



# Economic and Social Council

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## Committee for Programme and Coordination

Sixty-fifth session

New York, 12 May–13 June 2025

### Draft report

*Rapporteur:* Mr. Rodrigue Edgar Tchoffo Mongou (Cameroon)

#### Addendum

### Programme questions: proposed programme budget for 2026

(Item 3 (a))

#### Programme 19

#### Economic and social development in Western Asia

1. At its 9th meeting, on 16 May 2025, the Committee considered programme 19, Economic and social development in Western Asia, of the proposed programme plan for 2026 and programme performance in 2024 ([A/80/6 \(Sect. 22\)](#)).

#### Discussion

2. Delegations expressed appreciation for the presentation of the programme and for the work carried out by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

3. A delegation expressed appreciation for the cooperation with ESCWA, which its country had enjoyed since 2012. The delegation also expressed that it attached particular importance to all projects implemented by the Commission and that those projects aimed to bring about development in the economies of member States. The same delegation expressed the view that the presented proposed programme plan for 2026 was at the heart of the Arab region's concerns and expressed full support for the proposed programme plan for ESCWA for 2026.

4. In the context of the many growing challenges such as climate change, economic and social instability, and many other multidimensional crises faced by the Arab region, the view was expressed that ESCWA played a critical role in helping the region to roll out evidence-based policies for achievement of sustainable development in a holistic way.



5. Appreciation was expressed for the efforts by ESCWA to enhance the business environment, provide support to gender issues, bring about economic development and harness artificial intelligence tools in the best way. The same delegation noted that it was particularly interested in the importance ESCWA attached to the digital economy and, in that connection, thanked ESCWA for the valuable technical assistance provided to various countries of the Arab group.

6. Support was expressed to the initiative to establish an Arab observatory for road safety which would play an important role to bridge gaps between countries and gather the relevant data to strengthen road infrastructure and ultimately save lives. The same delegation expressed that its country was ready to step up its cooperation with the Commission. The view was expressed that middle income countries in the Arab region faced specific difficulties notably in terms of indebtedness while not receiving priority in terms of development aid. In that connection, a question was asked whether the initiatives the Commission was planning to undertake covered those countries.

7. A delegation noted the importance of exchanging knowledge and experience among all regional economic commissions, and the continuation of those efforts was encouraged. The delegation encouraged a continuing focus on area of economic prosperity and abstention from expanding mandates or duplicating the work mandate of other United Nations or multilateral bodies. The same delegation sought inputs on the multidimensional approach to reducing poverty across the region and the metrics utilized to measure the overall progress.

8. In the context of the support provided by ESCWA to its member States, it was noted that various conferences and important meetings were coming up, including the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, the Second World Summit for Social Development and the meetings on the implementation of the Pact for the Future.

#### **Conclusions and recommendations**

9. **The Committee recommended that the plenary or the relevant Main Committee or Main Committees of the General Assembly, in line with Assembly resolution [79/247](#), consider the programme plan for programme 19, Economic and social development in Western Asia, of the proposed programme budget for 2026 under the agenda item entitled “Programme planning” at the eightieth session of the Assembly.**