

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (ECE)

Good practice

The ECE has an Agreed Framework for Gender Mainstreaming for its activities. It is based on the recommendations made by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and has been adopted by the ECE senior management in 2001. The framework consists of two categories of actions to be taken – those which cut across all substantive divisions and those which are specific to the various areas of work carried out by each Division. Cross sectoral activities relate to: (i) introducing the gender perspective into the work of ECE subsidiary bodies; (ii) gender analysis; (iii) operational activities and (iv) responsibilities of senior management. The framework is under regular review in order to monitor progress, to ensure accountability as well as to adjust to new developments and opportunities for further gender mainstreaming in the ECE.

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Policy statements

In 2002, the annual session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) addressed for the first time gender aspects of the economic trends in the region, which are traditionally discussed during the first day of the Meeting. One of the conclusions of this debate which took place at the fifty-seventh session of the Commission, was that ECE activities in the area of gender and economy should be further developed to better assist member countries to address gender aspects of economic policies.

Programme objectives

The gender dimension has been incorporated into all ECE areas of work through the 2002-2003 programme budget. In the field of economic analysis (subprogramme 6), the objective is to introduce gender analysis on a regular basis in the Economic Survey of Europe. In the field of statistics (subprogramme 2), the objective is to develop the ECE Regional Gender Statistics Website, both in terms of improving the quality of statistics and ensuring their dissemination. In the area of trade, industry and enterprise development (subprogramme 6), the objective is to support women's access to entrepreneurship, particularly in transition economies. In the areas of environment (subprogramme 1), transport (subprogramme 2) and energy (subprogramme 5), the corresponding intergovernmental bodies will aim at identifying those parts of their work programme where the gender dimensions should be incorporated.

Operational activities

The Gender Statistics Website has made significant progress in the conceptual development of the data base for the purpose of information, policy formulation and monitoring.

The first ECE Forum of Women Entrepreneurs (Geneva, October 2001) gathered over 300 participants from 39 countries and prepared recommendations, in particular for better use of ICTs through establishing on-line networks of women-entrepreneurs, creating a cyber-market and supporting the process of E-learning to connect women-entrepreneurs with the global digital economy.

The first meeting of Experts on Gender and Macro economics met in July 2002 in Geneva, with the active involvement of ILO and UNIFEM. It was agreed that the group should continue its work (including via internet). Priority themes will be as follows: (i) gender budgets; (ii) entrepreneurship and women's employability (iii) EU enlargement (iv) access to ICTs.

In order to raise the awareness on problems faces by women entrepreneurship and to draw the attention of Governments and other stakeholders, the ECE has further developed a virtual Gallery of Excellent Women Entrepreneurs. Furthermore, an online network of women's business associations was established. ■