

QTMUN 2023



United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

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Equity Disclaimers

Throughout this conference, delegates will be engaging in complex debates and discussions covering a wide array of topics. As UTMUN seeks to provide an enriching educational experience that facilitates understanding of the implications of real-world issues, the content of our committees may involve sensitive or controversial subject matter for the purposes of academia and accuracy. We ask that delegates be respectful, professional, tactful, and diplomatic when engaging with all committee content, representing their assigned country's or character's position in an equitable manner, communicating with staff and other delegates, and responding

This Background Guide presents topics that may be distressing to some Delegates, including but not limited to: death, environmental disaster, COVID-19, war, economic disaster, classism and racism. Great care will be taken by staff in handling any/all of these topics should they arise.

UTMUN recognizes the sensitivity associated with many of our topics, and we encourage you to be aware of and set healthy boundaries that work for you. This may include: refraining from reading certain parts of the background guide, preparing yourself before reading this background guide, doing some self-care or seeking support after reading the background guide, or anything that can help make you feel more comfortable. We ask that all Delegates remain considerate of the boundaries that other Delegates set.

UTMUN expects that all discussions amongst delegates will remain productive and respectful of one another. If you have any equity concerns or need assistance in setting boundaries or navigating sensitive subject matter, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or our Equity Director, Aidan Thompson, at equity@utmun.org. We want you to feel safe and comfortable at UTMUN!

If you wish to switch committees after having read the content warnings for this committee, please:

- a) Contact your Faculty Advisor/Head Delegate with your request if you are a part of a group delegation.
- b) Email our Director of Academics, Elaine Wang, with a brief explanation of why you would like to switch committees if you are NOT a part of a group delegation.

Model United Nations at U of T Code of Conduct

The below code of conduct applies to the behaviour of all attendees of UTMUN for the entire duration of the conference, while engaging in any conference-related activities, including but not limited to committee sessions, conference socials, committee breaks, and the opening and closing ceremonies.

1. Harrassment and bullying in any form will not be tolerated, the nature of which includes, but is not limited to, discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, ethnicity, colour, religion, sex, age, mental and physical disabilities, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression,
 - a. Harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, insulting and/or degrading language or remarks; threats and intimidation; and intentional (direct or indirect) discrimination and/or marginalization of a group and/or individual;
 - i. The above prohibition on harassment, bullying, and inappropriate behaviour extends to any and all behaviour as well as written and verbal communication during the conference, including notes, conversation both during and outside committees, and general demeanour at all conference events;
 - ii. UTMUN reserves the right to determine what constitutes bullying and/or inappropriate behaviour toward any individual and/or group;
 - b. Attendees must not engage in any behaviour that constitutes physical violence or the threat of violence against any groups and/or individuals, including sexual violence and harassment, such as, but not limited to,
 - i. Unwelcome suggestive or indecent comments about one's appearance;
 - ii. Nonconsensual sexual contact and/or behaviour between any individuals and/or groups of individuals;
 - iii. Sexual contact or behaviour between delegates and staff members is strictly forbidden;
2. UTMUN expects all attendees to conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner at all times during the conference. Specific expectations, include, but are not limited to,
 - a. Attendees must, if able, contribute to the general provision of an inclusive conference and refrain from acting in a manner that restricts other attendees' capacity to learn and thrive in an intellectually stimulating environment;
 - b. Attendees must adhere to the dress code, which is Western business attire;
 - i. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis depending on the attendees' ability to adhere to the previous sub-clause;
 - ii. Attendees are encouraged to contact Director of Equity, Aidan Thompson, with questions or concerns about the dress code or conference accessibility;
 - c. Attendees must refrain from the use of cultural appropriation to represent their character

- and/or country, including the use of cultural dress, false accent, and any behaviour that perpetuates a national or personal stereotype;
- d. Delegates must not use music, audio recordings, graphics, or any other media at any time unless approved and requested to be shared by the Dais and/or the Director of Equity, Aidan Thompson;
- e. Attendees must abide by instructions and/or orders given by conference staff members;
- i. Attendees are exempt from this above sub-clause only if the instructions and/or orders given are unreasonable or inappropriate;
3. Delegates, staff, and all other conference participants are expected to abide by Ontario and Canadian laws and Toronto by-laws, as well as rules and regulations specific to the University of Toronto. This includes, but is not limited to,
- a. Attendees, regardless of their age, are strictly prohibited from being under the influence and/or engaging in the consumption of illicit substances, such as alcohol or illicit substances for the duration of the conference;
- b. Attendees are prohibited from smoking (cigarettes or e-cigarettes, including vapes) on University of Toronto property;
- c. Attendees must refrain from engaging in vandalism and the intentional and/or reckless destruction of any public or private property, including conference spaces, venues, furniture, resources, equipment, and university buildings;
- i. Neither UTMUN nor any representatives of UTMUN is responsible for damage inflicted by attendees to property on or off University of Toronto campus;
- ii. Individuals will be held responsible for any damages.
4. The Secretariat reserves the right to discipline delegates and/or attendees for not adhering to/violating any of the above stipulations. Disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to,
- a. Suspension from committee, in its entirety or for a specific period of time;
- b. Removal from the conference and/or conference venue(s);
- c. Disqualification from awards;
- d. Disqualification from participation in future conference-related events.
5. If online, additional rules apply to delegate and staff conduct, including but not limited to Zoom background usage. Delegates must use either conference-provided Zoom backgrounds, the blurred background, solid colours, or no background.
6. UTMUN reserves the right to the final interpretation of this document.

For further clarification on University of Toronto Model United Nations' policies regarding equity, questions, concerns, or for any equity violations that attendees would like to raise, please contact equity@utmun.org, or fill out this [anonymous form](#).

Letter from the Director

To all UNECE delegates,

Hello, and welcome to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) for UTMUN 2023. My name is Rick Dong, and I am very much looking forward to meeting all of you in February. For a bit about myself, I am currently a first-year humanities student at the University of Toronto planning on majoring in History, with a double minor in English and Political Science. Moreover, I have two years of experience as a delegate in Model United Nations, and I have always loved the research, debate and diplomatic aspects of MUN that has made it unique from other extra-curricular activities.

However, I will not be alone in directing this committee, as I am joined by a dais team consisting of Jennifer Vandespyker, a second year student majoring in Political Science and Ethics, Society, and Law who has significantly aided me in writing this background guide, and will be co-directing the committee. I am also joined by Juliette Cretot, a second year Political Science student who will be helping me in moderating this committee.

For this year, the two major topics that will be discussed in the UNECE include environmental policy; along with economic cooperation and integration. In the first topic, delegates will need to critically evaluate the many upsides and downsides of international environmental policy that are present within certain subtopics listed below in this background guide. While in the second topic, delegates shall debate the question of whether a new all-inclusive policy of economic cooperation and integration is needed between UNECE member-states within the context of twenty-first century geopolitics.

As a reminder on behalf of UTMUN 2023, we ask for all delegates to please remain professional by only engaging in equitable discussions throughout this committee, and we encourage delegates to be well prepared by doing research outside of this background guide, which will be invaluable when writing position papers on the stance of your country, or the potential solutions that you will propose throughout the duration of this committee.

Lastly, if you have any questions or concerns about anything related to researching, citations, position papers, resolutions or UTMUN procedure, do not hesitate to reach out via email. I will do my best to respond with the best of my ability, and within a timely manner.

Best of luck to you all.

Sincerely,

Rick Dong

Committee Director/United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

unece@utmun.org

Position Papers

At UTMUN 2023, position papers are required to qualify for awards. Each committee will also give out one Best Position Paper award. Only delegates in Ad Hoc are exempt from submitting a position paper. To learn more about position paper writing, formatting, and submission, please check out the position paper guidelines. Please read through the guidelines carefully as this page will describe content recommendations, formatting requirements, and details on citations. If you have any questions about position paper writing, feel free to contact your Dais via your committee email or reach out to academics@utmun.org.

Abbreviations

ECOSOC: Economic and Social Council

EMU: European Monetary Union

EU: European Union

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

UN: United Nations

UNECE: United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Introduction

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) was founded in 1947, with its objective being to rebuild Europe after the Second World War by developing and strengthening economic activity and relationships between European countries, and between Europe and the rest of the world¹. United Nations General Assembly Resolution 409 A and ECOSOC Resolution 414 C outlined the need for maintaining regional commissions to promote economic co-operation and peace, making the UNECE a permanent UN committee headed by the European Office of the United Nations and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1951². Since then, UNECE has acted as a major platform for economic dialogue, helping to facilitate global economic integration between Western Europe, Eastern European, The Balkans, West Asian and Central Asian countries with the UNECE Inland Transport Committee (ITC). That is, the ITC has provided a standardized international framework for developing road, rail and

¹ “About Us | UNECE,” accessed September 16, 2022, <https://unece.org/transport/about-us..>

² “History | UNECE,” accessed September 16, 2022, <https://unece.org/history-1>.

intermodal transport for at least sixty years³.

For UTMUN 2023, delegates will be focusing on both environmental policies, along with economic cooperation and integration within UNECE member-states. This will entail discussions surrounding preventative resolutions for environmental policy, and how to encourage unique, effective economic development across Europe.

