



Economic Commission for Europe**Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships****Fourteenth session**

Geneva, 2-4 June 2021

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Innovation and Competitiveness Policies**Status of the Innovation for Sustainable Development
Reviews of Armenia, the Republic of Moldova, and
Uzbekistan****Note by the Secretariat****I. Background**

1. ECE began a programme of Innovation Performance Reviews in 2010. Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Ukraine underwent such reviews, released as official UN publications. These reviews are country-led and participatory, where international experts assess the national innovation system, policies, institutions and propose a set of policy recommendations for further improvements for reforms. Following an international peer review and publication, ECE works with the country to support subsequent reform efforts.

In 2015, the methodology was updated to reflect the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and ECE Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews (henceforth referred to as I4SDRs) have since been completed and issued as official UN publications for Belarus, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan.

2. Under a further updated methodology, in 2020, Georgia became the first country to select elective, in-depth chapters addressing national policy priorities for sustainable development. The country selected two topics for these in-depth chapters: “Public procurement and financing as drivers of innovative development” and “Innovation and growth dynamics in Georgian enterprises”. The I4SDR was launched in the country and submitted as an official UN publication in December 2020.¹

II. Current status of the reviews

3. Following the success of this pilot approach in the case of Georgia with positive feedback from stakeholders, the Republic of Moldova selected three topics for these in-depth chapters: “Boosting industry-science linkages and technology commercialization”; “Developing the innovation and technology transfer infrastructure in the Republic of Moldova”; and “Role of the Republic of Moldova diaspora in promoting innovation for sustainable development”.

¹ See <https://unece.org/economic-cooperation-and-integration/publications/innovation-sustainable-development-review-georgia>

Uzbekistan selected the following elective topics for in-depth chapters: “Boosting industry-science linkages and technology commercialization” and “Developing the innovation and technology transfer infrastructure in Uzbekistan”. A similar approach is expected to be taken in the case of Armenia, following a consultation with the national authorities and stakeholders in the national innovation system.

4. Extrabudgetary support for the I4SDRs of Armenia (planned), Georgia (completed) and the Republic of Moldova was provided by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) under the project “Promoting innovation policy capacities in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus”. This followed requests from these countries to receive I4SDRs which, under this project, complement ECE’s pilot subregional Innovation Policy Outlook (henceforth referred to as IPO) of Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus that analyses the innovation policies and processes of six countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine) in a comparative perspective.

5. Extrabudgetary support for the I4SDR of Uzbekistan has been provided by the Russian Federation under the project “Strengthening the capacity of CIS countries to promote innovation for sustainable development in the context of the digital economy and Industry 4.0”.

6. The I4SDR of the Republic of Moldova was initiated alongside an IPO fact-finding mission to Chisinau on 15 – 17 January 2020, which provided the opportunity to consider options for elective chapters. This mission was followed by a formal agreement on elective topics for in-depth chapters by written correspondence (February – March 2020) with the national focal point, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research. Desk research has since been carried out on economic conditions, innovation performance, the national innovation system, its governance, institutions and policies (November 2020 – February 2021). Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, a virtual fact-finding process involving extensive interviews with national stakeholders is taking place (March – May 2021), with findings and policy recommendations to be peer-reviewed in a virtual process planned to begin in June 2021. Following incorporation of changes to reflect the peer review process, the I4SDR will be finalised, a national launch event organised and the final manuscript submitted as an official UN publication by the end of 2021.

7. The I4SDR of Uzbekistan was formally launched through a webinar on 5 March 2020, which brought together around 60 participants, including Government representatives, the private sector, academia, the research community, experts, international organisations and the Secretariat. It provided the opportunity to discuss options for elective chapters and decide their final selection. Desk research has since been carried out on economic conditions, innovation performance, the national innovation system, its governance, institutions and policies (March 2020 – April 2021). Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, a virtual fact-finding process involving extensive interviews with national stakeholders is taking place (April – June 2021), with findings and policy recommendations to be peer-reviewed in a virtual process planned to begin in Q3 2021. Following the incorporation of changes to reflect the peer review process, the I4SDR will be finalised, a national launch event organised, and the final manuscript submitted as an official UN publication by early 2022.

8. The research process for I4SDR of Armenia will begin in Q3 of 2021.
