NOTE:

The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations or its officials or member States.

Links contained in the present publication are provided for the convenience of the reader and are correct at the time of issue. The United Nations takes no responsibility for the continued accuracy of that information or for the content of any external website.

This publication is issued in English.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction by the Executive Secretary
2. 2022 Highlights
3. Support to Ukraine
4. Technical cooperation in the UNECE region
5. Climate action
6. Stepping up for biodiversity
7. Circular economy
8. Gender equality
9. UN collaboration advances in new regional architecture
10. Budget
11. UNECE member States
12. Media impact
Introduction by the Executive Secretary

2022 was among the most challenging years we have faced since the establishment of UNECE seventy-five years ago. The invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation on 24 February marked a turning point in the history of the UNECE region. The ongoing impacts of immense human suffering, the protracted COVID-19 pandemic, and the urgent need to transition to sustainable development have powered the largest refugee movement Europe has seen in close to 80 years, and destruction of settlements and infrastructure will be felt for many years to come.

The economic shocks amplified by the war, including increased inflation, public debt increase, disruption to markets and key supply chains, and the ensuing energy crisis are having huge socioeconomic consequences for our region and the entire world, piling pressure on those already enduring the most vulnerable situations. UNECE has been fully engaged to provide dedicated assistance to Ukraine and other affected countries within its mandate – including by supporting the development of reconstruction master plans for the cities of Kharkiv and Mykolaiv, and to guide preparations for the country’s future low carbon energy infrastructure, to cite just a few areas.

I express my solidarity with the people of Ukraine and all those affected by the war and call for the application of the UN General Assembly resolutions on Ukraine’s territorial integrity, the respect of the country’s future low carbon energy infrastructure, to cite just a few areas.

Against this stark backdrop, I am proud that UNECE has delivered its programme of work in full, and I am pleased to share some highlights of our actions in this report. Our organization has embraced the SDGs targets and the need to accelerate the shift to a more sustainable and circular economy, and UNECE is steadfast in its commitment to help countries overcome the multiple crises we face today and help steer the region onto a sustainable course before it is too late.

Further strengthening targeted support to UN Country Teams and Resident Coordinators over the past twelve months has played an important role in this respect. UNECE has also continued to mobilize its Regional Advisors, and to strengthen ties with UN partners in the region through the Regional Collaborative Platform (RCP) for Europe and Central Asia and the Issue-Based Coalitions.

Across the region, women and girls continued to face particularly harsh odds in 2022, with the pandemic and all major challenges – from climate impacts to the complex consequences of conflict in our region – having significant gendered impacts, which in many cases affect women disproportionately. With the off-track or lacking data for 8 out of 9 gender-related SDG targets, UNECE pushed ahead with its efforts to advance women’s empowerment in all areas of its work – from strengthening women’s capacities in the green energy transition, to supporting women entrepreneurs, measuring gender quality, advancing gender in environmental policy, to mention just a few areas – but we must all do much more to shore up the foundations for a gender equal future enshrined in the vision of the 2030 Agenda.

Through reinforced technical cooperation with our 17+1 member States with economies in transition, practical normative tools and valued policy dialogue, UNECE pushed ahead with its efforts to advance women’s empowerment in all areas of its work – from strengthening women’s capacities in the green energy transition, to supporting women entrepreneurs, measuring gender quality, advancing gender in environmental policy, to mention just a few areas – but we must all do much more to shore up the foundations for a gender equal future enshrined in the vision of the 2030 Agenda.

I am proud that Ministers at the 5th UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing in Rome, affirmed the region’s collective commitment for even closer cooperation to achieve a world in which everyone, at any age, can live their life to the fullest, underscoring the importance of sustainability, solidarity between generations and of upholding human rights.

Asaging in a global context and the countries in our region continue to be at the forefront of this global demographic transformation: today one in six people in the region are over the age of 65, by 2050 this will be the case for one in four.

Ramped-up efforts to align the region’s economic development with the green and low carbon transition was a key theme shaping our work in 2022 – from the renewed-commitment garnered through the Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference in Nicosia, to advocating for reneged climate action including increased sustainable financing for Critical Raw Materials at COP27 in Sharm-El-Sheikh.

UNEC’s joint efforts with its sister Regional Commissions were also strengthened in 2022, during which UNECE held the coordinating role. We spoke with one voice to raise the profile of the regional scale and to underscore the importance of cooperation within and between regions to address global challenges at several key international discussions, including on sustainable urban development, road safety, climate change, 2030 Agenda implementation and biodiversity at COP15 in Montreal.

At the last Commission session in 2021, UNECE member States raised their ambition to accelerate the shift to a more sustainable and circular economy, and called on UNECE to harness its leading regulatory and policy work in areas as diverse as vehicle regulations, statistics and forestry to support these efforts. I am proud of the progress made in this crucial area in 2022: the publication of a first-of-its-kind framework on waste statistics is just one example that can help countries. But, with the global circularity rate still at only 8.6%, and as a major producer and consumer of resources, our region still has a long way to go.