Topic A: Environmental Policy

Historical Background

Environmental policy is any action developed or implemented by a government, corporation or other organization surrounding the effects of human activity on the natural environment⁴. The purpose of environmental policy is to promote sustainability while also mitigating the depletion of global commons, which are shared natural resources such as the oceans, atmosphere, and climate. Survival of the human race hinges on preventing the excessive depletion of global commons, as this may result in a tragedy of the commons situation, where both collective and individual incentives to sustainably use shared natural resources for economic development, resulting in the depletion of such resources⁵.

With increasing industrialization since the 18th century, the need for environmental policies in Europe, North America, West Asia, and Central Asia has skyrocketed⁶. Calls for environmental policy action necessitated the formation of the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP), formed in 1994 by a group of Senior UNECE Advisors⁷. Since then, the CEP works as the central governing body of environmental activities within the UNECE. Its primary functions to assess and aid each UNECE member-state's efforts to reduce pollution, manage natural resources, integrate environmental and socio-economic policies, and fortify international cooperation on said initiatives⁸. Examples of the CEP's environmental initiatives include the 1995 Third Ministerial Conference on Environment for Europe, outlining the CEP's responsibility for proposing priority actions; the 1999 UNECE/WHO Europe Protocol on Water and Health, improving water management to reduce diseases; and the 2002 Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme working towards green economies via sustainable urban transport.

Apart from the UNECE's actions on environmental policy, the Kyoto Protocol and Paris

3 "About the Committee on Environmental Policy | UNECE," accessed September 16, 2022, <https://unece.org/about-committee-environmental-policy>.

4 "Environmental Policy | History, Concepts, Instruments, & Examples | Britannica," accessed September 16, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/environmental-policy>.

5 "Environmental Policy | History, Concepts, Instruments, & Examples | Britannica."

6 "Environmental Policy | History, Concepts, Instruments, & Examples | Britannica."

7 "About the Committee on Environmental Policy | UNECE."

8 "About the Committee on Environmental Policy | UNECE."

Agreement are the two most prominent pieces of international environmental policy aimed at climate action⁹. Key features of these policies include the Kyoto Protocol's call for cooperation between developed and developing countries in reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 5 per cent, compared to emission levels measured in 1990¹⁰. Furthermore, the Paris Agreement calls for global temperature increases to remain below 1.5 Degrees Celsius, and greater member-state accountability in contributing towards the reduction of anthropogenic emissions through nationally determined contributions¹¹.

Both the Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement have been widely ratified amongst UNECE member-states¹². Many countries in this committee therefore recognize the importance of environmental policy, and international law obligates them to follow the recent UNECE Set of Core Climate-change related Indicators and Statistics. These primarily measure which impacts and factors perpetuate emissions, giving countries a point of reference to develop policies aimed at reducing climate change¹³. However, the lack of enforcement surrounding environmental policy measures leaves many climate issues unresolved. For example, under the Kyoto Protocol, those countries that ratified the Protocol have the liberty to decide the actual method of reducing emissions¹⁴. Thus, some of the largest greenhouse gas emitters either choose to not be bound by the terms via ratification, or their classification as a developing country exempts them from pursuing climate action¹⁵. Similar issues jeopardize the effectiveness of the Paris Agreement. Many critics argue that though Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) make legally obligate signatory countries to independently determine their contributions towards climate action¹⁶, there are no external incentives for countries to further reduce emissions, as NDCs are voluntary¹⁷.

Developing a Green Economy

A crucial issue to consider while discussing high demand for energy directed at economic development is the need to find energy supply methods that do decimate the natural environment¹⁸. In the context of the UNECE, several issues are of importance, with the most prominent being that all of Europe, and especially European Union (EU) member-states, has a high dependency on

⁹ "Global Climate Agreements: Successes and Failures," Council on Foreign Relations, accessed September 16, 2022, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/paris-global-climate-change-agreements>.

¹⁰ "Kpeng.Pdf," accessed September 16, 2022, <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/kpeng.pdf>, 4-6, article 3, section 1, section 14

¹¹ "Global Climate Agreements.," for more information, consult "English_paris_agreement.Pdf," article 2, subsection 1, paragraph a; article 4, subsection 13

¹² United Nations, "The Paris Agreement," United Nations (United Nations), accessed September 16, 2022, <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/paris-agreement>.

¹³ "First Internationally-Agreed Recommendations for a Set of Core Climate Change-Related Indicators Will Inform Urgent Action | UNECE," accessed September 16, 2022, <https://unece.org/circular-economy/press/first-internationally-agreed-recommendations-set-core-climate-change-related>.

¹⁴ "Kpeng.Pdf.," 2-3, article 2

¹⁵ "Global Climate Agreements."

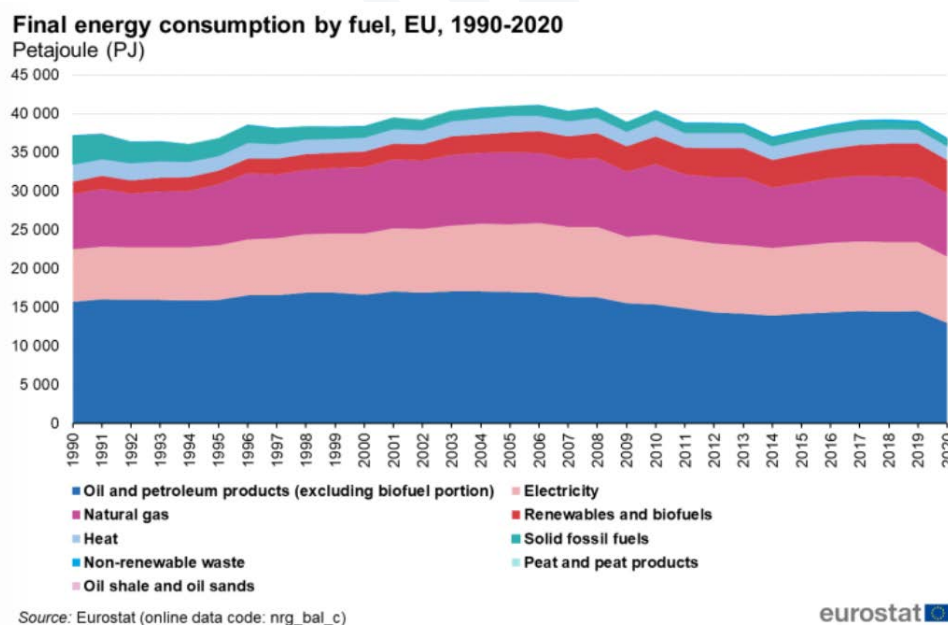
¹⁶ "English_paris_agreement.Pdf," accessed September 16, 2022, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf, article 2

¹⁷ "English_paris_agreement.Pdf.," 9, article 6, section 1

¹⁸ Claudia Kemfert, "Green Deal for Europe: More Climate Protection and Fewer Fossil Fuel Wars," *Intereconomics* 2019, no. 6 (2019): 353–58.

non-renewable energy¹⁹. In 2020, the three largest sources of Europe's final energy consumption by petajoule was 35% oil, 23.2% electricity, and 21.9% natural gas, with only 11.8% consisting of energy from renewable sources²⁰. This is highly concerning from a sustainability perspective, as crude oil and natural gas respectively made up around 95% and 83% of Western Europe's net import of gross available energy from Eastern Europe in 2020 despite experiencing a notable decline of demand due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic²¹.

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These statistics arguably demonstrate that Europe has an uncertain economic future because of its heavy reliance on insecure and unsustainable energy in the early twenty-first century²³. This issue is further aggravated by the problematic environmental effects linked to extensive usage of non-renewable energy such as global warming, heat waves, droughts, floods, oil spills, acid rain and the pollution of the global commons, killing millions of people worldwide²⁴. Additionally, both the 2008 Global Financial Crisis and ongoing COVID-19 recession have influenced some of the largest natural gas and oil exporters to compete for more supply and markets, proving that the demand for non-renewable energy still persists despite the well known environmental damages that occur as a result of economic development²⁵. These rising prices have provided incentive for EU member-states, which comprise a significant portion of

19 "EU Energy Mix and Import Dependency - Statistics Explained," accessed September 16, 2022, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=EU_energy_mix_and_import_dependency#Energy_mix_and_import_dependency.

20 "EU Energy Mix and Import Dependency - Statistics Explained."

21 "EU Energy Mix and Import Dependency - Statistics Explained."

22 "EU Energy Mix and Import Dependency - Statistics Explained."

23 Kemfert, "Green Deal for Europe."

24 "Are You Aware of the Environmental Impact of Non-Renewable Energies?," accessed September 16, 2022, <https://www.activesustainability.com/renewable-energy/environmental-impact-of-non-renewable-energies/>.

25 Kemfert, "Green Deal for Europe."

the membership in the UNECE, to discuss potential solutions to reduce dependency on non-renewable and imported energy²⁶. These discussions bear suggestions of an Energy Union to increase supply security by focusing on the balance between expandatory technology with EU aid directives to make energy more renewable, clean, diverse and efficient²⁷. An Energy Union would be funded by a Green New Deal aimed at making energy used by the EU completely sustainable and would employ an eco-friendly financial system. Such a project would require substantial investments to establish political frameworks that can effectively allocate the required funds to achieve energy sustainability²⁸. However, Europe experiences difficulty in universally defining what is considered to be “sustainable,” as there are more than 400 different standards for green bonds. Therefore, formulating a widely-accepted definition of sustainability remains the fundamental issue that delegates must address to achieve energy sustainability and security²⁹.

