

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

Key features

Type of organisation: United Nations Regional Commission

Charter/Constitution: UN Economic and Social's Council Resolution 36 (IV), www.unece.org/oes/nutshell/mandate_role.html

Membership:

- Nature: Representatives from governments
- Number: 56 members

Year of establishment: 1947

Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland

Secretariat staff: 229 (as of 2016)

Total budget: EUR 71.7 million (2016-17)

Type of activity: Policy dialogue, data collection and analysis, information exchange, development of legal instruments, technical co-operation for countries with economies in transition

Sectors of activity: Environmental Policy, Forestry and Timber, Housing and Land Management, Population, Sustainable Energy, Trade, Transport, Electronic Business, Public-Private Partnerships, Innovation Policy, Trade Facilitation, Regulatory Cooperation

Webpage: www.unece.org

Members

Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, San Marino, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan.

Observers

“Non-UNECE member States can participate as observers or, if agreed by the parent Sectoral Committee, as full members. In addition, relevant international organizations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can also be invited as observers, in compliance with the UN rules and practices in this respect” (ECE/EX/1 of 9 October 2006).

Mandate

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), as a multilateral platform, facilitates greater economic integration and co-operation among its 56 Member States and promotes sustainable development and economic prosperity through:

- policy dialogue;
- negotiation of international legal instruments;
- development of regulations and norms;
- exchange and application of best practices as well as economic and technical expertise; and
- technical co-operation for countries with economies in transition.

The UNECE contributes to enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations through the regional implementation of outcomes of global UN Conferences and Summits.

IRC processes taking place within the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe



Categories of legal and policy instruments*

	Is it taking place within the IO?	Approximate number
Treaties for ratification by States (excluding the funding one) (Conventions, protocols, Agreements)	√	64
Legally binding decisions	√	
Recommendations	√	74
Political declarations	√	32
Model treaties or law	√	
Production of technical standards (standards and technical specifications)	√	1 531
Non-binding guidance/best practices document (Best/Good practices, International classifications, Guidelines)	√	85

Interactions with other international organisations active in the field*

Mechanisms of interaction		Approximate number of IOs involved	Examples
Develop joint instruments	√	62	
MoU or other agreements	√	50	OECD, WTO/OMC, UNCTAD, FAO, Eurasian Customs Union,
Participate in co-ordinating institution	√		The Bank for International
Joint meetings that provide forum for co-ordination	√		Settlement, ISO, ITU, IEC, UNEP,
Observe relevant actions of other bodies	√		IAEA, UNDP, OSCE
Exchange information	√	100 (2014-15)	

* The information provided in the tables above has not been updated from the OECD (2016) report.

UNECE history

The UN Economic and Social Council adopted, on 28 March 1947, the resolution 36 (IV) setting up UNECE. The UNECE was thus, together with the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE), one of the first two regional economic commissions to be established by the UN Economic and Social Council. When it was established in 1947, UNECE was given the mandate of helping to rebuild post-war Europe, develop economic activity and strengthen economic relations between European countries and with the rest of the world. Since then, ECE has continued to adapt to the changing geopolitical landscape in Europe and has undergone two major reforms (in 1997 and in 2005) to better tailor its activities to the current needs of its now 56 member States.

Source: Updated from OECD (2016), *International Regulatory Co-operation: The Role of International Organisations in Fostering Better Rules of Globalisation*, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264244047-en>