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agenda item 5)

50th Anniversary of WP.6: "Indicators for Sustainable Transport"

**INTERSECRETARIAT WORKING GROUP
ON TRANSPORT STATISTICS (IWG)**

Report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Transport Statistics
(7 December 1998, Paris / 1-2 June 1999, Geneva)

Note by the secretariat

NOTE: The Intersecretariat Working Group on Transport Statistics (IWG) has held two meetings since the last session of WP.6 (7 December 1998 in Geneva, hosted by the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT), and 1-2 June 1999 in Geneva, hosted by ECE) (List of Participants is attached in annex 1). Decisions taken by the IWG in both meetings are reflected below. The minutes from the preceding session of the IWG are contained in TRANS/WP.6/1998/1 and Add.1.

I. COMMON QUESTIONNAIRE AND WP.6 PILOT QUESTIONNAIRES

1. The IWG reiterated the usefulness of the Common Questionnaire (CQ) for Transport Statistics as a tool to harmonize the collection of transport statistics, as well as to reduce the response burden of the member countries of the three organizations. It was agreed that the CQ would be sent out every year by 1 September, both on hard-copy and diskette. The deadline for replies would be 1 November. By the end of November each year, non-respondent countries would be contacted by telephone. On 1 December each year, a joint reminder letter would be sent by the three secretariats to the countries from whom data was still missing.

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2. The representative of the ECMT cited serious delays in the processing of replies from their countries due to problems with inserting footnotes from countries when preparing the Questionnaires pre-filled with historical data. This issue would be put to the countries during the meeting of WP.6 in an effort to alleviate the problem, including the suggestion to develop a harmonized approach for the designation of data when there was a question regarding the appropriate category in which data should fall (e.g., higher or lower category, etc.).

3. In addition, there was a problem regarding international trade matrices. Although the Common Questionnaire specifies that countries should provide data that refers to the place of loading/unloading, some of the collected data refers to the country of origin and destination. This issue would also be addressed at WP.6.

Data Needs of DGVII

4. The representative of Eurostat conveyed, on behalf of the European Community, (DGVII), the desire for the Common Questionnaire to reflect emerging data needs from the transport policy perspective, such as: non-motorized transport (cycling and walking, pkm and length of bicycle lanes); passenger intermodality (data on "Park and Ride" spaces); additional public transport data (number of railway stations and stops, public transport stops, length of bus lines); public transport systems (by S-Bahn, metro, tram/light rail, monorail, funicular, people mover, trolleybus, etc.); additional railway data (number of railway stations/stops, transshipment facilities, marshalling yards); additional data on environmental impact of transport (noise, emissions, land use, polluting accidents, etc.).

5. He said there was also a statistical gap related to disaggregated data (nodes, traffic flows etc. and other information along a given network, such as the E road network or TEN networks). It needed to be determined if such data could be partially covered by the CQ (or the UN/ECE E Road Census), or if a new data collection initiative would be necessary.

6. DGVII would try to define its data needs more concretely during the summer of 1999, and then compare these with the CQ to determine which data needs are not covered by the EC's legal acts on transport or by the CQ. Based on their findings, the IWG could then analyze how to tackle the remaining needs: either through new studies, direct contacts with member states, or via new sections (tested in pilot questionnaires) to the CQ. The Working Party may wish to consider the future treatment of these items in the Common Questionnaire.

Preliminary replies to Pilot Questionnaire on Urban Passenger Transport

7. The Group recalled that the results of a Pilot Questionnaire on Urban Passenger Transport had been considered by the Working Party at its forty-ninth session (TRANS/WP.6/1998/9), and that WP.6 had decided to re-circulate a modified version of the Pilot Questionnaire with pre-filled data accompanying the Common Questionnaire in 1998. The preliminary results to this modified questionnaire are contained in document TRANS/WP.6/1999/2.

8. While recognizing the importance of obtaining more reliable information on the urban transport situation in member countries, the Group expressed concern that the types of data asked for (metropolitan rail and taxi transport) did not fit logically into either the national basis or modal structure of the Common Questionnaire, since the urban questionnaire was targeted toward data at the city level

and across modes. Moreover, it was felt that perhaps other indicators could give a better picture of the urban transport situation, including indicators of quality of urban life, access to public transport, or environmental data linked to urban transport.

