

**Eighth Session**

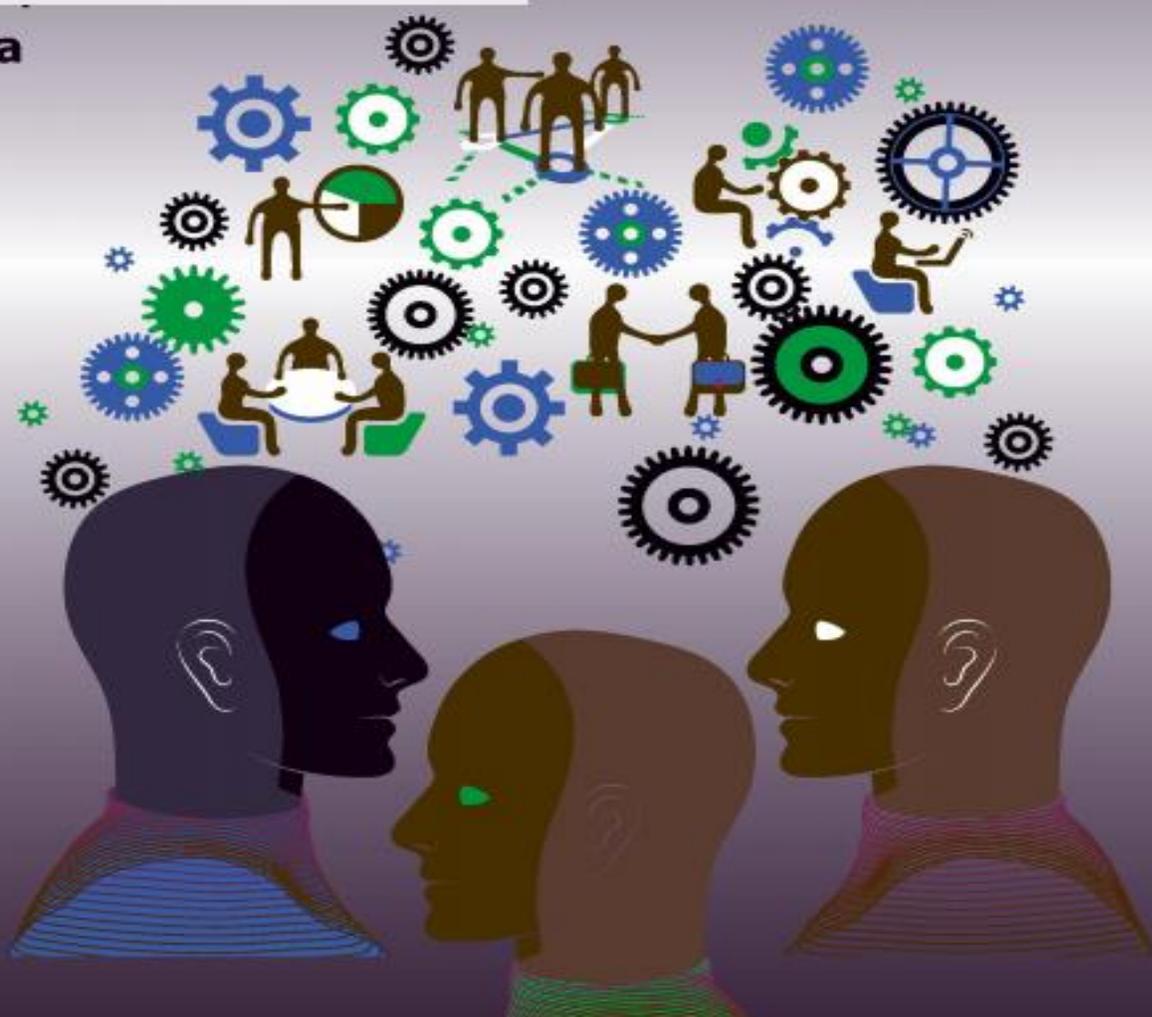
**Team of Specialists on Innovation and  
Competitiveness Policies**