Disaster Management

Environmental disasters such as earthquakes, droughts, floods, landslides, and wildfires are common occurrences throughout Europe³⁰. From 1970 to 2019, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) recorded that Europe has experienced a grand total of 1,672 natural disasters that have resulted in 159,438 deaths and US\$ 476.5 billion in economic damages³¹. The UNECE works to fix these issues by taking a preventative approach with their disaster management projects, guided by the 2015 Sendai Framework for Disaster Reduction. In short, the Sendai Framework works to aid both Europe and, increasingly, Central Asia to improve their disaster warning and response systems³². Based on the Sendai Framework, the UNECE continues to develop several disaster risk reduction projects in Central Asia. These projects were formed in collaboration with other branches of the United Nations (UN), such as the United For Smart Sustainable Cities (U4SSC) – in working to integrate disaster risk reduction architecture into domestic building standard policies – and the Strategic Frameworks For Adaptation to Climate Change in the Dniester and Chu-Talas Basin – in establishing climate change adaptation policies with local governments³³.

Comparatively, Western Europe, and more specifically the EU, has established its own

²⁶ Kemfert.

²⁷ Kemfert.

²⁸ Kemfert.

²⁹ Kemfert.

³⁰ “111015-REVISED-WP-ECA-Country-Risk-Profiles-PUBLIC.Pdf,” accessed September 19, 2022, <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/958801481798204368/pdf/111015-REVISED-WP-ECA-Country-risk-profiles-PUBLIC.pdf><https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/958801481798204368/pdf/111015-REVISED-WP-ECA-Country-risk-profiles-PUBLIC.pdf>, 6

³¹ “Weather-Related Disasters Increase over Past 50 Years, Causing More Damage but Fewer Deaths,” August 31, 2021, <https://public.wmo.int/en/media/press-release/weather-related-disasters-increase-over-past-50-years-causing-more-damage-fewer>.

³² “Disaster Risk Reduction | UNECE,” accessed September 19, 2022, https://unece.org/disaster-risk-reduction#accordion_.

³³ “Disaster Risk Reduction | UNECE.”

disaster management system called the 2001 Union Civil Protection Mechanism³⁴. Within this disaster management framework, member-states agree to transparently exchange information on disaster risks, run evacuation exercises and exchange equipment or personnel to form response task forces ready for deployment at any time³⁵.

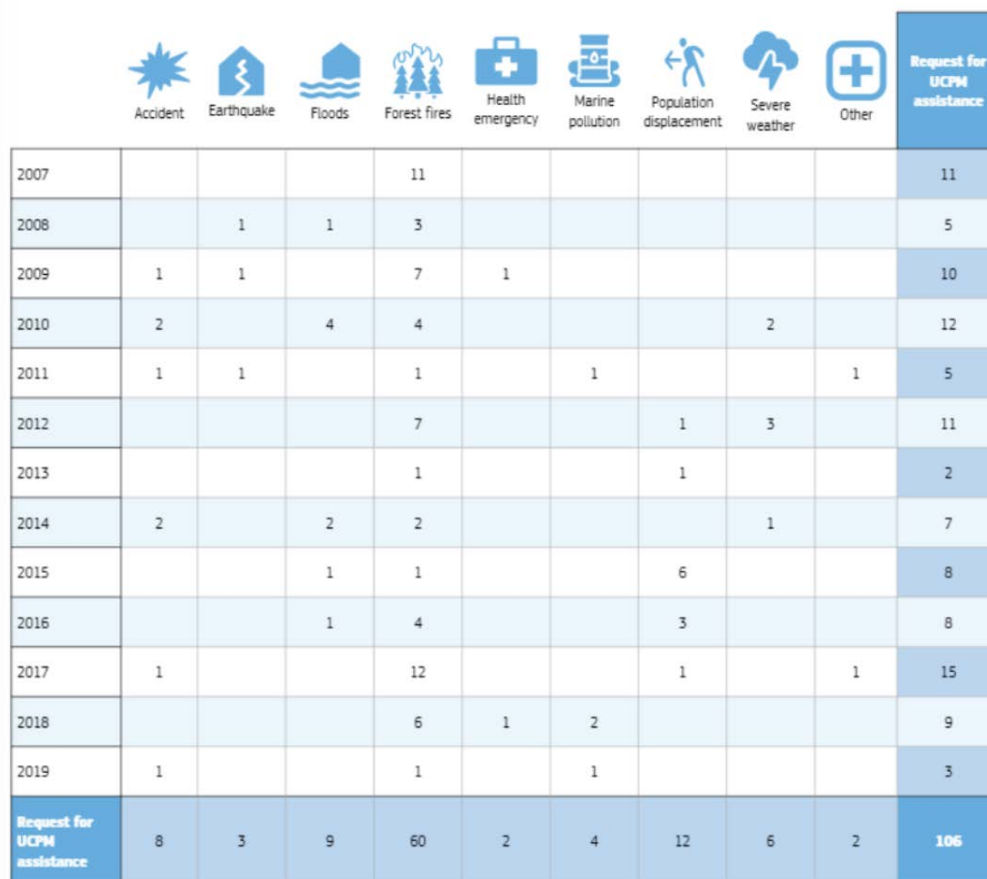


Figure 3. Requests for UCPM assistance from EU Member States / UCPM participating states by type of disaster, 2007-2019

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Environmental Monitoring & Assessment

The difficulty of finding and maintaining a suitable system for environmental monitoring and assessment between UNECE Member States continues to be a majorly debated topic,

34 Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) (European Commission), *Overview of Natural and Man-Made Disaster Risks the European Union May Face: 2020 Edition* (LU: Publications Office of the European Union, 2021), <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2795/1521>, 13

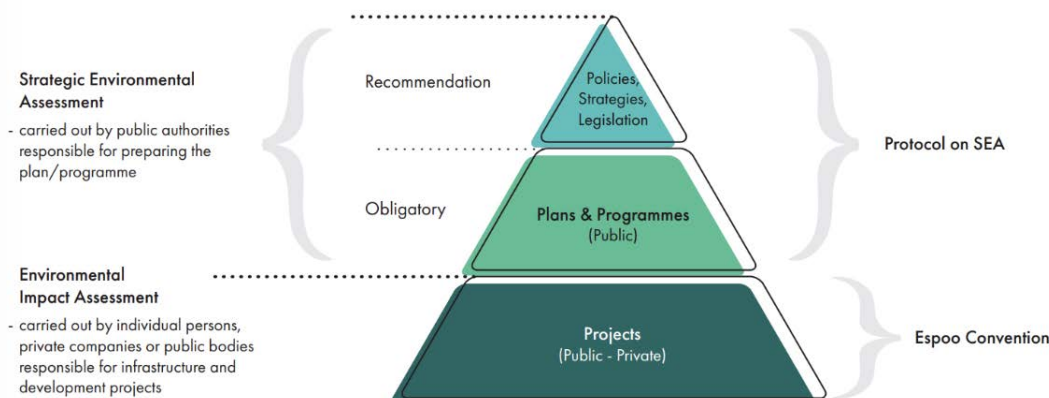
35 Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) (European Commission), 13

36 Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) (European Commission), 22

despite many recommendations proposed and legislations implemented³⁷. In 2001, the Member States of the European Union officially adopted Recommendation 2001/331/EC, establishing the minimum guidelines for organizing environmental agencies and conducting both scheduled and unscheduled inspections of member-states' economic facilities³⁸. These guidelines are intended to operate in conjunction with measures assessing the accuracy regarding the amount, type and effect of pollutants that would affect the natural environment³⁹. The EU's environmental monitoring and assessment measures are in stark contrast to those implemented by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which include explicit inspections of environmental quality indicators such as grams of carbon dioxide, sulfur oxides and nitrogen oxides being measured per unit of gross domestic product⁴⁰. However, since the OECD includes different countries from several continents, including North America, Europe and even Central Asia, there is no consistent measure for accuracy required from the respective environmental agencies. The transcontinental disconnect between environmental agencies exposes a lack of common environmental monitoring and assessment principles present between UNECE member-states. As a result, it is significantly more difficult to enforce environmental policies⁴¹.

In combating this problem, the UNECE accepted the expansion of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in 2003, which was originally negotiated under the 1991 Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (ESPOO Convention)⁴². SEA consists of a procedure tasked with analyzing and communicating both environmental and human health factors within the developmental policies of sovereign states⁴³.

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37 Jale Tosun, "Environmental Monitoring and Enforcement in Europe: A Review of Empirical Research," *Environmental Policy and Governance* 22, no. 6 (2012): 437–48, <https://doi.org/10.1002/eet.1582>.

38 Tosun.

39 Tosun.

40 Tosun.

41 Tosun.

42 Tosun

43 "1609217 UNECE HR.Pdf," accessed September 20, 2022, https://www.green-economies-eap.org/resources/1609217_UNECE_HR.pdf, 5-6

44"1609217_UNECE_HR.Pdf," 20

The main objective of SEA is to improve transparency between government authorities and the public, allowing for the dissemination of environmental information to all stakeholders. In this way, stakeholders can evaluate the pros and cons for each decision regarding a plan, programme, framework or policy before they are put into action⁴⁵. Nevertheless, the SEA Protocol's articles also pose problems in need of further evaluation. Such problems include the screening process that allows for voluntary adherence to SEA in UNECE member-states' plans and programmes, or the vagueness of needing SEA for any plan or programme that is likely to cause serious environmental or health effects⁴⁶.

