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WORKING PARTY ON INDUSTRY AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT (WP.8)

Summary of main activities and developments

Note by the secretariat

This paper summarizes the main activities of the Working Party on Industry and Enterprise Development (WP.8) since its first session (31 October – 1 November 2001).

It also sets out, in paragraph 12, for endorsement by the Committee, the decisions taken by the Working Party at its second session.

The Committee will be asked to endorse the reports of the first and second session of the Working Party (TRADE/WP.8/2000/12 and TRADE/WP.8/2001/5).

This report of the Working Party's second session and other documents of the Working Party are available at the following website address: <http://www.unece.org/trade/entdev/main.htm>

The Working Party will hold its third session in Geneva in February 2002.

Introduction

1. The Working Party on Industry and Enterprise Development (WP.8) was established by the ad hoc informal session of the UN/ECE on 21 September 2000 based on a recommendation by the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development at its fourth session, held 21-23 June 2000.
2. The mission of the Working Party is to promote industrial restructuring and enterprise development in the region covered by the UN/ECE under the general guidance of the Committee.
3. The Working Party held its first session on 31 October and 1 November 2000 to adopt its Terms of Reference based on a recommendation by the Committee and to elect its first officials. Ms Krystyna Gurbiel (Poland) was elected Chairperson and Ms Lilija Stelpe (Latvia) and Mr Brian McVey (United Kingdom) Vice Chairpersons.

Work carried out

4. Since the first session, the following main activities have been carried out.
5. Immediately following the first session, the secretariat organized the second Forum on Best Practice in the Development of Entrepreneurship and SMEs in Countries in Transition: the Hungarian Experience.
6. The Forum was followed by a Meeting of Experts on Business Advisory, Counselling and Information Services. Almost 100 participants attended the meeting, which recommended the creation of a new Team of Specialists to prepare best practice guidelines in the UN/ECE series of publications on best practice in enterprise development.
7. The last session of the ad hoc Meeting on the Steel Market met on 19 March and the last session of the ad hoc Group of Experts on Steel on 20 March with 30 participants. The ad hoc Group handed over to the Working Party its remaining programme of work in the area of industrial restructuring related to the social and economic consequences of overmanning.
8. The second session of the Team of Specialists on Internet Enterprise Development met on 20 March, with 30 participants. The Team adopted into its programme of work 14 new proposals made by the member States.
9. The last session of the Group of Experts on the Chemical Industry on 23 March, with 25 participants. The ad hoc Group of Experts on the Chemical Industry endorsed the programme of the Team of Specialists on Chemiseed for carrying out some specific remaining tasks on the environmental aspects of the chemical industry.
10. Prior to the session of the ad hoc Group, a Seminar on Analysis, Methodology of Treatment and Remediation of Contaminated Soils and Groundwater was held in Paris from 13 to 16 March 2001. The secretariat prepared a summary publication of the presentations. Some 750 participants from 30 countries

participated. In the seminar. Follow-up activities will be managed by the Team of Specialists on Chemiseed.

11. The second session of the Working Party on Industry and Enterprise Development met on 21 and 22 March, with some 70 participants from 25 member States, the European Community, other international organizations and non-governmental organizations. At the session, the Working Party decided to regroup all of its activities under three overall themes. Thus, the programme of work is divided into three sections: (a) industrial restructuring, (b) entrepreneurship and (c) sustainable development.

12. The Working Party adopted its programme of work for the period 2001 – 2002. In more detail, the Working Party

- decided to include a seminar/round table on the social aspects related to overmanning, to be organized in connection with the third session of the Working Party in February 2002. The seminar's recommendations will be incorporated into subsequent programme components.
- endorsed the programme of work of the regional advisory services.
- requested the secretariat to development activities in the area of benchmarking the management of business incubators in cooperation with the European Commission.
- decided to establish a new Team of Specialists to follow up on the recommendations of the UN/ECE Meeting of Experts on Business Advisory, Counselling and Information Services.
- adopted the programme of work of the Team of Specialists on Internet Enterprise Development.
- decided to include trade and enterprise financing as a cross-cutting theme in its programme of work and requested the secretariat to develop further activities related to trade and enterprise finance in response to requests from member States.
- decided to establish a network with Latvia as the lead country to prepare activities related to cross-border synergies through enhanced sharing of experiences, best practice, guidelines and recommendations on industrial and enterprise cooperation.
- decided to establish a new Team of Specialists on Women's Entrepreneurship.
- decided to establish a new Team of Specialists on Entrepreneurship in Poverty Alleviation.
- decided to include in its programme of work, providing resources could be made available, a contribution to a seminar on Analysis, Methodology of Treatment and Remediation of Contaminated Soils and Groundwater in 2003.
- adopted the programme of work of the Team of Specialists on Radioactive Contaminated Metal Scrap to finalize the Report on the Management of Radiation Protection Aspects in the Recycling of Metal Scrap in the spring of 2001.

13. The above decisions are all reflected in the report of the Working Party's second session (TRADE/WP.8/2001/5), which the Committee is requested to endorse.

Programme of work

14. The programme of work of the Working Party is included in the programme of work of the Committee (TRADE/2001/14), which the Committee will be asked to approve. Its basic structure is presented below for the information of the Committee.

Industrial restructuring

15. The programme covers questions related to industrial restructuring, and particularly, the social and economic consequences, including overmanning, and the resulting changes in trade and employment and the competitiveness of products in relation to changes in production structures and in markets.

16. The current work on industrial restructuring has concentrated on the steel sector, where preparatory work on a seminar on overmanning has been carried out by the secretariat. At its second session, the Working Party decided to expand the seminar to cover restructuring heavy industries in general and to include a round table in connection with the third session of the Working Party in February 2002.

Entrepreneurship

17. The aim of the Working Party in this area is to promote best practices in member States in entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial development, access to finance, the creation of an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and enterprise development and the enhancement of public – private partnerships in cooperation with the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Central European Initiative (CEI), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) and other regional and subregional organizations, as appropriate. The current programme of work consists of the following activities:

1. Regional Advisory Services
2. Team of Specialists on Business Incubation
3. Team of Specialists on Business Advisory, Counselling and Information Services
4. Team of Specialists on Internet Enterprise Development
5. Trade and Enterprise Finance
6. New Economy Business Synergy Network
7. Team of Specialists on Women's Entrepreneurship
8. Team of Specialists on Entrepreneurship in Poverty Alleviation

Sustainable development

18. The aim of the Working Party in this field is to support the sustainability of industrial and enterprise sectors, particularly in transition economies. The current programme of work consists of the following two activities:

1. Team of Specialists on Chemiseed
2. Team of Specialists on Radioactive Contaminated Metal Scrap.

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