



# Economic and Social Council

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## Committee for Programme and Coordination

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### Draft report

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### Addendum

## Programme questions: proposed programme budget for 2023

(Item 3 (a))

### Programme 17

#### Economic development in Europe

1. At its 14th meeting, on 8 June 2022, the Committee considered programme 17, Economic development in Europe, of the proposed programme plan for 2023 and programme performance information for 2021 ([A/77/6 \(Sect. 20\)](#)). The Committee also had before it a note by the Secretariat on the review of the proposed programme plan by sectoral, functional and regional bodies ([E/AC.51/2022/13](#)).

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the programme and responded to questions raised by the Committee during its consideration of the programme.

#### Discussion

3. Delegations expressed support for the role of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) in promoting economic development in the region. A delegation expressed support for ECE and its efforts to pursue sustainable development and regional cooperation in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Another delegation expressed appreciation for the important role played by the United Nations regional commissions in strengthening mutually beneficial regional economic integration and achieving sustainable development. The same delegation noted that the decisions of the Commission should best meet the interests of Member States, should be clearly justified in terms of both content and financial arrangements, and should not diminish the Commission's relevance and ability to provide Governments with the necessary support in development matters.



4. Delegations expressed support for the multilateral nature of the Commission's work and concern about unilateral actions that were not in accordance with international cooperation, noting that such cooperation formed the basis of the work of the organization in promoting sustainable development. A delegation expressed concern about the exclusion from the system of regional cooperation of two ECE member States, namely Belarus and the Russian Federation, which included one of the main donors of the region. The same delegation expressed concern that excessive politicization within the framework of the Commission on technical cooperation issues and, as a consequence, development financing issues, had jeopardized the effectiveness of the ECE mandate and progress towards achieving the Goals. The delegation also emphasized that it shared the approaches of other ECE member States to supporting the work of the Commission, including increased attention to regional and subregional cooperation and integration, in order to ensure sustainable development, and noted that it demonstrated the political will to cooperate and rejected the use of unilateral coercive measures.

5. With regard to subregional cooperation, a delegation noted that it attached great importance to further strengthening the role of ECE in promoting and facilitating economic integration and coherence in economic policies of the member States of the region, including through subregional cooperation, in order to ensure sustainable development. A question was raised related to the Commission's cooperation with external bodies, including the European Commission and the Council of Europe.

6. Support was expressed for the work of ECE beyond its region, including its work on norms and standard-setting with a worldwide impact. Another delegation expressed support for discussions on transport in the ECE Inland Transport Committee, which had a positive impact well beyond Europe. The delegation said that, given its global impact, the Inland Transport Committee should remain vigilant to ensure that it did not promote one set of regional regulations and agreements over other United Nations agreements. The delegation stressed that a truly global forum should look beyond any one region for creative ideas, listen to the needs of parties from various regions of the world and promote advanced technologies and innovation regardless of geography to meet the long-standing goals of road and vehicle safety, environmental protection and sustainability. Another delegation recommended that ECE increase its work on outreach and coordination with the other regional commissions.

7. A delegation expressed appreciation for the Commission's efforts to help countries to convene activities and cooperate on norms, standards and conventions in support of the Goals. The delegation expressed commitment to the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Goals, and looked forward to continued partnership with ECE and fellow Member States to accelerate the achievement of the Goals and to promote regional cooperation, peace and security in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Another delegation noted that ECE was actively helping to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Goals by providing a regional intergovernmental platform for addressing challenges in eight main areas, ranging from environmental protection and sustainable transport to the development of smart cities through the promotion of innovation and access to clean energy. The same delegation advised that the annual ECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, in turn, provided a regional multilateral platform for follow-up and review of the achievement of the Goals and for the exchange of information on practical ways to achieve sustainable development.

8. A delegation stressed that the successful implementation of technical assistance projects within the framework of ECE in such areas as innovation and digitalization, infrastructure, circular economy, energy and urban sustainability helped to ensure the sustainable development of beneficiary countries in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and

the Caucasus, which contributed to the achievement of the common goal of implementing the 2030 Agenda. The same delegation said that developing countries in the region were interested in continuing and expanding their participation in ECE project activities.

9. A question was raised with regard to the Commission's contribution to assisting member States in transitioning from traditional sources of energy to more sustainable, clean sources.

10. A delegation expressed the view that the ECE mandate for economic development would support the reconstruction and recovery from war, which would be a key focus in the next few years.

11. A delegation emphasized that enterprise risk management and the risk register should be key considerations in the development of the ECE strategy.

12. A delegation welcomed the new partnerships strategy to guide the Commission's engagement with the private sector and sought clarification on how it would be effectively operationalized and regarding the status of its implementation.

13. A delegation welcomed the move towards hybrid arrangements for ECE meetings and sought further information on how hybrid working allowed for a wider level of participation in meetings for delegates.

14. A delegation said that the results-based budgeting approach of the proposed programme plan for 2023 was well documented. The delegation asked whether the subprogramme structure in the report reflected the current structure of the organization or vice versa. The same delegation emphasized that, as set out in regulation 4.5, rule 104.5, of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, congruence of the programmatic and organizational structure could be interpreted to mean that the programme should be aligned with the organization's structure rather than with the objectives outlined in the programme budget document.

15. With regard to the external factors mentioned in paragraph 20.11 (c), which reads "voluntary resources continue to be available", a question was raised concerning the procedures that ECE followed to garner the voluntary contributions.

#### **Conclusions and recommendations**

16. **The Committee commended the continuing efforts of the Economic Commission for Europe to promote economic integration and cooperation in the region, and underlined the importance of its role in ensuring regional cooperation for sustainable development, in accordance with its mandate.**

17. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of programme 17, Economic development in Europe, of the proposed programme budget for 2023.**