

International Geneva
Directory of Geneva Global Health Actors

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe | UNECE
Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme | THE PEP

<https://www.unece.org/sustainable-development/sdg-priorities.html>

Palais des Nations | CH-1211 Geneva 10

Tel +41 22 917 1234 | | mail: unece_info@un.org

BACKGROUND AND MISSION

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) was set up in 1947 by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and is one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations. 56 European, North-American and Asian countries are members of UNECE, whose mission is to foster sustainable economic growth and promote pan-European economic integration.

AREAS OF INTEREST

- Economic cooperation and integration
- Environmental policy
- Population, housing and land management
- Sustainable energy and forests, Statistics
- Trade and transport
- Gender

HEALTH-RELATED ACTIVITIES

UNECE supports concrete cooperation between countries to ensure that good health and well-being remain at the heart of sustainable development.

Tackling air pollution

Air pollution kills 7 million people worldwide every year, making it more deadly than malaria, tuberculosis and AIDS combined. Under UNECE's [Air Convention](#), 51 countries in Europe and North America are cooperating to reduce deadly air pollution, achieving major reductions in emissions of harmful substances.

Bridging gaps in access to clean water and sanitation

140 million people in the pan-European region still do not have access to clean water. The UNECE/WHO Europe [Protocol on Water and Health](#) helps countries design and implement policies to increase access to drinking water and sanitation for all citizens, especially for the most vulnerable members of society. It also links sustainable water management and the prevention, control and reduction of water-related diseases in Europe.

Reducing harmful vehicle emissions

By driving progress in UN vehicle regulations on emissions and by supporting the development of cleaner fuel technologies, UNECE achieves significant reductions in dangerous emissions from transport (World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations).

Improving road safety

Every year 1.25 million people are killed and around 50 million are injured in road traffic crashes, making it one of the most pressing health emergencies of our time. As host to the UN conventions and agreements on road safety, UNECE supports cooperation for safer transport and works with countries to build capacities for road safety plans that save lives. UNECE also hosts the secretariat and supports the work of the Secretary General's Special Envoy for Road Safety.

Reducing health risks of hazardous materials

UNECE supports the safe handling, storage and transport of hazardous materials through standards, technical assistance and by promoting cooperation between countries, reducing risks to health and the environment.

Promoting access to healthy housing

Access to decent housing has a direct impact on people's health. UNECE helps countries improve access to healthy housing through reviews, recommendations and policy advice on housing sector policy ([Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management](#)), together with standards and capacity-building for housing design, maintenance and retrofitting of existing housing stock.

Supporting healthy and sustainable mobility

Together with WHO/Europe, UNECE supports countries in the development of integrated policies connecting [transport, health and environment](#). This includes initiatives to promote walking and cycling.

Ensuring ageing with dignity and reducing gender gaps in older age

Close to 195 million people in the region are 65 or older today and the proportion of persons aged 80+ is growing fast. Promoting health and well-being across the life course is a fundamental part of policy responses to population ageing. UNECE supports countries in their commitment to ensure ageing with dignity and reducing gender gaps in older age through the implementation of the UN policy framework on ageing in the region. This helps to ensure access to quality health and care services and the creation of an enabling, non-discriminatory environment that fosters [participation and well-being for women and men at all ages](#).

GOVERNANCE AND STAFF

UNECE's Governing Body, the Commission, is currently chaired by Belarus, Ambassador Yury Ambrazevich. The executive secretary of UNECE is Ms. Olga Algayerova (since April 2017). UNECE counts 188 staff.

PUBLICATIONS

See all UNECE publications at: <http://www.unece.org/publications/oes/welcome.html>

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