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Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Rail Transport

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Programme of work for 2020–2021

Draft programme of work and biennial evaluation for 2020–2021

Note by the secretariat

I. Mandate

1.	In accordance with the decision of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) to review its programme of work every two years, the next review period beginning in 2020 (ECE/TRANS/200, para. 120), the Working Party will be invited to review and adopt its programme of work for 2020–2021, as well as the relevant parameters for its biennial evaluation.

2.	Although the UN system no longer functions on a biennial budget and given that an alternative approach has not been developed and mandated at ITC level it is suggested that for the moment the programme of work continue on a biennial basis to allow member States the ability to monitor the activities of the working party.

II. Draft programme of work for 2020–2021

A. Introduction

3.	The present document sets out the draft programme of work for 2020–2021 of the subprogramme on "Rail Transport" of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC). The Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) is invited to consider this programme for adoption at its current session. The Working Party and ITC will have the opportunity to adjust its programme of work during the course of the biennium, to be reflected in a separate document.

4.	The draft programme of work applies a results based approach. It comprises, for each cluster of activities, an expected accomplishment and a list of outputs/activities proposed to be carried out in 2020–2021. The delivery of these outputs/activities is expected to contribute to achieving the expected results.

5.	The grouping of programme activities into clusters is the same as that used in the past by the ITC for the biennial evaluation of its subprogramme performance.

6.   The following clusters of activities make up the transport subprogramme of UNECE:

Cluster No.	Subprogramme: 02 Transport
1	Overall coordination (Inland Transport Committee and Bureau)
2	Transport trends and economics (including Euro–Asian transport links)
3	Harmonization of vehicle regulations, climate change and intelligent transport systems (ITS)
4	Rail transport and Trans–European railway (TER) Project
5	Inland waterway transport
6	Intermodal transport and logistics
7	Customs questions affecting transport
8	Transport, Health and Environment pan–European programme (THE PEP)
9	Transport of dangerous goods (UNECE)
10	Transport of dangerous goods (ECOSOC)
11	Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) (ECOSOC)
12	Transport of perishable foodstuffs
13	Transport statistics
14	Road transport and Trans–European north–south motorway (TEM) project
15	Road traffic safety

7.   For easy of reference, new outputs/activities are indicated as "additional" and in "bold text".

8.   The outputs/activities have been listed under the cluster of activities to which they belong according to the following main categories: (a) meetings and related parliamentary documentation; (b) publications and other information material; and (c) technical cooperation, including, seminars, workshops, training sessions, advisory services and online tools.

9.   The relevant indicators of achievement, together with baseline and target data, against which performance will be measured, are presented below.

10.   The present document is based on the programme of work agreed at the seventy–first session of the Working Party on Rail Transport (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2017/5) and seeks to implement the ITC Strategy and so should be read with the document setting out how the ITC strategy would be implemented in relation to the work on railways (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2019/2).

B.   Objective and strategy

11.   The objective of the UNECE subprogramme on transport is to facilitate the international movement of persons and goods by inland transport modes and improve safety, environmental protection, energy efficiency and security in the transport sector to levels that contribute effectively to sustainable transport.

12.   The responsibility for this subprogramme is vested in the Sustainable Transport Division.

C. Outputs/activities to be delivered in the 2020–2021 biennium

13. Outputs/activities to be delivered in the 2020–2021biennium are as follows:

Subprogramme: 02 Transport

Cluster 4: Rail transport

Description of cluster (optional)	Expected accomplishments from this cluster
1. Monitoring, reviewing and updating of the European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC). 2. Consideration of measures to promote efficiency **and sustainability** of rail transport as part of a sustainable transport system, including bottlenecks in rail transport services at the pan–European level **and facilitating technological progression of the sector**. 3. Report and consider utilization of results of the Trans–European Railway (TER) project and its activities and strengthen cooperation between the TER project and the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2). 4. Survey passenger and goods traffic on the AGC network in order to provide support for transport planning. 5. Participation in, and monitoring of, different rail projects **as well as in the development of** initiatives on new conventions and regional cooperation and along Euro–Asian transport corridors. 6. Facilitate international rail transport in the pan–European region through improved border crossing procedures and harmonization of technical specifications of different railway systems and their operations at borders. 7. Review general trends in rail transport developments and rail transport policy, analyze specific rail transport economic issues, collect, compile and disseminate rail transport statistics in cooperation with the Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6) and prepare reports, reviews, publications and annual workshops on topical themes in rail transport development and best practices. Main actions by the Sustainable Transport Division: 　(a) Act as secretariat to the Working Party on Rail Transport and its groups of experts. 　(b) Maintain the online monitoring tool on the application of the AGC and AGTC infrastructure standards. 　(c) Provide support **and analysis** for technical cooperation and capacity–building in rail transport. 　(d) Represent UNECE in meetings of inter– and non–governmental organizations that are relevant to railways.	Better understanding of rail transport operations and policies in the region, including infrastructure and its financing, border crossing, interoperability, security and safety, high speed trains, climate change as well as rail productivity and rail reform issues, and monitoring and updating of relevant legal instruments, as well as enhanced cooperation of ECE countries in addressing them. Increased capacity of ECE countries participating in the TER projects.