Growing Desertification & Land Degradation

The UNECE's preventative disaster management efforts within Central Asia largely include responding to the complications caused by growing desertification and land degradation in the region⁴⁷. Addressing desertification and land degradation in Central Asia has proved increasingly challenging due to factors such as, but not limited to, global warming, ineffective agricultural management policies, and human activity relating to economic development⁴⁸. Consequently, the UNECE in 2019 recorded that out of all the land in Central Asia, 4-10% of arable land, 27-68% of pastureland, 8% of forest land and 50% of wetlands have considerably degraded⁴⁹. From these statistics, it has been projected that Central Asia will experience economic losses as high as USD \$288 billion by 2048⁵⁰.

Previously, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), and the United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification (UNCCD) launched the Central Asian Countries Initiative on Land Management (CACILM), aimed at improving rural livelihoods by combating desertification and land degradation⁵¹. Moreover, CACILM was approved for implementation in 2006 under a multi-country partnership framework⁵². It was somewhat successful at mitigating desertification and land degradation before its discontinuation in 2011, as there were 20 less climate related disasters in North and Central Asia between the 2000-2009 and 2010-2019 time periods⁵³.

45 "1609217_UNECE_HR.Pdf", 5-6

46 "1609217_UNECE_HR.Pdf", 10

47 "About Us | UNECE." accessed September 20, 2022, <https://unece.org/forestry/press/new-call-bring-30-million-hectares-degraded-and-deforested-landscapes-restoration>

48 "38464-01-Reg-Tcr.Pdf," accessed September 20, 2022, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/project-document/61257/38464-01-reg-tcr.pdf>.<https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/project-document/61257/38464-01-reg-tcr.pdf>, 1

49 "About Us | UNECE."

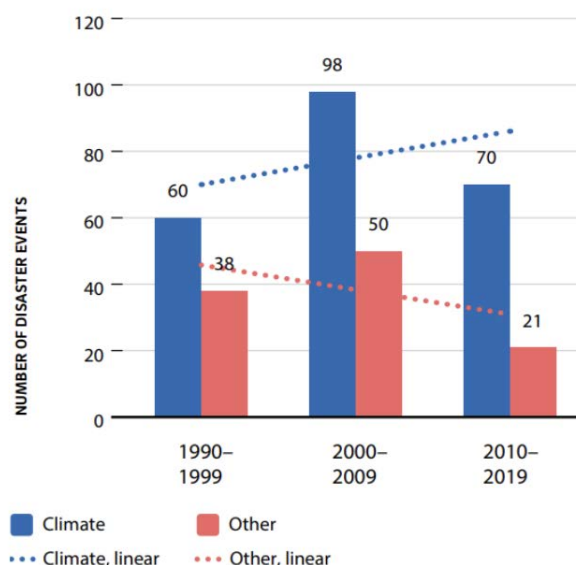
50 "ECCA30," InfoFLR, accessed September 20, 2022, <https://infoflr.org/bonn-challenge/regional-initiatives/ecca30>.

51 "38464-01-Reg-Tcr.Pdf." accessed September 20, 2020, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/project-document/61257/38464-01-reg-tcr.pdf>, 1

52 "38464-01-Reg-Tcr.Pdf.", 1

53 "The Disaster Riskscape across North and Central Asia," n.d., 24., 4

FIGURE 4 Disaster events in North and Central Asia – total per decade



Despite the minor success of CACILM in assisting aid recipients to develop the necessary advisory, investment, information sharing, research and management infrastructures needed to reduce desertification and land degradation, much is still desired from land degradation and desertification policy actions⁵⁵. When a final technical assistance report was completed, several unaddressed issues remain unresolved, including a lack of information exchanged between CACILM aid recipients, poor amounts of funding by relevant funding agencies due to ineffective accountability policy, and the infeasibility of developing a mechanism able to transfer knowledge and research to all rural farmers in Central Asia⁵⁶.

Since CACILM's discontinuation⁵⁷, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused massive amounts of average annual losses throughout Central Asia. These losses have totaled to USD \$30.249 billion in 2020 alone, with 75% of the losses being caused by droughts, 19% caused by floods, and 6% caused by earthquakes⁵⁸.

54 "The Disaster Riskscape across North and Central Asia.", 4

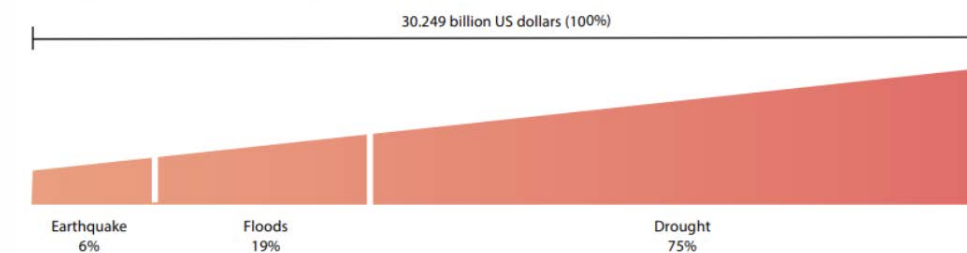
55 "38464-01-Reg-Tcr.Pdf.", 1-2

56 "38464-01-Reg-Tcr.Pdf.", 2

57 adbheadhoncho, "Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management (CACILM) Multicountry Partnership Framework Support Project," Text, Asian Development Bank, November 24, 2006, Regional, <https://www.adb.org/projects/38464-012/main>.

58 "The Disaster Riskscape across North and Central Asia.", 3

FIGURE 1 North and Central Asia sub-regional riskscape (average annual losses) – volumetric analysis



Source: ESCAP based on probabilistic risk assessment.

Note: Volumetric analysis is a measurement by volume (impacted population, geographical area and economic losses).

TABLE 1 Disaster Risk in North and Central Asia (AAL, millions of US dollars)

SOURCE OF RISK	AAL (BILLIONS OF US DOLLARS)	PROPORTION OF SUB-REGIONAL GDP (PERCENTAGE)
Intensive risk - multi-hazard AAL	6,369	0.3
Extensive risk - multi-hazard AAL	8,281	0.4
Extensive risk - multi-hazard AAL including indirect losses	11,592	0.6
Agricultural drought AAL	18,657.38	0.9
Total - including intensive, extensive, direct and indirect losses, and agricultural drought	30,249.38	1.5

Source: ESCAP, based on probabilistic risk assessment.

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Fortunately, the UNECE has recently replaced the role of CACILM by collaborating with the FAO, World Bank and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to form the ECCA30 project in 2019, which has pledged to restore 30 million hectares worth of degraded and deforested land in Central Asia by 2030⁶⁰. But as for now, the question of how to effectively combat desertification and land degradation in the long-term for Central Asia and Europe shall be something that delegates will still need to confront when further developing international environmental policy, as the implementation of ECCA30 is still in progress, and will not be evaluated on until much later in the future⁶¹.

Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions

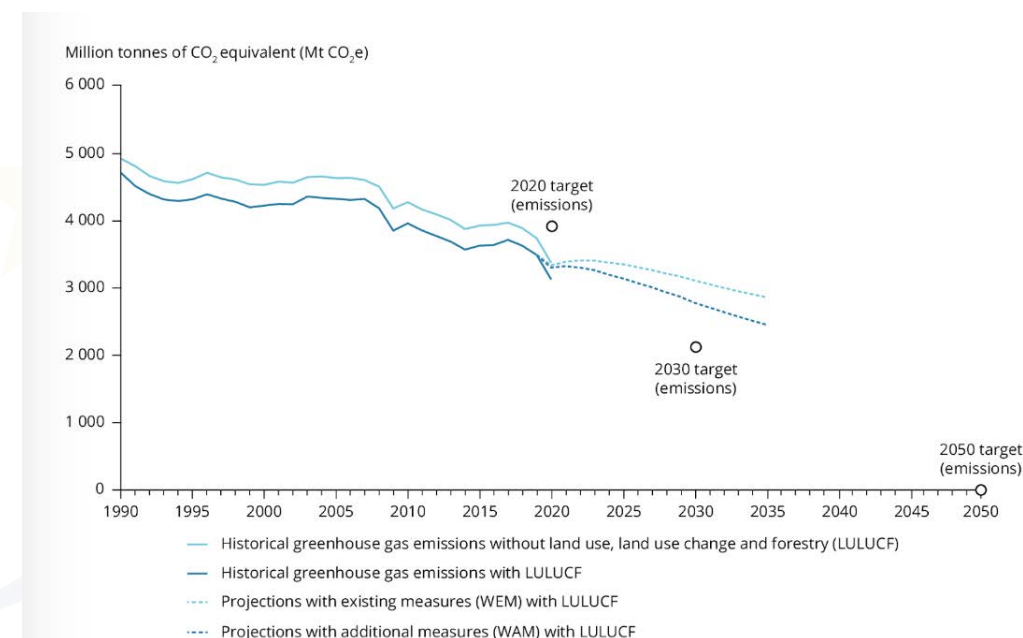
Observations of Western and Eastern Europe's greenhouse gas emissions have shown areas of simultaneous progress and room for improvement. Though the EU surpassed their 2020 greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal by 11%⁶²,

59 "The Disaster Riskscape across North and Central Asia.", 1

60 "ECCA30."

61 "ECCA30."

62 "Total Greenhouse Gas Emission Trends and Projections in Europe," accessed September 21, 2022, <https://www.eea.europa.eu/ims/total-greenhouse-gas-emission-trends>.



