



United Nations

UNECE Weekly

Economic Commission for Europe

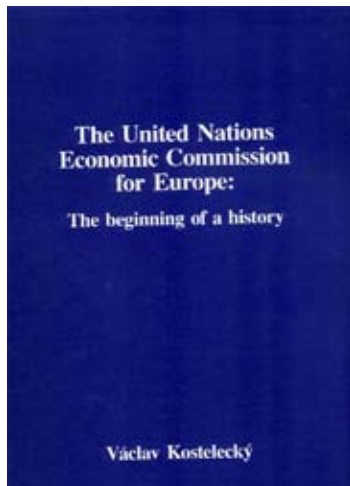
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61 years ago - The UNECE conception

By the end of 1945 it became clear that the activities of the three emergency organizations, the European Coal Organization (ECO), the Emergency Economic Committee for Europe (EECE) and the European Central Inland Transport Organization (ECITO), much as they had been helpful in removing at least some of the most urgent bottlenecks in supplies and services, were not sufficient to cope with longer-term problems of reconstruction and economic recovery in Europe. When early in 1946 the General Assembly of the United Nations convened for its first session at Church House in London, the Polish delegation took the initiative to propose the addition of a new item on the agenda to deal with "Reconstruction of countries members of the United Nations devastated by war". In the event, this proved to be the first step on the long and somewhat tortuous way which, in a little more than a year's time, led to the creation of regional economic commissions as a permanent institutional feature of the United Nations Organization.

On 2 February 1946 Jan Stanczyk, the Polish Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, introduced in the plenary session of the General Assembly his country's draft resolution on the reconstruction of war-devastated countries. He argued that because of the magnitude of the war damage a solution was beyond the capabilities of individual countries, and that the problem should be tackled by the international community no longer

on a humanitarian basis, as was the case of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), but for economic reasons of concern to all. He was supported by the delegates of the United States and the United Kingdom, and without any further discussion the General Assembly unanimously adopted its resolution 28 (I) on "Reconstruction of countries members of the United Nations devastated by war". It is interesting to note that the *consideranda* of this



resolution contained in an embryonic form the basic ingredients of the dilemma governments were to face a year later when the United States Secretary of State George Marshall proposed massive economic aid to European countries: the preamble to the resolution states not only that "in order to make good the destruction [resulting from the war of aggression] vast amounts of new capital goods must be invested in the destroyed areas", but also that "only a full-scale and whole-hearted co-operation of all United Nations can bring about the right solution of this grave problem". In its operational part the resolution recognized that this was "a grave and urgent matter which should be given very high priority among post-war problems" and asked the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to deal with this question as a matter of urgency.

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Transport - la CEE-ONU à l'honneur

La Commission européenne a annoncé une nouvelle stratégie pour un développement durable de l'industrie automobile européenne. La Commission européenne a adopté une stratégie exhaustive et durable en faveur de l'industrie automobile européenne qui doit permettre à celle-ci de continuer à produire pendant longtemps des véhicules d'un coût abordable pour les consommateurs. La stratégie pour un développement durable de l'industrie automobile européenne englobe une diversité de domaines tels que la réduction des charges administratives, la sauvegarde de l'environnement, la sécurité routière, le commerce et les marchés étrangers ainsi que la recherche. L'industrie automobile



est un pilier essentiel de l'économie européenne qui représente 3 % du PIB européen et 7 % de l'emploi dans le secteur manufacturier.

Réduction des charges administratives: La Commission proposera de remplacer 38 directives CE par les règlements internationaux correspondants de la CEE-ONU en ce qui concerne, par exemple, les pneumatiques, le verre de sécurité, les phares antibrouillard et les ceintures de sécurité.