9. In addition, replies from Governments included virtually no information about terminology or methodologies used in urban transport statistics (including harmonization on what constituted an “urban area”), thus making any country to country comparisons difficult.

10. The Group noted, moreover, the developments on a database on urban passenger transport as reported by the International Union of Public Transport (UITP) at the forty-ninth session of WP.6 and decided to ask the UITP for clarification regarding the ECE role in collecting this data.

11. The ECMT said that it was conducting a study on 300 cities in the region of its member countries and would report to WP.6 on the results. The European Community (DG16) was apparently also involved in work on urban transport and environment indicators for 100 cities.

12. It was suggested that further work be done in the context of WP.6 on identifying useful indicators for urban transport, based on the availability of data in member countries, as well as on other aspects of the urban environment deemed important for transport statistics. Moreover, further work needed to be done on terminology and methodologies used in urban transport. Once there was agreement on the variables to be collected, and the terminology and methodologies to be used, another pilot questionnaire could be envisioned in future, with the eventual inclusion of a supplement to the Common Questionnaire for collecting this data. Both issues could possibly be addressed in the context of an Informal Working Group on Urban Transport Statistics, if WP.6 felt it appropriate.

Eurostat/ECMT/ECE Pilot Survey on Road Vehicle Fleets Definitions on Transport and Environment

13. The Group reiterated the importance of collecting better information on the environmental impact of transport, recalling that a Pilot Survey on Road Vehicle Fleets had been sent out by Eurostat in 1998. The Survey asked for more detailed information on vehicle fleets by including a breakdown of the total number of vehicles by new registrations, final deregistrations and end-of-life vehicles. In addition, the Pilot Survey asked Governments to break down new vehicles by type of motor energy (petrol, diesel, electricity); by cylinder capacity and by weight. The results of the Pilot Questionnaire were considered by WP.6 at its forty-ninth session where it was decided that the Questionnaire would be re-sent to only those countries who had not provided data (TRANS/WP.6/135, para. 39).

14. As data from these additional countries were not yet available, the Group was unable to consider the replies. Depending on the replies received, it was feasible to include some or all of these items, with pre-filled data from the Pilot Survey, as a supplement to the 1999 Common Questionnaire. Eurostat would transmit the replies to the ECE secretariat so that WP.6 could assess the results at its upcoming session. Depending on the position of WP.6, the possibility of convening an Informal Working Group on Transport and Environment Indicators could also be envisaged.

15. The Group noted, in this connection, the importance of considering also the progress made on the TERM project (Transport and Environment Reporting Mechanism) initiated by the European Environment Agency, in cooperation with DGVII, DGXI and Eurostat. It was pointed out, moreover, that the ECE would undertake an initiative, in connection with the follow-up to the UN Regional

Conference on Transport and the Environment (Vienna, 1997), to extend the TERM project to ECE Countries in Transition.

Results of the Task Force on Road Traffic Accidents Definitions

16. The Group finalized the definitions as agreed to by the Task Force on Road Traffic Accident Statistics, convened on 8-9 December 1999 in Paris. There remained a few open questions regarding definitions of “within built-up areas”, “outside built-up areas”, “daylight”, “darkness”, “twilight”, “dry road surface” and “other road surface”. The three secretariats would aim to find existing definitions for these, and send the complete draft of definitions to the Task Force members for approval. The agreed draft would be submitted to WP.6 as a document, and, if agreed, would be included in the third edition of the Glossary for Transport Statistics.

17. The Group reiterated the Task Force position that definitions regarding “injured” and “seriously injured” were not considered satisfactory, but decided to leave the definitions as they were for the time being.

Future of the Common Questionnaire

18. The IWG discussed the future of the CQ, noting that it had been a successful product because it was consistent and dependable. On the one hand, it was suggested that the CQ be simplified; on the other hand, the IWG recognized that there were increasing demands from various interested parties to add new variables to the CQ, such as urban transport variables, further breakdowns of vehicle fleets and new registrations from an environmental perspective.

