECE Transport Division Database for 2000, 2001 and 2005 figures
WHO Global Status Report on Road Safety for 2008 figures

Definition: Killed: Any person who was killed outright or who died within 30 days as a result of the accident.

Greece: persons recorded as killed are those who die within 3 days of the accident; persons who die later are recorded as injured.

Self-made cities



More than 50 million people in 15 UNECE member States live in informal settlements. Rapid urbanization, poverty and lack of access to land and ownership, in addition to limited or no social housing, have led citizens to build their homes illegally under very poor environmental and social conditions. The phenomenon is growing at an exponential rate in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and calls for urgent political, legal and planning solutions.

The study *Self-made Cities* provides a general overview of the phenomenon of informal settlements in the UNECE region and identifies policy responses to address these challenges. Emphasis is given to practices that can facilitate access to affordable land and housing and improve the livelihoods of residents in informal settlements, and in general to strategies that stand to better the physical, social, economic and environmental situation of informal settlements.

Self-made Cities analyses the various causes of formation of informal settlements, which include the following: regional migrations that are the result of rapid urbanization, war, and natural disasters; poverty and the lack of low-cost housing; excessive regulations by administrative authorities; inappropriate planning and inadequate land administration tools.

The study – the first of its kind – aims to assist policymakers, decision-makers, planners and local authorities in their efforts to improve living conditions in informal settlements and/or find alternative solutions. It is an initial step towards the development of practical and capacity-building activities in this area, which will facilitate the implementation of sound policies and actions. ■

An informal settlement is a residential formation where housing has been constructed without the required legal permit for use of the land or outside any urban development plan. In general, residents of informal settlements lack the legal rights to the land and the house where they live and become vulnerable to eviction. In addition, because of their improvised nature, units often lack basic facilities such as running water and sanitation, which creates further challenges to public authorities.

Available from the UN Publications, Sales and Marketing Section (unogbookshop@unog.ch)