63

this achievement was only accomplished through a combination of aligned interests in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the COVID-19 pandemic causing people to remain indoors⁶⁴. This means that economic recovery plans aimed at returning back to normalcy after the pandemic will have to be balanced with environmental policy in order for the 2030 or 2050 goals to be actualized⁶⁵.

Moreover, many Eastern European states will experience more pressure in conforming to international environmental policy, as challenges regarding the need to update legacy infrastructure and reduce dependency on non-renewable energy resources must be financed⁶⁶. As a result, Eastern European countries are accepting more monetary aid from the EU⁶⁷, or are legislating domestic laws that limit and require large greenhouse gas emitters to issue reports to the government⁶⁸. Eastern European countries acceptance of aid and legislative actions are attempts to transition from reliance on unsustainable energy sectors to cleaner energy alternatives, such as wind power in Northeastern Europe, and solar power in Southeastern Europe⁶⁹. Unfortunately, the progress of transitioning to cleaner energy is exceptionally slow, as a lack of transparency between states and investors, along with a low public willingness to fund such projects remain prominent factors that delegates need to resolve⁷⁰.

63 “Total Greenhouse Gas Emission Trends and Projections in Europe.”

64 “Total Greenhouse Gas Emission Trends and Projections in Europe.”

65 “Total Greenhouse Gas Emission Trends and Projections in Europe.”

66 “Why Eastern Europe Is Stepping up a Gear in the Drive for Net Zero,” accessed September 21, 2022, https://www.ey.com/en_eg/recail/why-eastern-europe-is-stepping-up-a-gear-in-the-drive-for-net-zero.

67 “Why Eastern Europe Is Stepping up a Gear in the Drive for Net Zero.”

68 “Environmental Policy in Eastern Europe | SITE Development Day 2021 • FREE NETWORK,” FREE NETWORK, January 9, 2022, <https://freepolicybriefs.org/2022/01/10/environmental-policy-in-eastern-europe-site-development-day-2021/>.

69 “Why Eastern Europe Is Stepping up a Gear in the Drive for Net Zero.”

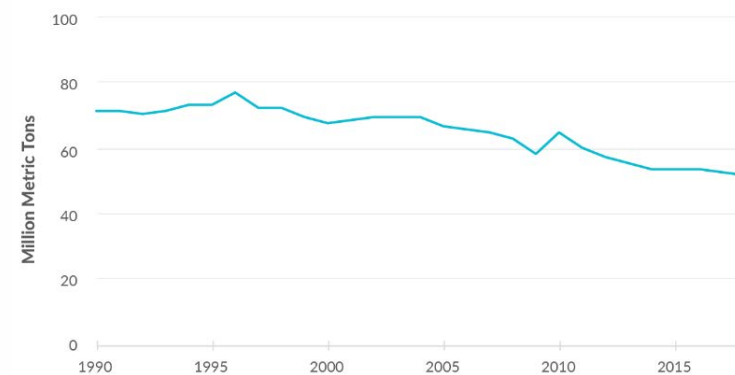
70 “Environmental Policy in Eastern Europe | SITE Development Day 2021 • FREE NETWORK.”

Case Study: Sweden's Environmental Protection Act

After considering the many subtopics within discussions of environmental policy, exploring Sweden's Environmental Protection Act outlines effective environmental policy, for the reduction of emissions, in practice⁷¹. Since its ratification in 1969, Sweden's effective governmental framework has fundamentally emphasized the responsibility of the state to protect the natural environment. State-level environmental protection functions through a strictly enforced industry permit system for environmentally hazardous human activities⁷², and a state-mandated carbon tax law passed in 1991, calculated by how much energy is produced by burning oil, natural gas and coal⁷³. Since then, Sweden has consistently updated its carbon tax by doubling-down on the discouragement of greenhouse gas emissions for transportation and household heating purposes, while also implementing exceptions and a tax ceiling to alleviate large industries from financial burdens⁷⁴. These actions have culminated in a 50% GDP per capita growth between 1990 and 2019, in conjunction with a 27% decrease in greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 to 2018 that allowed for revenue to be directed towards disaster management or environmental monitoring and assessment⁷⁵.

Over the Last 30 Years Greenhouse Gas Emissions Have Declined in Sweden

Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Sweden in CO₂-Equivalents, 1990-2018



Source: Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (Naturvårdsverket), "Territoriella utsläpp och upptag av växthusgaser," <http://www.naturvardsverket.se/klimatutslapp?visuallyDisabledSeries=8423b88cha18c7cf>.

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Nevertheless, Sweden's carbon tax is not perfect, as only 40% of Sweden's total greenhouse gas emissions are taxed, while many large industries such as steel and concrete

71 "Swedish Environmental Law," accessed September 21, 2022, <https://www.naturvardsverket.se/om-oss/publikationer/6700/swedish-environmental-law/>, 14

72 "Swedish Environmental Law," 14

73 "Looking Back on 30 Years of Carbon Taxes in Sweden," *Tax Foundation* (blog), September 23, 2020, <https://taxfoundation.org/sweden-carbon-tax-revenue-greenhouse-gas-emissions/>.

74 "Looking Back on 30 Years of Carbon Taxes in Sweden."

75 "Looking Back on 30 Years of Carbon Taxes in Sweden."

76 "Looking Back on 30 Years of Carbon Taxes in Sweden."

manufacturing remain untaxed due to the tax ceiling⁷⁷.

Questions to Consider

- What political, technological, or social methods can be used to incentivise UNECE countries to expand on more renewable sources of energy?
- How can major environmental policy concerns be addressed to reduce the frequency of natural disasters occurring in Europe?
- What common principles should UNECE members find to improve environmental monitoring and assessment?
- How effective would a similar policy to CACILM be in mitigating desertification and land degradation for UNECE members outside of North and Central Asia?

⁷⁷ “Looking Back on 30 Years of Carbon Taxes in Sweden.”

Topic B: Economic Cooperation and Integration

Historical Background

Shortly after the conclusion of the Second World War, the victorious Allied forces were confronted with the issue of economically rebuilding a post-war Europe so that another international conflict would not happen again. The European Recovery Program, better known as the Marshall Plan, implemented by the U.S from 1948 to 1952 established Europe's need for economic cooperation and integration for the maintenance of international peace⁷⁸.

The Marshall Plan centrally focused on the intricate, sometimes obscure details of long-term economic restructuring, industrial and agricultural infrastructure, international finance, and trade⁷⁹. The legislation setting up the European Recovery Program consisted of a relatively complex set of stipulations and interventions formulated by economists, technocrats, and industrialists to rebuild European monetary markets and economic infrastructure⁸⁰.

Evidently, this vast amount of long-term planning bore the formation of the European Cooperation Administration (ECA). The ECA significantly aided the dissemination of USD \$13 billion (USD \$15.9 billion when adjusted to 2022 inflation rates) that kickstarted a common agreement to pursue economic cooperation and integration so that Europe's industrial, agricultural and financial sectors could recover to their maximum potential⁸¹. Following developments subsequent to the ECA's establishment, the EU was formed in 1991⁸².

But even after the Cold War ended, the Marshall Plan's legacy lived on via the European Monetary Union (EMU). The EMU was established by the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, which explicitly called for the continuation of monetary unity within Europe by pooling all nations into a single economic entity⁸³.

One of the Maastricht Treaty's priorities was economic policy and the convergence of EU member state economies⁸⁴. The treaty established a timeline for the creation and implementation of the EMU. The EMU was to include a common economic and monetary union, a central banking system, and a common currency⁸⁵.

There were many positive impacts of EMU, such as increased price stability, controlled

78 "Helping Europe Help Itself: The Marshall Plan," accessed September 21, 2022, <https://afsa.org/helping-europe-help-itself-marshall-plan>.

79 "Helping Europe Help Itself: The Marshall Plan."

80 "Helping Europe Help Itself: The Marshall Plan."

81 "Helping Europe Help Itself: The Marshall Plan."

82 "European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU)," Investopedia, accessed September 21, 2022, <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/e/emu.asp>.

83 "European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU)."

84 "European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU)."

85 "European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU)."

inflation, and high economic efficiency⁸⁶. However, the downside of reduced monetary flexibility was that countries were no longer able to develop economic policies uniquely tailored to their national interests⁸⁷. As of today, the most important issue that delegates will confront when discussing economic cooperation and integration across Europe is whether a new, all-inclusive economic policy for Europe is needed within the context of twenty-first century geopolitics.

Cross Border Migration of Labor and Resources

Throughout European history, cross-border migration has played a vital role in defining the social, political, and economic developments that are uniquely present within each nation. Under the 1985 and 1990 Schengen Agreement, unrestricted international migration within EU member-states for residential, educational, and occupational purposes was achieved with the goal of fostering general economic growth, integration, and cooperation⁸⁸. However, since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Schengen Agreement has been at the epicenter of increasingly polarized cross-border migration, regarding labor and resources⁸⁹. Certain regions have experienced a substantial net increase in migration that becomes increasingly harder to accommodate, while other regions have experienced a net decrease in migration that have resulted in being trapped within a negative feedback loop of low economic development, integration, and cooperation compared to the rest of Europe⁹⁰.