19. The IWG agreed that it was important to strike a balance between the two conflicting goals of the CQ: consistency and saliency. In order for the CQ to be reliable and consistent, it should not change too much or too often in content and format; on the other hand, the CQ should reflect changes in the market and the transport sector, and thus be a flexible tool to be expanded when necessary and after the appropriate pre-conditions had been satisfied (pilot questionnaires, consensus among Governments, etc.).

20. The IWG decided to hold a second session of the Informal Meeting on the Common Questionnaire, in Spring (2000), tentatively expected to be hosted by the ECMT in Paris. As with the first session (held in 1997, Geneva), the purpose of the Informal Meeting would be to bring together the appropriate persons from each Government who were directly involved with filling out the CQ, in order to have an exchange of views on specific problems in the CQ. Both the content and format of the CQ would be addressed, with a view toward both simplifying, and expanding the CQ, including inter alia, the areas of urban transport and environment, and to address the policy needs cited above by the European Commission (DG).

21. The next session of the IWG would be devoted, in large part, to assessing possible changes to the format and content of the CQ, as well as to planning the Informal Meeting on the Common Questionnaire for Spring 2000. The meeting would also be a good occasion for the ECE to assess the progress made on the development of a database system linked to the Common Questionnaire, with the relevant consultants present, if possible.

International Union of Railways (UIC) proposal to collect railway data

22. During the December meeting of the IWG (Paris) the representative of the UIC indicated his willingness to cooperate in as many fields as possible with the IWG. He said his organization had started collecting data among their member railways using a questionnaire based on the format of the Common Questionnaire.

23. The IWG considered again the proposal made at the forty-eighth session of WP.6 by the UIC to collect railway data in the Common Questionnaire. It was noted that the UIC had pre-filled in the CQ for 1997 with railway data from member countries as available, in order to verify the figures. The IWG expressed concern that there was still a duplication of effort between the UIC and the IWG, as the UIC was apparently sending out a Questionnaire to member railways in the same format as the CQ. The representative of ECMT said he would contact the UIC to clarify the matter.

Inland waterway classifications

24. The IWG recalled that the Secretary to the UN/ECE Principal Working Party on Inland Waterways (SC.3), had previously addressed the Group regarding changes to be made to the section on: "C. Inland waterway transport 1. Canals / Navigable Rivers and Lakes". ECMT had circulated this information on the proposed changes to its member countries to determine if countries were now prepared to adapt their statistics to the new classification scheme. While a number of countries said they were prepared to use the new classification scheme, the majority of countries with important inland waterways (France, Germany and the Netherlands) were not prepared to use it.

25. The Working Party on Transport Statistics may wish to consider examining the problems in applying the new classification scheme, in particular from those three countries. The IWG would take this issue up again at its December meeting in an effort to eventually encourage member Governments to adopt the new classification system for statistical purposes.

II. GLOSSARY

26. The Group discussed the publication of the third edition of the Glossary for Transport Statistics, and agreed on the following changes to the cover:

- a new logo should be added to the cover to reflect additional modes to be included (e.g., intermodal, maritime, etc.);
- the date of the edition should be on the cover;
- the cover should be in a new colour;

27. Regarding the layout of the third edition, it was agreed that:

- headers would refer to sections with roman numerals;
- arabic numbers and bold terms would be indented;
- an alphabetical index would be developed, organized by categories and sub-categories.

28. Eurostat agreed to develop an HTML page for the Glossary with appropriate links;

29. ECE agreed to examine the possibility of retaining a consultant to:

- verify the Common Questionnaire against the Glossary;
- check the Glossary for typos and inconsistencies;
- prepare an Index of Terms;
- make the changes in the Annex of Definitions in the ABTS consistent with the third edition of the Glossary;
- Conform both Russian and French texts to these changes.

30. The Third Edition would include only new definitions to reflect new chapters currently in the Common Questionnaire. It would be decided at the next meeting of the IWG what, if any, new chapters to include in the third edition. Proposed new chapters included Road Traffic Accidents and possible new terms on Transport and Environment, as well as Urban Transport, based on the opinion of WP.6 and results of the proposed Informal Meetings on these subjects.