As we look ahead to the 70th session of the Commission in April 2023, I look forward to reflecting with our member States on how we can best harness UNECE’s 75 years of multilateral cooperation on regulatory and policy instruments to respond to the opportunities and challenges of the digital and green transition, which are priority areas for our region. The insights of the UNECE Youth Dialogue, held for the first time in December 2022 and gathering some 200 young changemakers from across the region, provided special inspiration for these important discussions, as together we seek to make the Commission fit for the great challenges ahead.

I am proud that Ministers at the 5th UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing in Rome, affirmed the region’s collective commitment for even closer cooperation to achieve a world in which everyone, at any age, can live their life to the fullest, underscoring the importance of sustainability, solidarity between generations and of upholding human rights. Ageing in a global context and the countries in our region continue to be at the forefront of this global demographic transformation: today one in six people in the region are over the age of 65, by 2050 this will be the case for one in four.

Ramped-up efforts to align the region’s economic development with the green and low carbon transition was a key theme shaping our work in 2022 – from the renewed-commitment garnered through the Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference in Nicosia, to advocating for reneged climate action including increased sustainable financing for Critical Raw Materials at COP27 in Sharm-El-Sheikh.

UNEC’s joint efforts with its sister Regional Commissions were also strengthened in 2022, during which UNECE held the coordinating role. We spoke with one voice to raise the profile of the regional scale and to underscore the importance of cooperation within and between regions to address global challenges at several key international discussions, including on sustainable urban development, road safety, climate change, 2030 Agenda implementation and biodiversity at COP15 in Montreal.

At the last Commission session in 2021, UNECE member States raised their ambition to accelerate the shift to a more sustainable and circular economy, and called on UNECE to harness its leading regulatory and policy work in areas as diverse as vehicle regulations, statistics and forestry to support these efforts. I am proud of the progress made in this crucial area in 2022: the publication of a first-of-its-kind framework on waste statistics is just one example that can help countries. But, with the global circularity rate still at only 8.6%, and as a major producer and consumer of resources, our region still has a long way to go.

As we look ahead to the 70th session of the Commission in April 2023, I look forward to reflecting with our member States on how we can best harness UNECE’s 75 years of multilateral cooperation on regulatory and policy instruments to respond to the opportunities and challenges of the digital and green transition, which are priority areas for our region. The insights of the UNECE Youth Dialogue, held for the first time in December 2022 and gathering some 200 young changemakers from across the region, provided special inspiration for these important discussions, as together we seek to make the Commission fit for the great challenges ahead.

I am proud that Ministers at the 5th UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing in Rome, affirmed the region’s collective commitment for even closer cooperation to achieve a world in which everyone, at any age, can live their life to the fullest, underscoring the importance of sustainability, solidarity between generations and of upholding human rights. Ageing in a global context and the countries in our region continue to be at the forefront of this global demographic transformation: today one in six people in the region are over the age of 65, by 2050 this will be the case for one in four.

Ramped-up efforts to align the region’s economic development with the green and low carbon transition was a key theme shaping our work in 2022 – from the renewed-commitment garnered through the Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference in Nicosia, to advocating for reneged climate action including increased sustainable financing for Critical Raw Materials at COP27 in Sharm-El-Sheikh.

UNEC’s joint efforts with its sister Regional Commissions were also strengthened in 2022, during which UNECE held the coordinating role. We spoke with one voice to raise the profile of the regional scale and to underscore the importance of cooperation within and between regions to address global challenges at several key international discussions, including on sustainable urban development, road safety, climate change, 2030 Agenda implementation and biodiversity at COP15 in Montreal.

At the last Commission session in 2021, UNECE member States raised their ambition to accelerate the shift to a more sustainable and circular economy, and called on UNECE to harness its leading regulatory and policy work in areas as diverse as vehicle regulations, statistics and forestry to support these efforts. I am proud of the progress made in this crucial area in 2022: the publication of a first-of-its-kind framework on waste statistics is just one example that can help countries. But, with the global circularity rate still at only 8.6%, and as a major producer and consumer of resources, our region still has a long way to go.

As we look ahead to the 70th session of the Commission in April 2023, I look forward to reflecting with our member States on how we can best harness UNECE’s 75 years of multilateral cooperation on regulatory and policy instruments to respond to the opportunities and challenges of the digital and green transition, which are priority areas for our region. The insights of the UNECE Youth Dialogue, held for the first time in December 2022 and gathering some 200 young changemakers from across the region, provided special inspiration for these important discussions, as together we seek to make the Commission fit for the great challenges ahead.
UNECE assumed the coordination role of the UN Regional Commissions for 2022, showcasing regional solutions to the world’s global challenges and reaffirming the importance of the regional perspective in designing a sustainable future.

The Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) marked 20 years of cross-sectoral cooperation in the region. 2022 saw the launch of work towards a Pan-European Masterplan on Walking.