Other activities within the cluster

The Group of Experts towards Unified Railway Law **will continue working towards achieving Unified Railway Law** ~~implement the strategy (rail map) planned to establish legal conditions for railways equivalent with those existing for competing modes such as road, air, inland water and maritime transport in accordance with the Joint Declaration on the promotion of Euro–Asian rail transport and activities towards unified railway law signed by thirty–seven (37) European and Asian countries during the Ministerial session of the seventy–fifth Inland Transport Committee.~~

~~The planned strategy includes the following elements:~~

~~(a) Establishment of a unified set of transparent and predictable provisions and legal rules for Euro–Asian rail transport operations in all countries concerned that would facilitate border crossing procedures, particularly for transit traffic;~~

(b)   Analysis of existing international modal transport conventions (rail, road, air, inland water and maritime transport) and related agreements in order to identify provisions and procedures important for establishing unified railway law;

(c)   Unification of international railway law with the objective to allow rail carriage under a single legal regime from the Atlantic to the Pacific;

(d)   On the basis of a future material consensus on unified railway law, identification of an appropriate management system for unified railway law using the experience of international organizations in the field of the railway transport (Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF), Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSJD), etc.) as well as of international organizations of other modes of transport;

(e)   Support for the widest possible use of electronic document workflow and intelligent transport systems.

2.   Outputs/activities

(a)   *Meetings and related parliamentary documentation*

4.1   Working Party on Rail Transport (seventy fourth session in 2020 and seventy-fifth session in 2021) (12 meetings)

Documentation:

Agenda and reports of the annual sessions (4); other documents (14) on mandated issues, including the draft programme of work and biennial evaluation **(in the format prescribed by any updated ITC decision)**, public private partnerships and railways financing, high speed railways, rail security **(including cybersecurity)**, ~~and~~ safety, border crossings facilitation, rail review, rail productivity indicators, railways reform, unified railway law, administration and updating of the AGC Agreement**,** railway statistics; other related documents on newly mandated issues.

4.2   Scheduled sessions of the Group of Experts towards Unified Railway Law

Documentation:

Agendas of the sessions (6), Reports of the sessions (6); documents related to draft legal provisions of the unified railway law (12), documents related to the appropriate management of the unified railway law (6), other mandated documents relevant to the unified railway law (6).

(b)   *Publications and other information material and online tools*

4.3   **Update of the** online monitoring tool on the application of the AGC and AGTC infrastructure standards.

4.4   **Update of the** rail review publication for the ECE region, including contemporary issues for rail including climate change, infrastructure and statistics.

4.5   ~~Development~~ **Update** and monitoring of the International Observatory on Rail Security.

4.6   Development of rail productivity indicators

4.7   Development of other mandated tools as required by the Working Party

Non–recurrent publications:

4.8   High–Speed Trains Master Plan for ECE region.

4.9   Development of other mandated publications as required by the Working Party

(c)   *Technical cooperation*

4.10   Workshop on contemporary rail issues (2).

4.11   Seminars on TER (2).

4.12   Field project on TER (1).

III.   Biennial evaluation

14.   On the basis of decisions taken at its sixty–seventh session in October 2013 (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/220, paras. 88–89), the activities of the Working Party are measured, as part of the biennial evaluation, against one expected accomplishment, three indicators of achievement and corresponding actual performance measures. In 2014 and 2015, this approach had been approved by ITC as part of the performance planning for evaluation of the biennium 2014–2015 (ECE/TRANS/2014/26).

15.   The Working Party may wish to review the 2018–2019 parameters (expected accomplishments, indicators of achievement, actual performance measures) as provided below with a view to either maintaining them or establishing new ones for the biennium 2020–2021.

Biennial Assessment
Review of performance measures for 2014–2015 and establishment of targets for 2016–2017

Cluster	Expected Accomplishments	Indicators of Achievement		Actual Performance Measures
4. Rail Transport (Trans–European network for rail (TER) project)	Better understanding of rail transport operations and policies in the region, including infrastructure, border crossing, interoperability issues, and monitoring and updating of relevant legal instruments, as well as enhanced cooperation of ECE countries in addressing them.	(a) Number of countries, IGOs and NGOs participating in the two annual meetings of the Working Party on Rail Transport and the TER project and level of satisfaction as expressed in surveys		
		Performance measures:		
		Baseline: 2012–2013:	30	55
		Target: 2014–2015:	40	78
		Target 2016–2017:	40	72
	Increased capacity of ECE countries participating in the TER projects.	Target: 2018–2019:	40	67
		Target 2020–2021:	50	
		(b) Number of amendments to the AGC Agreement, as well as updated and amended lines in its annex I which the Working Party has put in effect.		
		Performance measures:		
		Baseline: 2012–2013:	1	1
		Target: 2014–2015:	1	2
		Target: 2016–2017:	1	1
		Target: 2018–2019:	1	1
		Target 2020–2021:	1	
		(c) Number of thematic workshops/ seminars/themes organized and number of participants		
		Performance measures:		
		Baseline: 2012–2013:	1	1
		Target: 2014–2015:	2	2
		Target: 2016–2017:	2	2
		Target: 2018–2019:	2	3
		Target 2020–2021:	2	

IV. Next steps

16.   The working party may wish to discuss this document in its current format for the 2020–2021 period and decide whether to continue using it in this format or move to a different time period in lieu of further ITC decisions.

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