# **The Innovation Adoption Gap**

**Strategies and Policy Options for Accelerating  
the Adoption and Diffusion of Innovations**

**16-17 December 2015  
Room VII, Palais des Nations**

**Geneva**



## Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies

Eighth Session

Geneva, 16-17 December 2015

### The Innovation Adoption Gap

#### Strategies and Policy Options for Accelerating the Adoption and Diffusion of Innovations

In September 2015, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Inclusive and sustainable economic growth figures prominently in the discussion. Innovation can make an important contribution towards advancing this agenda, as it drives productivity growth, economizes on scarce resources and enables sustainable production and consumption patterns.

When discussing innovation policy, the focus is frequently on “supply-side” policies to encourage additional innovation. At the same time there is growing evidence that aggregate performance is usually far from what would be possible with the current state of the art in technology, because the latest technologies are implemented only by a minority of firms and households. Significant progress in terms of productivity and sustainability could be made if the latest technologies were adopted more widely and more quickly. Cases in point include energy efficiency in buildings and in the transport sector, sustainable cities, the move to the circular economy, to name but a few.

Among the policies designed to increase the pace of technology adoption are standards, regulations, product labelling, awareness raising campaigns, subsidies, tax incentives, public procurement. By strengthening demand for innovation, these policies can also encourage additional investments in innovation.

The applied policy seminar will lay the groundwork for developing good practices and policy recommendations for addressing gaps in the adoption of innovations. The conclusions may also serve as a contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda at the regional level.

Issues for discussion include:

- How large are innovation adoption gaps in different sectors and different countries?
- How to internalize the social costs and benefits of adopting innovations that support economic, environmental and social sustainability?
- How to create markets for innovations that support sustainability?
- How effective are policies such as subsidies, taxes, standards, regulations, product labelling, awareness raising campaigns, and smart government procurement in reducing innovation adoption gaps, and how can their effectiveness be increased?
- How to ensure policy consistency, i.e. how to avoid that support for “legacy” technologies or industries compromises the broad-based adoption of innovations?
- How to address policy uncertainty, i.e. how to ensure that investors have confidence in the stability of the regulatory framework?

- Demand-side business model innovations
- Policies for accelerating the move to the circular economy
- The international dimension: How to avoid distortionary barriers to trade arising from these policies?
- To what extent is there a need for/ a benefit to international coordination of such policies?

## Provisional List of Speakers

Viktor Badaker, Sustainable Energy Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Miguel Botelho Barbosa, Member of the Board, National Innovation Agency, Portugal

Alexandre Chachine, independent consultant on energy efficiency, former chief of section, UNECE  
Council for Sustainable Development, Germany (tbc)

European Institute of Innovation and Technology (tbc)

Gaia Felber, Senior Team Coordinator, Environmental Initiatives, World Economic Forum (tbc)

Markku Heimbürger, Programme Manager, Smart Procurement, The Finnish Innovation Agency (TEKES), Finland

Laurent Horvath, Cleantech Manager, OPI Cleantech Genève, Switzerland

Julian Hill-Landolt, Cluster Lead, Sustainable Lifestyles, World Business Council on Sustainable Development

Sonja Hawkins, Global Platform on Climate, Trade and Sustainable Energy, International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development

Zaal Lomtadze, Chief of Section, Environment Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Gulnara Roll, Head, Housing and Land Management Unit, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Slawomir Tokarski, Head of Unit, Innovation Policy and Investment for Growth, European Commission (tbc)

Jukka Uosukainen, Director, UN Climate Technology Centre and Network

Charles Wessner, Professor, Georgetown University, United States

The Applied Policy Seminar is part of the eighth session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies (UNECE TOS-ICP).

TOS-ICP is an intergovernmental group promoting knowledge sharing, network-building and good practices leading to better innovation policies. Please visit our [website](#) to find out more about our activities and publications.