A UNECE report on e-commerce in transition economies found that the pandemic exacerbated the digital gap, and highlighted how UN/CEFACT standards can help address this.

Some 50 Ministers and leaders from around the world marked 75 years of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and reaffirmed its critical role for the future of sustainable mobility.

The Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) marked 20 years of cross-sectoral cooperation in the region. 2022 saw the launch of work towards a Pan-European Masterplan on Walking.

UNECE’s 2022 SDGs report showed that halfway to 2030, the region is on track to achieve only 26 of 169 SDG targets, calling for strengthened commitment.

On International Women’s Day, UNECE reaffirmed its commitment to advancing women’s economic empowerment. The Gender-Responsive Standards Initiative now mobilizes 80 standard-setters worldwide.

The Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) marked 20 years of cross-sectoral cooperation in the region. 2022 saw the launch of work towards a Pan-European Masterplan on Walking.

UNECE’s 2022 SDGs report showed that halfway to 2030, the region is on track to achieve only 26 of 169 SDG targets, calling for strengthened commitment.

Some 50 Ministers and leaders from around the world marked 75 years of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and reaffirmed its critical role for the future of sustainable mobility.

UNECE’s 2022 SDGs report showed that halfway to 2030, the region is on track to achieve only 26 of 169 SDG targets, calling for strengthened commitment.

UNECE’s 2022 SDGs report showed that halfway to 2030, the region is on track to achieve only 26 of 169 SDG targets, calling for strengthened commitment.
Launch of a pilot project to develop the reconstruction master plan for the city of Kharkiv under the multi-agency UN4Kharkiv initiative. UNECE also mobilized international architects to help the city of Mykolaiv in developing a master plan for its recovery and rebuilding.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia agreed on a cross-sectoral roadmap to improve transboundary cooperation in the management of natural resources in the Drina basin, with support under the Water Convention.

UNECE, Doha and partners released recommendations to smooth the movement of disaster relief across borders.

The 6th UNECE International PPP Forum in Barcelona showcased 16 examples of green, circular, inclusive, and resilient infrastructure projects using the UNECE PPP Evaluation Methodology for the SDGs. Based on the PPPs for the SDGs approach, UNECE built capacity to implement its tools in Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

Release of guidance to help countries measure social exclusion, and to help countries close data gaps on vulnerable children.

Chief Statisticians reaffirmed Official statistics as the shared foundation of an informed society and bedrock of democracy 30 years since the adoption by UNECE of Fundamental Principles – now a General Assembly-endorsed global standard.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia agreed on a cross-sectoral roadmap to improve transboundary cooperation in the management of natural resources in the Drina basin, with support under the Water Convention.

UNECE, Doha and partners released recommendations to smooth the movement of disaster relief across borders.

The 6th UNECE International PPP Forum in Barcelona showcased 16 examples of green, circular, inclusive, and resilient infrastructure projects using the UNECE PPP Evaluation Methodology for the SDGs. Based on the PPPs for the SDGs approach, UNECE built capacity to implement its tools in Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

Release of guidance to help countries measure social exclusion, and to help countries close data gaps on vulnerable children.

Chief Statisticians reaffirmed Official statistics as the shared foundation of an informed society and bedrock of democracy 30 years since the adoption by UNECE of Fundamental Principles – now a General Assembly-endorsed global standard.

UNECE, Doha and partners released recommendations to smooth the movement of disaster relief across borders.

The 6th UNECE International PPP Forum in Barcelona showcased 16 examples of green, circular, inclusive, and resilient infrastructure projects using the UNECE PPP Evaluation Methodology for the SDGs. Based on the PPPs for the SDGs approach, UNECE built capacity to implement its tools in Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

Release of guidance to help countries measure social exclusion, and to help countries close data gaps on vulnerable children.

Chief Statisticians reaffirmed Official statistics as the shared foundation of an informed society and bedrock of democracy 30 years since the adoption by UNECE of Fundamental Principles – now a General Assembly-endorsed global standard.

The World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations adopted a UN Regulation extending automated driving up to 130 km/h in certain conditions. It also adopted a strengthened UN regulation on emergency braking for trucks and coaches.

The Rome Ministerial Conference on Ageing reaffirmed the commitment of UNECE member States to policy action for solidarity and equal opportunities throughout life. Today one in six people in the region are over the age of 65, by 2050 this will be the case in one in four.

UNECE supported Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine in advance strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and transboundary environmental impact assessment in line with the Espoo Convention and the Protocol on SEA.

The World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations adopted a UN Regulation extending automated driving up to 130 km/h in certain conditions. It also adopted a strengthened UN regulation on emergency braking for trucks and coaches.

The Rome Ministerial Conference on Ageing reaffirmed the commitment of UNECE member States to policy action for solidarity and equal opportunities throughout life. Today one in six people in the region are over the age of 65, by 2050 this will be the case in one in four.