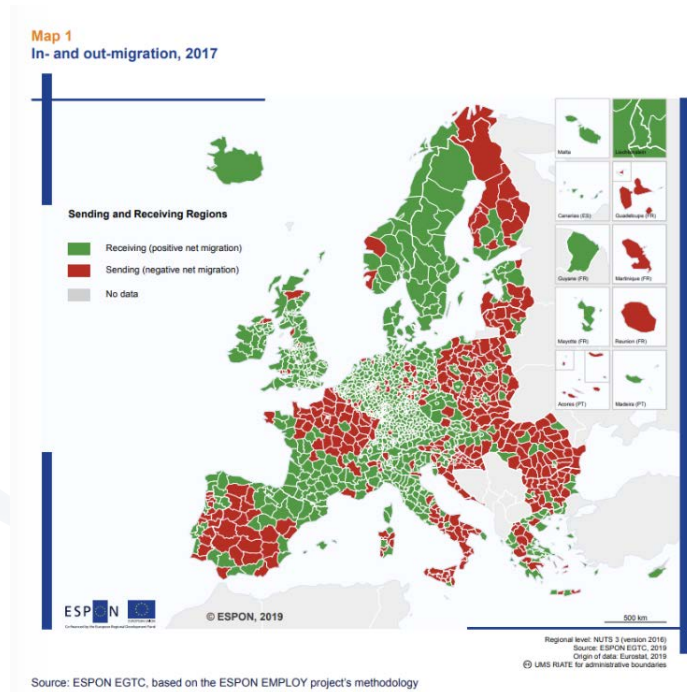
⁸⁶ Benjamin Conrad, *The European Monetary Union - Benefits and Potential Risks*, 2000, <https://www.grin.com/document/95394>.

⁸⁷ “European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU).”

⁸⁸ “Migration,” Manual for Human Rights Education with Young people, accessed September 21, 2022, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/migration>.

⁸⁹ “ESPON Policy Brief, Labour Migration Challenges.Pdf,” accessed September 21, 2022, <https://www.espon.eu/sites/default/files/attachments/ESPON%20Policy%20Brief%2C%20Labour%20migration%20challenges.pdf>.<https://www.espon.eu/sites/default/files/attachments/ESPON%20Policy%20Brief%2C%20Labour%20migration%20challenges.pdf>, 4

⁹⁰ “ESPON Policy Brief, Labour Migration Challenges.Pdf.”, 4



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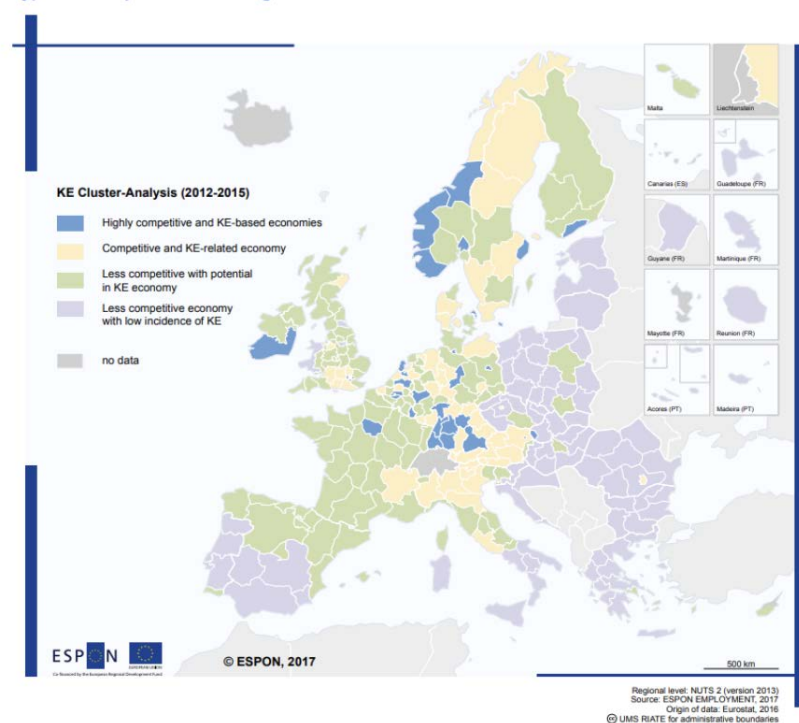
Consequently, there have been suggestions of mitigating the rising migration and economic progress disparities between regions in Europe via the development of knowledge-based economies⁹². This development involves high wage opportunities provided to highly specialized and skilled laborers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to migrate back into economically poor regions. Their migration is expected to then facilitate economic development through skill-based competition, codified knowledge dissemination, and territorial cooperation with neighboring metropolitan, suburban or rural areas⁹³.

91 “ESPON Policy Brief, Labour Migration Challenges.Pdf.”, 4

92 “ESPON Policy Brief, Labour Migration Challenges.Pdf.”, 10

93 “ESPON Policy Brief, Labour Migration Challenges.Pdf.”, 11-12

Map 7
Types of competitive knowledge economies



Note: KE, knowledge economy.
Source: ESPON EMPLOY project (2017)

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Nonetheless, the implementation of knowledge economy programs had been advocated before in the 2013 ESPON ATTREG Project, but the project never actualized due to the difficulty of forging cooperation between origin and destination locations⁹⁵. Moreover, the recent COVID-19 pandemic has simultaneously benefitted and hindered attempts to build knowledge-based economies. The crisis has increased the overall demand for skilled workers in healthcare related fields such as STEM, while also necessitating many OECD member-states to establish economically damaging travel restrictions that only allow migration for essential foreign workers⁹⁶. As well, vaccine mandates have compounded massive amounts of unprecedented and ongoing inflation issues in Europe⁹⁷.

94 “ESPON Policy Brief, Labour Migration Challenges.Pdf.”<https://www.espon.eu/sites/default/files/attachments/ESPON%20Policy%20Brief%2C%20Labour%20migration%20challenges.pdf>“ESPON Policy Brief, Labour Migration Challenges.Pdf.”, 12

95 “ESPON Policy Brief, Labour Migration Challenges.Pdf.”, 12-13

96 “Managing International Migration under COVID-19,” OECD, accessed September 21, 2022, <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/managing-international-migration-under-covid-19-6e914d57/#section-d1e175>.

97 “Managing International Migration under COVID-19.””

Effectiveness of the Euro

This section provides an in-depth summary of the EU and EMU, and several of the countries covered in this subsection make up the UNECE⁹⁸. However, the UNECE is separate from the EU and EMU as it economically links North American, Eastern European, and Central Asian States. Nonetheless, the affairs and interests of the EU, EMU, and UNECE greatly intersect. Since 1999, promoting and stabilizing the Euro remains a central feature of multilateral efforts to facilitate expansive economic integration and cooperation within EU member-states⁹⁹. Yet, as highlighted during the European Sovereign Debt Crisis between the late 2000s and early 2010s, the Euro features substantial drawbacks, the most prominent of them being a rigid monetary policy¹⁰⁰. That is, certain EU member-states' national banks had restricted control over monetary supply and facilitation of stable economic growth during the Crisis¹⁰¹. Thus, the Crisis is in part attributed to the Euro's standardized economic policy. Specifically, Southern and Atlantic European countries experienced massive amounts of deflation and unemployment due to Northern-European-mandated interest rates, hence discouraging the European Central Bank from printing more banknotes and manufacturing an artificial supply as scared investors rapidly sold their assets¹⁰².

In light of organizational vulnerabilities exposed during the Crisis, several member-states have chosen to either opt out of the EMU, or not join in the first place to retain some economic independence¹⁰³. Since then, the promise of multi-speed economic integration has incentivized European nations to reconsider joining the EMU. However, increased membership could complicate these economic institutions, possibly culminating in the establishment of separate EMU governing bodies to mitigate conflicting interests of those members wary of stipulations on economic decision-making capacities¹⁰⁴. From here, delegates must carefully consider whether a continued expansion of the EMU remains in the best interests of UNECE member-states.

Opportunities for International Workers

Today's Europe is a patchwork of varying labor markets, attracting international labor and featuring challenges to existing European labor demographics. As European economic integration progresses alongside globalization, a marked shift in market-based capitalism has occurred worldwide. Namely, market-based economies have become increasingly post-industrial, wherein

98 "Member States and Member States Representatives | UNECE," accessed October 18, 2022, <https://unece.org/member-states-and-member-states-representatives>.

99 "Pros and Cons of the Euro," Investopedia, accessed September 21, 2022, <https://www.investopedia.com/ask/answers/09/euro-introduction-debut.asp>.

100 "Pros and Cons of the Euro."

101 "Monetary Policy Meaning, Types, and Tools," Investopedia, accessed October 18, 2022, <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/m/monetarypolicy.asp>.

102 "Pros and Cons of the Euro."

103 "Why These European Countries Don't Use the Euro," Investopedia, accessed September 21, 2022, <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/050515/why-these-european-countries-dont-use-euro.asp>.

104 "Why These European Countries Don't Use the Euro."

the demand and opportunity in knowledge-intensive labor sectors has increased considerably¹⁰⁵. Sectors in this category include those requiring STEM skills, legal and business professions, and those requiring a socioemotional aptitude, such as education and management industries.

The European Commission cites three “mega-trends” that correlate with such occupational skill shifts, including (1) rapid technological transformation throughout modern society, (2) global market competition forces, and (3) major demographic shifts within the working age pool¹⁰⁶. Therefore, the most desirable and fast-growing labor markets are geographically concentrated in regions with the most significant innovation capabilities, business dynamism, workforce skills, and tertiary educational opportunities¹⁰⁷. The COVID-19 pandemic has only accelerated such occupational shifts through increased adoption of automation, which has caused further wealth and job growth inequalities amongst socioeconomic classes that have become more polarizing, and particularly affecting middle-skill occupations¹⁰⁸.

