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MOSCOW-VIENNA, ONLINE, MAY 5

ITPO RUSSIA COORDINATION GROUP MEETING

In early May, a meeting of the ITPO Russia Coordination Group and ITPO on the Zoom platform was held.

During the meeting, prospects for the activities of the UNIDO Center in the Russian Federation and issues of harmonizing the processes of implementing UNIDO policies in achieving sustainable development goals in Russia were discussed.

VIENNA, ONLINE, MAY 14

UNIDO WEBINAR ON THE EVE OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA, TRANSPHOBIA AND BIOPHOBIA.

May 17th marks the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOBIT), an annual event to draw attention to the discrimination faced by individuals with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, as well as sex characteristics. IDAHOBIT is commemorated on May 17th - on this date in 1990, the World Health Organization (WHO) decided to remove homosexuality from the International Classification of Diseases (ICD).

30 years after that decision, many positive milestones have been achieved, including marriage equality and the passing of comprehensive non-discrimination laws in a variety of countries. However, a lot of progress remains to be made as hate crimes, discrimination in the workplace as well as detrimental stigma and stereotypes dominate the lives of many LGBTIQ+ individuals. Still today, same-sex sexual activity is punishable by death in 12 countries.

To commemorate IDAHOBIT in Vienna and the field this year, the Vienna chapter of UN-Globe (the organization of LGBTIQ+ personnel in the UN system), the Gender Focal Points and Focal Points for Women of the Vienna-based Organizations (VBOs) as well as Diplomats for Equality were organizing a webinar on Thursday, May 14th 2020.

The webinar focused on:

International frameworks and United Nations human resources guidance documents that pertain to the rights of LGBTIQ+ individuals.

Challenges and achievements made to promote diversity and inclusion in the Vienna-based Organizations.

The global theme of this year's IDAHOBIT being "Breaking the silence", the event will be an opportunity to highlight the different lived experiences of members of the LGBTIQ+ community, focusing on the particular experiences of trans, intersex persons and LGBTIQ+ persons of colour.

MOSCOW, ONLINE, MAY 20

UNIDO SURVEY FOR STARTUP AND ANALYTICAL ARTICLE

The Skolkovo Innovation Center, together with the UNIDO Center in Russia, launched an online survey as part of a study on the participation of small and medium-sized innovative companies in the fast-growing BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) in global value chains. The ultimate goal of the study is to develop an optimal policy of stimulating business to enhance cooperation within the BRICS framework.

Companies can participate in the survey at: <https://tinyurl.com/UNIDOBRICS>

An analytical article was also prepared with the participation of UNIDO CIIC experts: "MOTIVATIONS, PREFERENCES, AND BARRIERS TO GOING ABROAD: RUSSIAN HIGH-TECH START-UPS AND SMALL INNOVATIVE ENTERPRISES".

Key points are below:

This article is devoted to studying the motives, preferences, and market entry barriers for Russian high-tech start-ups and small innovative enterprises (SIE) that took part in the "Startup Village" event held at Skolkovo Innovation Centre in May 2019. Due to limitations in neoclassical theories, corporate motivation at the micro-level cannot be accurately quantified. Thus, this work uses survey and interview methods to gather primary data directly from top representatives of participating enterprises.

In total, about 100 participants were interviewed. Every respondent expressed intentions to engaged in foreign economic activity; half of them already have experience operating outside of Russia. Further, 44% intend to sell their business or intellectual property rights outright, with only 12% ready to cooperate in a joint venture.

Based on the analysis of the results, the corporate motives of Russian startups and SIEs going abroad is in seeking: new markets (17.3%), improved efficiency (20.0%), resources (40.0%), and strategic assets (22.7%). This diverges significantly from the average estimates made by UNCTAD in 2005/2006, where they found motivation from foreign companies in developing and transition economies to be 51%/22%/13%/14%. Against this background, Russian innovative enterprises appear far more resource-oriented and more interested in finding strategic assets. However, they are notably less interested in acquiring new markets or efficiency gains.

Additionally, the preferences in foreign partners by Russian enterprises exhibit some variety. Many choose the CIS countries (mainly Belarus and Kazakhstan) and BRICS nations (primarily China) as desirable partners. Most also express interest in

developed economies in the EU (namely Germany). Among the main barriers to establishing foreign relations is the lack of personal finances and other key resources, as well as a lack of state support in promoting Russian companies abroad.

Based on the obtained results, impactful recommendations are offered to the government of the Russian Federation to strengthen the investment motivation of Russian innovative enterprises. Also, recommendations are given to advance the international cooperation of BRICS in the form of joint global value chains (GVCs) using their own innovative capability.

Full text:

<https://publications.hse.ru/articles/316182418>

MOSCOW, MAY 28-29

ONLINE MEETING OF NORWEGIAN AND RUSSIAN EXPERTS OF CHEMICAL CONVENTIONS

On May 28-29, 2020, an online meeting of Russian and Norwegian experts on chemical conventions was held.

The meeting was organized by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology of the Russian Federation. The event was attended by representatives of the Stockholm Convention Regional Center in Russia, the Norwegian Environmental Protection Agency, large energy companies and others.

During the meeting, issues related to the implementation of the provisions of chemical conventions on the territory of Norway and Russia, environmentally safe storage and burning of waste were discussed.

Director of the UNIDO Center in the Russian Federation Sergey Korotkov presented the UNIDO / GEF project "Environmentally sound regulation and the final destruction of equipment and materials containing PCBs at the enterprises of

Russian Railways and other owners” as a successful example of the implementation of the provisions of the Stockholm Convention in Russia. Sergey Korotkov emphasized that the implementation of the Stockholm Convention on POPs in Russia, the disposal of PCB-containing equipment and materials reached a new level of interagency cooperation and pooling efforts, with the coordinating role of the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources.

Norwegian and Russian experts also discussed the work of countries under the Minamata Convention, demercurization and environmentally safe storage of hazardous waste.

The Minamata Convention on Mercury and the Stockholm Convention on POPs, designed to protect human health and the environment from the harmful effects of hazardous substances, are constantly updated and discussed by world experts, and are also under the scrutiny of UNIDO.