UNECE supported Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine in advance strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and transboundary environmental impact assessment in line with the Espoo Convention and the Protocol on SEA.

The World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations adopted a UN Regulation extending automated driving up to 130 km/h in certain conditions. It also adopted a strengthened UN regulation on emergency braking for trucks and coaches.

The Rome Ministerial Conference on Ageing reaffirmed the commitment of UNECE member States to policy action for solidarity and equal opportunities throughout life. Today one in six people in the region are over the age of 65, by 2050 this will be the case in one in four.

UNECE supported Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine in advance strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and transboundary environmental impact assessment in line with the Espoo Convention and the Protocol on SEA.
The 2022 REN21 and UNECE Renewable Energy Status Report highlighted that breakthrough growth in renewables in South-East and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia must be accelerated to end fossil fuel dependency and boost energy security.

Member States decided to develop specifications for the application of the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC) to Hydrogen.

A UNECE technology brief showed that carbon neutrality is still within reach despite the current energy and geopolitical crises, but bold action must start now, harnessing all available technological and policy solutions.

Central Asian countries collaborate to enhance sustainable trade growth via the SPECA Working Group on Trade.

A study under the Air Convention confirmed that ecosystems are more sensitive to nitrogen pollution than previously assumed. UNECE Guidance can help tackle emissions.

At the 27th World Water Week held in Stockholm, the secretariat of the Water Convention contributed to several sessions and promoted sustainable transboundary water cooperation.

The Third High-Level Meeting of Education and Environment Ministries adopted the future implementation framework for the UNECE regional strategy for Education for Sustainable Development to help build populations’ capacities to play an active role in environmental governance.

The 7th pan-European environmental assessment by UNECE and UNEP called for greater action to tackle the triple planetary crisis affecting climate, nature and pollution.

The Ministerial Declaration adopted at the 9th Environment for Europe Conference affirmed countries’ commitment to move to a green economy with sustainable infrastructure at its core.

The San Marino Declaration outlined a first-of-its-kind set of “Principles for Sustainable and Inclusive Urban Design and Architecture”, supported by leading architects including Lord Norman Foster and Stefano Boeri.

The 7th pan-European environmental assessment by UNECE and UNEP called for greater action to tackle the triple planetary crisis affecting climate, nature and pollution.

A study under the Air Convention confirmed that ecosystems are more sensitive to nitrogen pollution than previously assumed. UNECE Guidance can help tackle emissions.

The Ministerial Declaration adopted at the 9th Environment for Europe Conference affirmed countries’ commitment to move to a green economy with sustainable infrastructure at its core.

The San Marino Declaration outlined a first-of-its-kind set of “Principles for Sustainable and Inclusive Urban Design and Architecture”, supported by leading architects including Lord Norman Foster and Stefano Boeri.
Kazakhstan became the first country in Central Asia to use the SPECA Principles of Sustainable Trade in its sustainable development plans.

The Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health brought countries together to tackle rising climate risks to water and sanitation at the heart of COVID-19 recovery efforts. 16 million people in the region still lack access to basic drinking water and 29 million do not have basic access to sanitation services.

UNECE was fully engaged at COP27 to highlight opportunities for concrete climate action, leveraging UNECE tools, including for decarbonization of the energy sector, strengthened water cooperation, enhanced value chain traceability, climate-resilient urban development and sustainable resource management. A portfolio of thirty high-impact climate action investment projects from the UNECE region was presented.

The UNECE Expert Group on Resource Management approved the UN Resources Management System based on UNFC to support the low-carbon and circular economy transitions.

Countries reaffirmed the need for cooperation on sustainable forest management, building on 75 years of cooperation supported jointly by UNECE and FAO. UNECE marked its commitment with the planting of a 75-tree forest in San Marino.

UNECE and UNEPMS rollout continued worldwide, including through the adoption of UNFC Guidance for Europe, use of a UNFC-based system by the African Union Commission, endorsement of the Bridging Documents for China’s resource management, and capacity building in Latin America. Queensland, Australia, became the first jurisdiction to legislate the application of UNFC to Geothermal energy.

UNFC and UNEPMS rollout continued worldwide, including through the adoption of UNFC Guidance for Europe, use of a UNFC-based system by the African Union Commission, endorsement of the Bridging Documents for China’s resource management, and capacity building in Latin America. Queensland, Australia, became the first jurisdiction to legislate the application of UNFC to Geothermal energy.

The UN-ECE Transformative Innovation Network (ETIN) was launched to facilitate peer learning among policymakers, innovation agencies, think tanks, entrepreneurs, and experts.

Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) discussed for the first time the role of PRTRs in supporting access to information on plastic pollution.

A technology brief identified pathways to carbon-neutrality in “energy intensive” steel, chemicals and cement industries, which account for about 25% of total CO₂ emissions globally and 66% of those of the industrial sector.