## Provisional Agenda

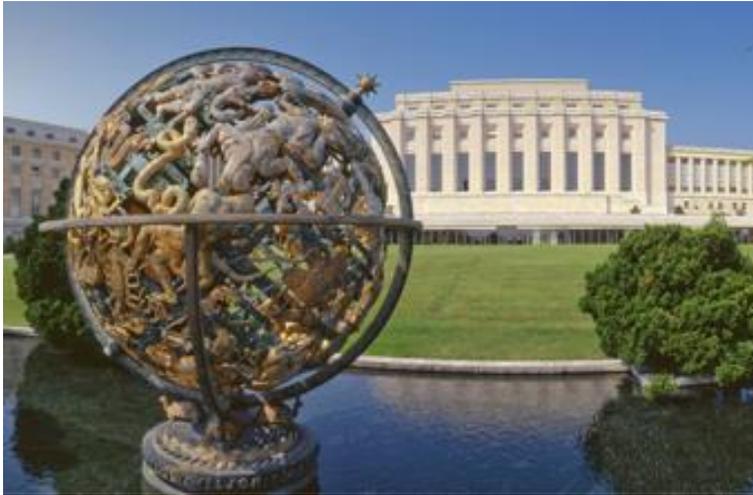
<b>Wednesday 16 December 2015</b>	
9am – 10 am	Registration
10 am – 10:15 am	Welcome Remarks 1. Adoption of the Agenda
2. Substantive Segment: Applied Policy Seminar “The Innovation Adoption Gap – Strategies and Policy Options to Accelerate the Adoption and Diffusion of Innovations”	
10:15 am – 11:30	Session 1 – Innovation adoption gaps – evidence, causes, policy responses
11:30 am – 1 pm	Session 2 – Clean technologies and greening the economy: policies to strengthen demand and encourage investments
1 pm – 3 pm	Lunch Break
3 pm – 4:30 pm	Session 3 – Sustainable lifestyles and circular economy: raising awareness and facilitating systemic change
4:30 pm – 6 pm	Session 4 – Sustainable energy: accelerating
<b>Thursday 17 December 2015</b>	
10am – 11:30 am	Session 5 – Country cases
Business Segment	
11:30 am – 1 pm	3. Review of the work of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies 4. Intersessional Implementation Plan 5. Other Business
1 pm – 3 pm	Lunch Break
3 pm – 4:30 pm	Business Segment (continued)
4:30 pm – 6 pm	6. Adoption of the Session Report

## Interpretation

Simultaneous interpretation English-French-Russian will be provided throughout the conference.

## Conference Venue

The Palais des Nations is an outstanding testimony to twentieth century architecture, situated in a beautiful park overlooking Lake Geneva, with a splendid view of the Alps.



## Registration

To register online, please click [here](#).

## Entrance and accreditation (see map overleaf)

On the first day, meeting participants need to pick up their security badges at the Pregny Gate. Please bring the registration form with you. With a valid piece of identity and the security badge you will receive at the Pregny Gate, entry will also be possible through the Place of Nations Gate on the second day.

## Accommodation

Geneva is the world's leading international conference center. There is a large choice of hotels of all categories. However, hotels can fill up quickly during peak times, so it is a good idea to book early. The Geneva Tourist Office maintains a [search engine](#).

## Geneva

Birthplace of the Red Cross movement and seat of the European headquarters of the United Nations, Geneva's exceptional history and international vocation make it a cosmopolitan and lively city. Geneva is uniquely set on the shores of Western Europe's largest lake with a magnificent view of Mont Blanc, the tallest peak in Western Europe.



## Getting there

Geneva International Airport is located about 6 km from the Palais des Nations. Taxis are readily available. There are also free public transport tickets available from a machine in the baggage collection area (on the left hand side just before passing customs). Bus 28 goes from the airport to the Pregny Gate entrance (“Appia” stop), which is the point of entry for conference participants.

## Moving around

Details on public transport links can be found in the website of Transports Publics Genevois, which includes a useful route planner in English.

For further information, please contact:

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