III. DATABASE DEVELOPMENT

31. The Group furthered its discussion regarding the progress made, in particular at the ECMT and Eurostat, toward the development of transport database systems linked to the Common Questionnaire. The representatives of Eurostat and ECMT said that they had developed similar models, and adapted them to their different needs.

32. Eurostat said that the basic structure of their system involved an ACCESS-based database stored in a flat file format, with cells linked to those in the Common Questionnaire, including a separate file to store "flags" (break in series, revised data, etc.) and footnotes. The database functioned as an electronic questionnaire, allowing the downloading of the Questionnaire in EXCEL format, which could be pre-filled with historical data, per each mode. The database had graphical check tools, to verify the new data before accepting it into the database. He said his organization had had some problems regarding the flags, footnotes and historical data, but had succeeded in cleaning this up.

33. ECMT said it had basically developed the same system, with the intention of managing the CQ and for publishing their statistics, although it was noted that ACCESS was not an ideal system for publishing. It was also noted that there remained problems in moving between ACCESS and EXCEL, but that they were working with their consultant to resolve these problems.

34. ECE reiterated its interest in developing a similar system, but had decided last year to await one year's cycle of the electronic questionnaire by ECMT and Eurostat to gauge their experience and target problems before developing their own system. Now that both ECMT and Eurostat had their systems up and running, ECE would examine the possibility of retaining a consultant to develop a system, based on that of the ECMT and Eurostat's appropriate to the needs of the ECE.

35. ECMT and Eurostat offered to demonstrate their system at the next IWG meeting in Luxembourg, so that ECE could determine if a similar system could work in Geneva. It was reiterated that the aim is for each organization to have its own database system to suit its internal needs and demands, and a common format to exchange data. In other words, there would be three separate databases with an "open highway" among them.

IV. STATISTICS ON TRANSPORT EQUIPMENT FOR PERISHABLE FOODSTUFFS

36. The Group discussed the continuous efforts of WP.6 to obtain better information on transport equipment for perishable foodstuffs, reiterating the importance of this data to track the evolution in the market as well as from an environmental perspective (e.g., emissions related to temperature-controlled vehicles).

37. The Group decided to ask WP.6 to maintain this item on its agenda, but would ask WP.11 (UN/ECE Working Party on the Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs) if they would send out and compile the results of the Pilot Questionnaire themselves instead of WP.6. Moreover, it was recommended that WP.11 update the list of ATP Focal Points for statistics, in an attempt to have contacts from a greater number of Contracting Parties to the ATP Agreement. Meanwhile, Eurostat would verify with their Environmental Statistics Division whether this information was interesting in the context of their work.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

38. The next meeting of the IWG was tentatively scheduled to be held on 30 November - 2 December in Luxembourg. It is foreseen to invite, in addition to the core members of the group (ECE-ECMT-EC/Eurostat), experts from other organizations, as deemed appropriate in accordance with the agenda.

Annex 1

**Intersecretariat Working Group on Transport Statistics
(1-2 June 1999, Geneva)**

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Annex 2

Breakdown of countries to which the Common Questionnaire is sent by the three respective organizations

EUROSTAT (18 countries)

15 EU Countries + Norway and Iceland (EEA) + Switzerland

ECMT (22 countries)

Albania	Republic of Moldova
Andorra	Poland
Azerbaijan	Romania
Belarus	Russian Federation
Bosnia Herzegovina	Slovakia
Bulgaria	Slovenia
Croatia	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Czech Republic	Turkey
Estonia	Ukraine
Georgia	
Hungary	
Latvia	
Lithuania	

ECE (15 countries)

Armenia
Canada
Cyprus
Israel
Kazakhstan
Kyrgyzstan
Liechtenstein
Malta
Monaco
San Marino
Tajikistan
Turkmenistan
Uzbekistan
United States
Yugoslavia

*/ It was agreed in a previous IWG meeting that countries would be directed to send photocopies (or diskettes) of their completed Questionnaires, as well as any revisions and corrections, to the other two organizations; however, as a backstopping measure, if copies were NOT received from countries, the three organizations would send photocopies of the data received from each of their respective countries to each of the other two organizations.