UNECE was fully engaged at COP27 to highlight opportunities for concrete climate action, leveraging UNECE tools, including for decarbonization of the energy sector, strengthened water cooperation, enhanced value chain traceability, climate-resilient urban development and sustainable resource management. A portfolio of thirty high-impact climate action investment projects from the UNECE region was presented.

The Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health brought countries together to tackle rising climate risks to water and sanitation at the heart of COVID-19 recovery efforts. 16 million people in the region still lack access to basic drinking water and 29 million do not have basic access to sanitation services.

Adoption of new standards that will boost international trade for dried persimmon, peanuts, and certain small fruits.

Marking 30 years of progress, Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention strengthened cooperation to address risks from climate change, natural hazards and the green energy transition and welcomed Ukraine as the 42nd Party to the Convention.

With water stress on the rise in shared river basins and aquifers, over 30 governments and organizations formed a Coalition to push for greater cross-border water cooperation.

The World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations adopted two new regulations to improve the safety of vulnerable road users.

The UN-ECE Youth Dialogue for the first time brought together some 200 young people from 38 countries to share priorities for the future of the UNECE region.

The UN-ECE Transformative Innovation Network (ETIN) was launched to facilitate peer learning among policymakers, innovation agencies, think tanks, entrepreneurs, and experts.

UNECE member States endorse three policy documents to guide governments in their infrastructure and PPP finance decisions.

UNECE and the European Commission’s DG MOVE join hands to help implement the EU Electronic Freight Transport Information (eFTI) Regulation, using UN/CEFACT semantic standards and reference data models.

First eTIR transport between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan, paving the way to a digital era in international transport and transit.

UNECE and the European Commission’s DG MOVE join hands to help implement the EU Electronic Freight Transport Information (eFTI) Regulation, using UN/CEFACT semantic standards and reference data models.
The Executive Secretary visited Kyiv in October 2022 to discuss UNECE support to Ukraine’s reconstruction.

UNECE is part of the UN Country Team in Ukraine, and all responses are coordinated through the Office of the Resident Coordinator.

Support to Ukraine

Since the start of the war, UNECE has responded to a number of requests for assistance from the government of Ukraine.
UNECE launched a pilot project to develop the reconstruction master plan for the city of Kharkiv under the UN4Kharkiv initiative. The master plan is being developed, with pro-bono inputs from the Norman Foster Foundation (the UNECE Centre of Excellence on smart sustainable cities), with the active engagement of the local population and local architects. Building on this experience, UNECE is preparing Framework Guidelines for the development of reconstruction programmes of other cities and regions. UNECE has also mobilized international architects to help the city of Mykolaiv in developing a master plan for its reconstruction. Visions for the master plans for Kharkiv and Mykolaiv were presented in December 2022, building on surveys involving 18,000 and 8,000 local people in the respective cities.

Unlocking the potential of renewable energy in Ukraine

UNECE is conducting an assessment of Ukraine's critical raw material resources and the role these can play in building a low-carbon energy infrastructure, applying UNC and UNRMI. UNECE is also supporting the identification of the best technology and policy options to design a carbon-neutral energy system, including a just transition away from fossil fuels in affected workforces and regions. Under a project with FAO and UNEP, UNECE is analysing the normative and institutional framework to help increase renewable energy uptake, with special attention to bioenergy.

Infrastructure recovery

Financing reconstruction needs are huge, estimated at around $350 billion by the EU/World Bank, and will require substantial and sustained international public support. UNECE has prepared recommendations on the application of the UNECE PPP Evaluation Methodology for the SDGs to prepare, design and finance priority PPP projects in post-conflict Ukraine.

UNECE rolled out comprehensive support to Ukraine in 2022, including for:

**Urban development**

UNECE is preparing Framework Guidelines for the development of reconstruction programmes of other cities and regions. UNECE has also mobilized international architects to help the city of Mykolaiv in developing a master plan for its reconstruction. Visions for the master plans for Kharkiv and Mykolaiv were presented in December 2022, building on surveys involving 18,000 and 8,000 local people in the respective cities.

**Trade**

Based on its longstanding support to the development of the Odessa Port Community System, UNECE is finalizing a proposal for the digitalization of information exchange to facilitate trade flows in the land corridors connecting Ukraine with Romania, Poland and Bulgaria, to circumvent the blockade of Ukrainian ports, using UN/CEFACT standards.

**Statistics**

To help Ukraine address the technical and methodological challenges arising from the war in the collection of data and production of official statistics, UNECE compiled resources (manuals, guidance, etc.) and supported training and expert assistance by mobilizing an international volunteer network.

Despite the war, the Ukrainian Parliament passed a new Law on Official Statistics in August 2022, based on UNECE's Generic Law on Official Statistics.

**Energy**

UNECE is conducting an assessment of Ukraine's critical raw material resources and the role these can play in building a low-carbon energy infrastructure, applying UNFC and UNRMI.

UNECE is also supporting the identification of the best technology and policy options to design a carbon-neutral energy system, including a just transition away from fossil fuels in affected workforces and regions.