European labor markets fall into three regional concentrations: dynamic growth hubs, stable economies, and shrinking regions¹⁰⁹. Dynamic growth hubs pose the most opportunity for employment in increasingly relevant professions. These regions are large cities with young workforces, high educational attainment, high GDPs per capita, strong innovation capabilities, and high-growth industries. These dynamic growth hubs generate 43% of the EU’s GDP growth, 35% of its net job growth, and 40% of its population growth while accounting for only 20% of the EU’s population and 21% of its workforce¹¹⁰. In turn, these regions incur the most job migration and labor mobility, with cross-border occupational migration rising by 50% from 2003 to 2017¹¹¹.

Labor mobility poses significant economic opportunities for Europe’s job market. As European economies grapple with aging workforces and shrinking labor markets, mass migration is required to fill open positions in the most desired occupations to keep Europe’s economy competitive. Currently, non-EU citizens are significantly underrepresented in fields that provide the most economic opportunities, both by job sector and specific occupations¹¹².

Under-Represented Sectors

Non-EU citizens were **under-represented** in other economic sectors, including:

105 “The Future of Work in Europe | McKinsey,” accessed September 23, 2022, <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/the-future-of-work-in-europe>.

106 “Employment and Social Analysis - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission,” accessed September 24, 2022, <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=113&intPageId=5099&langId=en>.

107 “The Future of Work in Europe | McKinsey.”

108 “Employment and Social Analysis - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission.”

109 “The Future of Work in Europe | McKinsey.”

110 “The Future of Work in Europe | McKinsey.”

111 “The Future of Work in Europe | McKinsey.”

112 “Statistics on Migration to Europe,” Text, European Commission - European Commission, accessed September 23, 2022, https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/statistics-migration-europe_en.

Sector	Overall employment of non-EU citizens	Overall employment of EU citizens
Public administration and defence, compulsory social security	1.2%	7.5%
Education	3.7%	7.6%
Human health and social work activities	7.6%	10.9%
Financial and insurance activities	1.1%	2.8%

Under-representation by occupation

On the other hand, non-EU citizens were under-represented among:

Occupational group	Overall employment of non-EU citizens	Overall employment of EU citizens
Teaching professionals	2.5%	5.6%
Business and administration associate professionals	2.5%	6.8%
General and keyboard clerks	1.4%	4.0%
Science and engineering associate professionals	2.0%	4.1%

Business and administration professionals	2.1%	4.2%
Market-oriented skilled agricultural workers	1.3%	3.1%

Source: Eurostat¹¹³

Balancing employment opportunities for domestic and international workers are required to create a prosperous and fair European labor market system, and there are a variety of suggested steps to achieve this overarching goal. More training and career pathways are achievable through emphasizing marketable professional skills, nurturing educator-employer partnerships through workforce, development investments, policy incentives; in addition to mobilizing existing education systems, labor agency networks, training infrastructures, and digital technology for economic benefit¹¹⁴. Transit infrastructure development, affordable housing policy, remote work and outsourcing could connect a wider variety of workers to growth hubs¹¹⁵. Economic development strategies such as public and private investment in financial incentives for company relocations and skilled migrants could tackle the shrinking labor market within Europe¹¹⁶. Broad labor-market and pension reforms could also incentivize non-EU citizens underrepresented in higher-skill labor markets to further opportunity and diversity in the European workforce¹¹⁷.

Removing Barriers

Outlined in the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, the European Single Market enables the free movement of goods, services, people, and capital across European nation-states. Since then, digital technology has transformed conventional consumer-seller interactions on a global scale. Considering these developments, the Digital Single Market strategy was adopted by the EU on May 6th, 2015, seeking to further consolidate Europe's 28 markets into a singular entity, with the extensive usage of a seamless digital market¹¹⁸. However, language, physical, and regulatory barriers pose serious setbacks to cross-border e-commerce, economic integration, and the achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the EU and between UNECE member states.

¹¹³ "Statistics on Migration to Europe."

¹¹⁴ "The Future of Work in Europe | McKinsey."

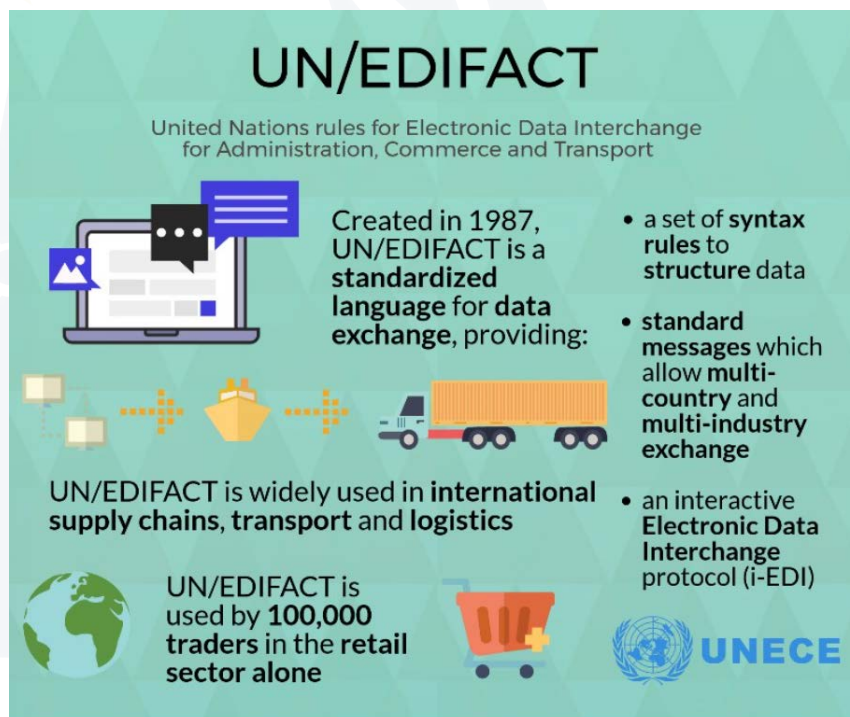
¹¹⁵ "The Future of Work in Europe | McKinsey."

¹¹⁶ "The Future of Work in Europe | McKinsey."

¹¹⁷ "The Future of Work in Europe | McKinsey."

¹¹⁸ "Digital Economy and Society in the EU - What Is the Digital Single Market About?," Digital technologies and in particular the internet are transforming our world and the European Commission wants to make the EU's single market fit for the digital age – moving from 28 national digital markets to a single one., accessed September 24, 2022, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/ict/bloc-4.html>.

Plurilingualism within the EU Single Market calls for online tools and features that increase access to goods and services, maximize economic benefits from digitization for businesses, and create opportunities for governments and citizens¹¹⁹. Interoperable Europe, formerly known as ISA², currently leads policymaking on interoperable cross-border and cross-sector public services¹²⁰. The ISA² funding programme implemented Action 2016.16: Public multilingual knowledge management infrastructure for the Digital Single Market.



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Under this action, open multilingual tools and features are provided to small- to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and public administrations, helping them save resources on the creation and maintenance of multilingual tools that improve cross-border accessibility of e-commerce solutions include machine translation, localization, and multilingual search functions¹²².

At the heart of the UNECE's efforts to remove barriers to cross-border trade and commerce is the achievement of the SDGs. Established in 1987, the UN/EDIFACT international standard for the electronic exchange of data has created a "standardized language for data exchange, providing a set of syntax rules to structure data, standard messages which allow multi-country

119 Zhenya ALEKSANDROVA, "Overcoming Language Barriers," Text, ISA² - European Commission, November 22, 2016, http://webserver:8080/isa2/actions/overcoming-language-barriers_en.

120 "The ISA² Programme Becomes Interoperable Europe," Text, European Commission - European Commission, accessed September 24, 2022, https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/isa2-programme-becomes-interoperable-europe-2021-nov-22_en.

121 "Celebrating 30 Years of Successful Data Exchange for Trade and Logistics Using the UN/EDIFACT Standard | UNECE," 30, unece.org (UNECE, October 6, 2017) accessed October 21, 2022, <https://unece.org/trade/news/celebrating-30-years-successful-data-exchange-trade-and-logistics-using-unedifact>.

122 ALEKSANDROVA, "Overcoming Language Barriers."

and multi-industry exchange, [and] an interactive Electronic Data Interchange protocol (i-EDI)”¹²³. This standard is the cornerstone for much of the UNECE’s action toward removing trade and transnational barriers between member states.

The UNECE’s approach to Goal 8 – decent work and economic growth – includes accelerating growth through simplified international trade, removing non-tariff barriers to trade, and cutting costs and opening access to markets¹²⁴. The Electronic Single Window system, based on UNECE Recommendation No. 33 – is just one example of tools working to simplify trade rules and create a common language for cross-border transactions for the facilitation of global trade. Under a Single Window system, the large volume of standardized information and documents required for imports, exports, and transit-related regulatory requirements is submitted once at a single entry point¹²⁵. This system streamlines trade efficiency and cuts the “red tape” – differing trade regulations or formalities – between borders^{126 127}. The benefit of this system is shared by governments and private actors, as the Single Window improves the efficiency and effectiveness of official controls, reduces costs with the better deployment of human and financial resources, and increases revenue yields through increased trade compliance, productivity, and competitiveness¹²⁸. As electronic trade facilitation solutions continue to emerge and evolve, it is essential to address regional challenges to their implementation to equalize economic opportunities across UNECE member states¹²⁹.