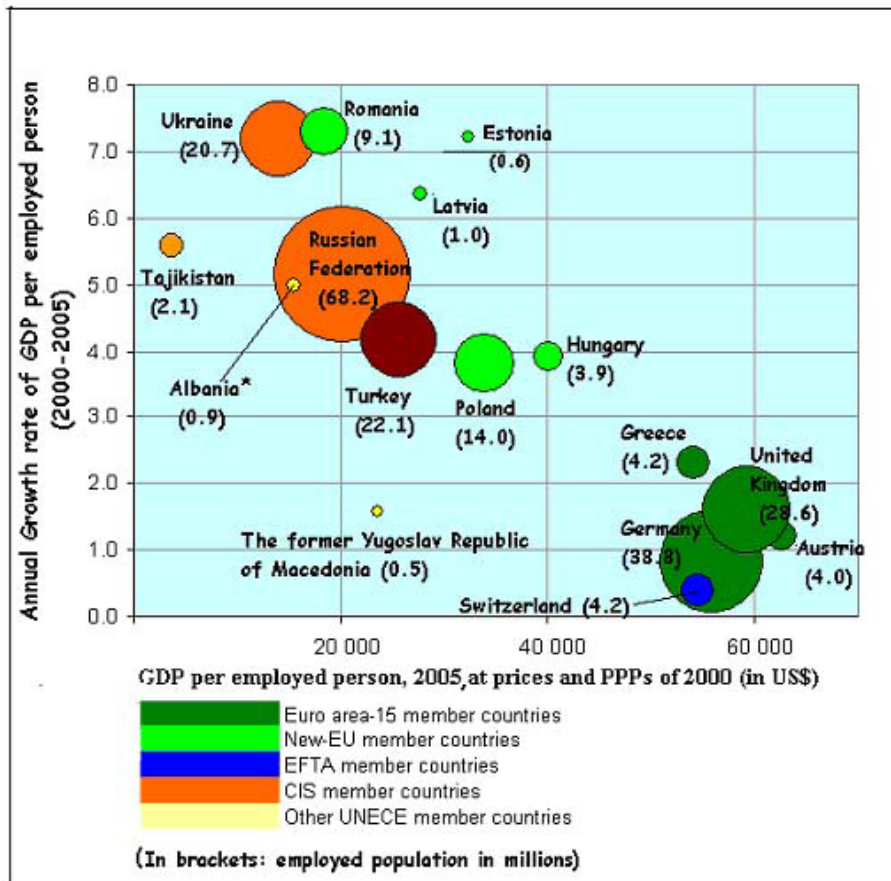
L'industrie pourra ainsi s'appuyer sur un texte unique valable dans le monde entier. Des procédures de contrôle

automatique et virtuel seront également mises en place pour 25 directives communautaires et règlements de la CEE-ONU afin de réduire les coûts de mise en conformité et rendre les

procédures moins longues et moins coûteuses. ♦

Facts and figures

Signs of catching-up in labour productivity?



Source: UNECE Statistical database.

* Albania: data refer to 2004 values for GDP and employment, and to 2001-2004 for the annual growth rate of GDP per employed person.

Over the last five years many UNECE emerging market economies recorded a rapid rise in labour productivity as measured by the growth in GDP per employed person. Although these growth rates seem impressive if compared with those recorded in the EU-15 or EFTA countries, in most cases they reflect the very low initial levels due to drastic contractions of GDP in the early transition period. In

fact, only a few CIS and western Balkan countries had by 2005 succeeded to reach their pre-transition GDP and labour productivity levels, and among the new EU member countries, the Baltic countries were the last to catch up with it. At the same time, the gap in labour productivity between ECE emerging market economies and western European countries remains large: the level of GDP per employed



On 28 March 1947, came to an end the process of negotiations, lasting more than a year from the moment when, on 2 February 1946, the Polish delegation raised the problem of

the reconstruction of war-devastated countries. The ECE was born. By the adoption of General Assembly resolutions 36 (IV) on ECE and 37 (IV) on ECAFE, a new venture in international organization had begun: that of a regional approach to economic co-operation within the universal framework of the United Nations. Seen from the historical perspective, it may well have been the very last possible moment for such a decision to be taken. All delegations voted in favour except the Soviet Union. The USSR delegate explained that he abstained because his amendments "which were well-founded and based on the Charter, had not received serious consideration". Although he was outvoted, he was not in the least upset and was "in the most smiling mood after the meeting".

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe: The beginning of a history, Vaclav Kostelecky, 1989.

Coming up

14-16 February

Working Group on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers

is around three times higher in Austria, Germany, Switzerland and the United Kingdom than in Albania, Romania, Russian Federation, or Ukraine. At an estimated \$3,800 per person, Tajikistan is the country with the lowest level of GDP per employed in the region.