Under a project with FAO and UNEP, UNECE is analysing the normative and institutional framework to help increase renewable energy uptake, with special attention to bioenergy.

**Environment**

Following its accession to the Industrial Accidents Convention in October 2022, Ukraine is now a Party to all 5 UNECE Multilateral Environmental Agreements. The legal frameworks, guidance, and international policy support under these instruments can support Ukraine’s sustainable reconstruction efforts.

The government of Ukraine estimated in October 2022 environmental damage caused by the war of EUR 36 billion.

The Ministerial Declaration adopted at the 9th Ministerial Environment for Europe Conference “invited the UNECE secretariat, in cooperation with UNEP, OECD and others, to prioritize assessing the most urgent environmental needs in Ukraine” arising from the military aggression, “based upon the methodology of the UNECE Environmental Performance Review Programme and on the results of ongoing and planned impacts assessments”.

**Transport**

With the assistance of national rail and road experts, UNECE is preparing a list of infrastructure and rolling stock/resources requirements to operationally boost the capacity of railways and road transport in Ukraine and its connectivity with neighboring countries.

**Innovation**

UNECE facilitated expert discussions with Ukraine’s Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Economy and National Academy of Sciences to explore the role of innovation policies in supporting a green and circular recovery. An Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Ukraine will be completed in 2023.

**Infrastructure**

Financing reconstruction needs are huge, estimated at around $350 billion by the EU/World Bank, and will require substantial and sustained international public support.

UNECE has prepared recommendations on the application of the UNECE PPP Evaluation Methodology for the SDGs to prepare, design and finance priority PPP projects in post-conflict Ukraine.

**Urban development**

UNECE is preparing Framework Guidelines for the development of reconstruction programmes of other cities and regions. UNECE has also mobilized international architects to help the city of Mykolaiv in developing a master plan for its reconstruction. Visions for the master plans for Kharkiv and Mykolaiv were presented in December 2022, building on surveys involving 18,000 and 8,000 local people in the respective cities.
In 2022 UNECE continued to reinforce collaboration with the 17 programme countries in the region (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Republic of Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan) and Kosovo (SCR 1244).

This is being driven by UNECE’s dedicated Regional Advisors, under the leadership of the UNECE Deputy Executive Secretary, through stronger collaboration with the Resident Coordinator system and United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) in the region.

Examples of country level engagement in 2022 include:

- Joint SDGs Fund Development Emergency Modality, in response to the Global Crisis on Food, Energy, Finance
- Guidelines for efficient and safe mine closure in Albania and Serbia
- Improving energy efficiency and using renewable energy, including biomass, in rural areas in Georgia
- Smart sustainable city profile of Grodno, Belarus, using EPIs developed by UNECE and ITU
- National Afforestation and Reforestation Programme of the Republic of Moldova
- National Policy Dialogues on industrial safety and advancing the circular economy in Serbia
- Blockchain technology for due diligence and sustainability in cotton value chains in Uzbekistan
- Preparation of a roadmap for the technical inspection of vehicles in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Adoption of a national road safety strategy in Georgia based on the recommendations of the 2018 UNECE Road Safety Performance Review. Georgia also prepared legislation on the use of safety belts on rear seats, child restraint systems and speed management.

The Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) – a unique partnership between the five Central Asian countries, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, UNECE and ESCAP – had a vibrant year. SPECA countries made significant progress both in designing regional solutions in trade and in transport, have held important discussions on water cooperation and on the regional carbon neutrality agenda.

The Working Group on Gender and SDGs saw a new boost, with important contributions to its discussions from UN Women, and several International Financial Institutions. Importantly, standards and tools being devised within the framework of SPECA are increasingly gaining traction. For example, Kazakhstan became the first country in Central Asia to use the SPECA Principles of Sustainable Trade in its sustainable development plans. Finally, the high-profile SPECA Economic Forum hosted by Kazakhstan in Almaty in November 2022 focused on greener and safer future for the sub-region, with particular attention to the issues of resilience, connectivity and cooperation and was an important convening platform for a wide range of stakeholders.
As a key milestone, COP27 in Sharm-El-Sheikh, Egypt, offered an important opportunity to UNECE member States and all Parties worldwide to scale up commitments to deliver on the Paris Agreement. UNECE was fully engaged at COP27, advocating for:

- Increased climate financing, through the presentation of a portfolio of thirty high-impact climate action projects, identified in partnership with the Egyptian Presidency and the UN Climate Change High-Level Champions for COP26 and COP27.

- The key role of water cooperation in adaptation to ensure resilience and security, supported by the Water Convention.

- Widespread application of the UN Framework Classification for Resources and UN Resource Management System for the production of the Critical Raw Materials needed for a rapid renewables and clean energy shift in line with the circular economy.

- Full use of low-carbon technologies and energy sources and transformative policy measures for carbon neutrality, including in energy-intensive steel, cement and chemicals industries.

- Traceability and transparency in the garment and footwear industry, enabled by industry-ready tools developed under The Sustainability Pledge.