Case Study: France’s People First Private Partnerships

Public-private partnerships give insight into the progress of European economic integration and cooperation as they continue to play a pivotal role in the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The OECD defines public-private partnerships (PPPs) as “long term agreements between the government and private partner whereby the private partner delivers and funds public services using a capital asset, sharing the associated risks”¹³⁰. PPPs are employed in various infrastructural and social sectors available to the public for use and benefit¹³¹. The UNECE places particular emphasis on approaching PPPs from a “people first” lens, wherein the will and “value of the people” is prioritized while engaging with the design and

123 UNECE, “Celebrating 30 Years of Successful Data Exchange for Trade and Logistics Using the UN/EDIFACT Standard | UNECE,” unece.org (UNECE, October 6, 2017),

124 UNECE, “UNECE and the SDGs | UNECE,” unece.org, accessed October 7, 2022, <https://unece.org/unece-and-sdgs-2>.

125 UN/CEFACT, “Recommendation and Guidelines on Establishing a Single Window,” *Unece.org*, 2005, https://unece.org/DAM/cefact/recommendations/rec33/rec33_trd352e.pdf, 3-7.

126 UNECE, “Trade Goods | UNECE,” unece.org, accessed October 7, 2022, <https://unece.org/stories/trade-goods>.

127 UN/CEFACT, “Recommendation and Guidelines,” 3-7.

128 UN/CEFACT, “Recommendation and Guidelines,” 3.

129 UNECE, “Expanding E-Government in Europe and Central Asia | UNECE,” unece.org (UNECE, July 13, 2020), <https://unece.org/general-unece/press/expanding-e-government-europe-and-central-asia>.

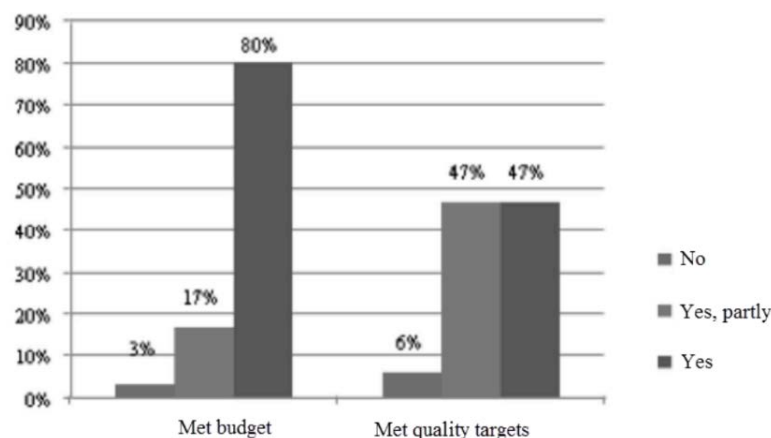
130 “OECD Principles for Public Governance of Public-Private Partnerships - OECD,” accessed September 24, 2022, <https://www.oecd.org/gov/budgeting/oecd-principles-for-public-governance-of-public-private-partnerships.htm>.

131 “Public Private Partnership Introduction,” n.d., 3., 1

operative powers of private sectors¹³².

In the case of France, PPPs were originally introduced in June of 2004, which were based on Great Britain's Private Finance Initiative (PFI) in the 1990s. At the time, France capitalized on PPP opportunities to compensate for lost economic ground in comparison to other large EU member states¹³³. Since then, France has led the PPP market in Europe since 2011 with the most volume yearly contracts compared to any other EU member-state. Its share of PPPs has been worth over 12 billion euros since 2005, and as of August 2012, France has successfully signed and operated over 150 PPPs to deliver infrastructure and public services¹³⁴. In a 2012 study conducted by Stephane Saussier and Phuong Tra Tran of the Sorbonne Business School on evaluating the efficiency of PPPs, they found that public authorities were overall satisfied with the construction and operation phases of 30 PPP contracts, with 80% reporting they were somewhat satisfied at least¹³⁵. From here, it is useful to evaluate what econometric factors ensure or supplement the success of PPPs.

Graph 9. Performance of public-private partnerships in the operational phase (Yes: score 5 or 6; Yes, partly: score 4; No: scores 1, 2, or 3)



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132 "Revised Guiding Principles for People-First PPPs in support of the UN SDGs-Part I.pdf," accessed September 24, 2022, https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/ceci/documents/2018/PPP/Forum/Documents/Revised_Guiding_Principles_for_People-first_PPPs_in_support_of_the_UN_SDGs-Part_I.pdf.https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/ceci/documents/2018/PPP/Forum/Documents/Revised_Guiding_Principles_for_People-first_PPPs_in_support_of_the_UN_SDGs-Part_I.pdf, 15-16

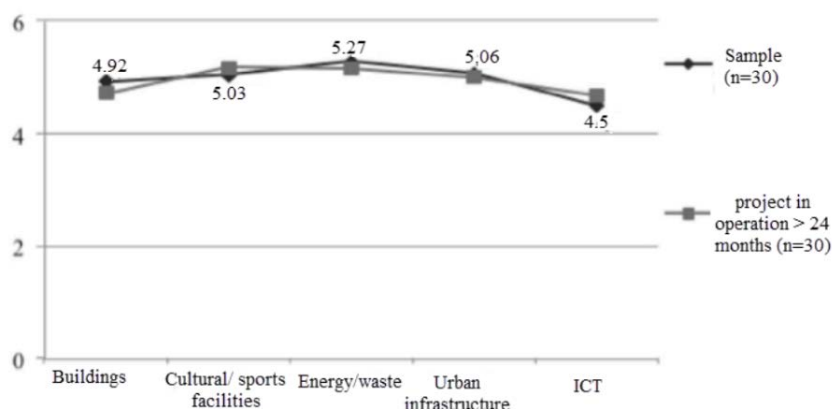
133 Stéphane Saussier, "The Efficiency of Public-Private Partnerships in France: An Initial Quantitative Evaluation," n.d., 25., 2

134 Saussier., 5-7

135 Saussier., 20-21

136 Saussier., 21

Graph 10. Overall performance of public-private partnerships by sector (scale from 1 to 6)



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The UN 2030 development agenda further emphasizes the transformative potential of people-first PPPs, wherein “comprehensive, well-visioned, national infrastructure plan[s]” are prioritized¹³⁸. Through economic cooperation and collaboration with private actors, governments can better operate and maintain public infrastructure and services on a long-term basis without draining public budgets and heavily altering tax budgets¹³⁹. With these findings in mind, PPPs can respond to challenges faced by low- and middle-income countries, helping them to engage near or at the same economic level as higher-income states.

Questions to Consider

- How can UNECE members effectively balance international migration policy to maximize their potential of helping migrants, while also maintaining political and economic sustainability?
- How effective has the Euro been in promoting economic cooperation and integration within the EU? Is it a viable solution for the rest of Europe?
- What can UNECE members do to further improve employment opportunities for international workers, while balancing employment for domestic workers?
- What can be done in addressing regional challenges of stable electricity access to equalize the economic opportunities presented by UN/EDIFACT?

¹³⁷ Saussier., 22

¹³⁸ “Revised_Guiding_Principles_for_People-First_PPPs_in_support_of_the_UN_SDGs-Part_I.Pdf”, 12

¹³⁹ “Revised_Guiding_Principles_for_People-First_PPPs_in_support_of_the_UN_SDGs-Part_I.Pdf”, 15-16

Tips for Research

This background guide is meant to provide a basic outline of the key details surrounding the three topics that will be discussed over the course of the conference. It introduces the topics and the relevant subtopics in order to provide delegates with a general understanding of the goals of the committee. This is not meant to be a comprehensive source of information. Delegates are advised to supplement the information provided in the background guide with their own research in order to better these topics and their individual positions in regards to them.

Begin by researching general details about the country that you are representing. This doesn't necessarily need to be in relation to the topics that are covered in this committee, but rather so that you will be able to speak to its current state of affairs and position in the world. Get to know the nation you're representing so that you will be able to portray its contemporary interests well.

Following this, go through the background guide, taking care to note any aspects of it that are relevant to the part of the world that your nation is in. Model UN is meant to highlight the interconnectedness of the world, so think beyond just your individual country and consider its surroundings to understand how it may be impacted. Follow the "Key Resources" provided below to better understand the general topics we will be discussing, looking at the bigger picture but also noting anything that is pertinent to your part of the world.

Once you are comfortable with the topics, begin compiling your research about your country's position on the issues that are highlighted. Use the subtopics to guide your research, and learn about your country's national and international response to them. Look at what your country's stakes are in relation to these subtopics. Don't be afraid to go into the specifics! Look at the different economic and social concepts covered in the Background Guide and connect them to your country's position. Look through the "Questions to Consider" at the end of each topic to further guide your research. The goal is to be able to comfortably defend the interests of the country you are representing and to be able to further those interests throughout the conference.

Lastly, begin thinking about solutions to the issues presented throughout the background guide. Remember that you are to take an objective stance based on what country you are representing, which is why it is so important to keep in mind your respective country's stakes in the issues. Think of how your country would go about presenting resolutions in relation to the two topics in order to prepare yourself for meaningful deliberation throughout the conference. This will allow for an engaging committee, where everyone can bring various perspectives.

Good luck!

Topic A Key Resources

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