- Climate-neutral cities, including through application of Principles for Sustainable and Inclusive Urban Design and Architecture of the San Marino Declaration.

The UNECE region is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions, responsible for 34% of the world’s CO₂ emissions from fossil fuel combustion. Today, the region remains dependent on fossil fuels for some 80% of its primary energy supply. Decarbonization efforts must urgently be accelerated.

Through its norms, standards, conventions, and policy assistance, UNECE continued throughout 2022 to support countries in their climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts, to leverage financing, and to strengthen collaboration.
Global biodiversity is now declining faster than at any time in human history. Biodiversity and ecosystem services are of critical importance in underpinning the fight against poverty, supporting inclusive sustainable economic growth, ensuring food security and food sovereignty, and supporting implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

According to the 2022 UNECE report on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the region needs to act urgently to reverse trends for biodiversity loss (Target 15.5).

As leaders gathered in Montreal for the 15th Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15, 7-19 December 2022), UNECE called for the region to urgently step up with the leadership needed to stop biodiversity loss and implement the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Forests host around 80% of the world’s terrestrial biodiversity, making their sustainable management a strategic priority. UNECE also highlighted the contribution of sustainable urban forestry to support biodiversity.

UNECE stands ready to help member States fully leverage its normative and policy tools – including support for sustainable forest management, its Multilateral Environmental Agreements, and Environmental Performance Reviews – to address some of the key drivers of biodiversity loss, and to strengthen cooperation within and beyond the region to help collectively tackle this global crisis.
As major users and producers of natural resources, UNECE member states have identified progress towards more sustainable and circular production and consumption as a key priority.

UNECE stepped up its normative and policy work to advance the circular and sustainable shift in 2022. For example:

- The CIRCULAR STEP platform for policy dialogue was launched, bringing together stakeholders from across the region to advance policy dialogue and peer learning for the circular economy transition.
- Training for EU member states and Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Serbia, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan helped stakeholders in the region to harness UNECE to support more sustainable and circular resource management.
- The pre-COP27 UNECE Regional Forum put circularity at the heart of discussions on how to sustainably meet skyrocketing demand for the Critical Raw Materials needed for the clean energy transition.
- The Team of Specialists on ESG Traceability in Sustainable Supply Chains for the Circular Economy pushed forward cooperation, building on experience gained in the garment and footwear sector and using tools including UNFC/UNRMS.
- A study on Circularity Concepts in Forest-based Industries analysed the use and possible limitations of circular approaches in woodworking (focusing on sawn wood processing, bioenergy production and wood in construction), the furniture sector, the paper and pulp industry as well as the use of cellulose-based fibres and plastics.
- UNECE pushed for greater traceability and transparency in fashion sector value chains to facilitate sustainable materials’ use and recycling uptake, together with activist Lily Cole. Tested in more than 20 countries including Brazil, India, Egypt, Peru, Turkey and Uzbekistan in cooperation with value chain actors in Denmark, Germany, France, Italy, Switzerland and the UK, with 60 partners and 13 lead brands, UNECE’s blockchain pilots (for cotton, leather, wool and cashmere value chains) under The Sustainability Pledge have shown the importance of reliable information to identify, prevent and mitigate adverse social and environmental impacts. Around 100 pledges were submitted to the initiative by 350 industry actors in 2022.
- UNECE supported Serbia to develop a gap analysis that will contribute to a national action plan for the circular economy transition in agriculture through food waste reduction and prevention. A gap analysis for Tajikistan helped the country to move towards the circular economy in its garment and footwear industry.
- The development of an Interim Innovation Policy Outlook helped Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine to identify means to advance circular economy progress by strengthening science-business linkages and innovation-enhancing procurement.
- UNECE worked with Kazakhstan to integrate circular economy approaches into its trade processes.
- UNECE helped to harness trade for the circular economy transition, including through policy research and debate in its normative (e.g. Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards) and other events (WTO Public Forum, WTO Trade and Environment Week).
In 2022, for the first time UNECE achieved gender parity on Professionals and higher posts. UNECE remains committed to support its member States to advance gender equality and women’s economic empowerment as central to achieving the inclusive COVID-19 recovery needed to deliver on the 2030 Agenda.

Gender equality

To help countries shift course, UNECE continued its efforts in 2022 to advance gender equality in all programme areas. Examples include:

- Over 725 women among 1,600 stakeholders overall were trained as part of targeted support on sustainable energy in 10 UNECE member States. Over 970 women strengthened capacities through activities under the Committee on Sustainable Energy.
- The study “Energy transition and post-Covid-19 socio-economic recovery: role of women and impact on them” presented priority actions that countries and companies can take to encourage the participation of women in the energy sector to drive a sustainable socioeconomic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- UNECE and FAO made recommendations to foster the integration of under-represented groups including women and young people into the forest sector labour market based on a joint study of the social and economic trends impacting the workforce in the region.
- UNECE in collaboration with partners such as UNDP and UN Women organised training to help local authorities and regional agencies integrate a gender perspective into environmental policies and measures, in areas such as programme screening, Gender Impact Assessment, Gender Responsive Budgeting, and Gender Monitoring.
- UNECE’s 56 member States agreed to launch a new Team of Specialists (ToS) on Gender-Responsive Standards under the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies. It will build on Recommendation U on Gender-Responsive Standards and the Declaration on Gender-Responsive Standards and Standards Development, so far signed by 80 standards development organizations. Together with the new ToS, UNECE will work to further expand signatories, particularly in UNECE’s 17 programme countries in Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe. In 2022, UNECE also delivered a series of capacity-building workshops to support standards developing bodies to meet their obligations as signatories to the Declaration.
- Expert discussions at UNECE highlighted the need to address gender equality considerations in the just transition out of coal mining.
- UNECE supported Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia to integrate gender aspects into their environmental policies.
- The third Environmental Performance Review for Azerbaijan and the second Review for Armenia, carried out in 2022, addressed gender equality considerations, ranging from agriculture, health and waste management, transport, to education for sustainable development, climate action and availability of gender and environmental statistics.
- UNECE issued country-specific studies on the impact of COVID-19 on women-owned MSMEs in Armenia and the Republic of Moldova.
Cooperation between the regional UN entities further intensified in 2022 within the Regional Collaborative Platform (RCP) for Europe and Central Asia. Formally created in December 2020, the RCP is the central UN platform at the regional level for promoting joint action and facilitating integrated policy advice as well as normative and technical support to partners.

During a challenging year for the region, supporting the response to multiple crises, notably the impacts of the war in Ukraine, was a key priority. Opportunities to accelerate SDGs progress, engaging in key transition areas such as energy and food, and addressing human rights challenges were other major issues of concern.

Additionally, the regional Issue-based Coalitions (IBCs) and groups, the RCP’s main substantive and operational arm, provided targeted policy support to the country level.

UN collaboration advances in new regional architecture

Cooperation between the regional UN entities further intensified in 2022 within the Regional Collaborative Platform (RCP) for Europe and Central Asia. Formally created in December 2020, the RCP is the central UN platform at the regional level for promoting joint action and facilitating integrated policy advice as well as normative and technical support to partners.

During a challenging year for the region, supporting the response to multiple crises, notably the impacts of the war in Ukraine, was a key priority. Opportunities to accelerate SDGs progress, engaging in key transition areas such as energy and food, and addressing human rights challenges were other major issues of concern. Additionally, the regional Issue-based Coalitions (IBCs) and groups, the RCP’s main substantive and operational arm, provided targeted policy support to the country level.

The IBCs and groups co-chaired by UNECE or with UNECE engagement achieved progress in some crucial areas:

- The Issue-based Coalition on Environment and Climate Change provided training on mainstreaming environment and climate change into UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) processes for Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, South-Eastern Europe, and Central Asia. Moreover, the IBC held a series of training sessions on green transition, covering finance, energy, circular economy, plastics, and pathways.

- The Issue-based Coalition on Gender Equality organized a virtual discussion on the implications of the war in Ukraine for Women and Girls in the region, providing a starting point to respond to the impact of the war in Ukraine and to identify emerging gender priorities. The IBC also launched an advocacy brief on the impacts of COVID-19 on refugee and migrant women and girls and the importance of including their specific needs and rights in COVID-19 recovery plans.

- The Issue-based Coalition on Sustainable Food Systems issued key knowledge products on food security and nutrition in Europe and Central Asia, the impact of the war in Ukraine on food systems in the region, and on the follow-up to the UN Food Systems Summit. Furthermore, the IBC organized a series of food system talks on environmentally sustainable food production and on rural women and girls in food systems.

- The Regional Coordination Group on Data and Statistics provided stories for the 2022 UNECE annual SDGs report that shone a spotlight on gender equality and women’s empowerment and coordinated capacity development activities on data and statistics.

The 2022 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, held in hybrid format, demonstrated the ability of the regional UN system to deliver joint results adapted to ongoing COVID-19 circumstances.
## Budget

### Financial Resources
(in thousands of US Dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of budget resources</th>
<th>2022 Appropriation/ Allotment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong> Regular Budget (Section 20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post items</td>
<td>34,028.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Post items</td>
<td>1,480.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>35,509.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong> Regular Programme Of Technical Cooperation (Section 23)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other staff costs</td>
<td>1,486.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Post items</td>
<td>848.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>2,335.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C</strong> United Nations Development Account (Section 35)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Post items</td>
<td>3,541.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3,541.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D</strong> Extrabudgetary - Technical Cooperation &amp; General Trust Funds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25,674.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td>67,059.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Media impact in 2022

- over 12,500 media stories
- 242 UNECE press releases and news
- 119,000 YouTube views
- 238 million people reached on social media

Find out more:

- Website
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Flickr
- Facebook
- YouTube