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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics

**REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON TRANSPORT TRENDS AND ECONOMICS
ON ITS SIXTEENTH SESSION
(24-26 September 2003)**

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Annex: Draft Programme of Work for 2004-2008

REPORT¹

ATTENDANCE AND OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics held its sixteenth session from 24 to 26 September 2003. Mr. V. Arsenov (Russian Federation) and Mr. W. Zarnoch (Poland) were elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman, respectively, of the session. Representatives of the following UNECE member States participated: Belarus, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom and Turkey. The Commission of the European Communities (CEC) was also represented. The representative of the European Investment Bank (EIB), the representative of the Danube Commission (DC) and the representative of the TEM Project Central Office also attended.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

2. The provisional agenda (TRANS/WP.5/33) was adopted.

ACTIVITIES OF ECE BODIES OF INTEREST TO THE WORKING PARTY

(a) Economic Commission for Europe

Documentation: E/2003/37-E/ECE/1406.

3. The Working Party was informed about the decisions taken by the Commission at its fifty-eighth session (Geneva, 4-6 March 2003), concerning such questions as the UNECE reform, major policy directions of UNECE's work, UNECE technical assistance, and cooperation and coordination with other organizations.

(b) Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/152.

4. The Working Party was briefed about the results of the sixty-fifth session of the Inland Transport Committee (18 – 20 February 2003) and its discussions to the extent that they were related to the area of work of interest to the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/152, paras.23-39).

FOLLOW-UP TO THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRANSPORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Documentation: ECE/AC.21/2003/1(EUR/03/5040828/1); ECE/AC.21/2003/5 (EUR/03/5040828/5).

5. The representative of the Netherlands and the secretariat informed the Working Party about the outcome of the first session of THE PEP Steering Committee (10-11 April 2003). It noted that the meeting had considered the following project proposals: (i) clearing house on transport, environment and health, (ii) urban plans for transport sustainable for health and

¹ The underlined text indicates the Working Party's decisions taken at the end of the session.

environment, (iii) transport related health impacts and their costs, (iv) establishment of a set of indicators to monitor the integration of environmental and health aspects in transport policies and the impact of these policies on health and the environment. Further information on activities within THE PEP Programme could be obtained at the Internet site: <http://www.unece.org/the-pep>

The Working Party welcomed the equal representation of the three sectors concerned. The representative of the Russian Federation also informed the Working Party that her delegation proposed the following three projects to be included in THE PEP programme: (i) improvement of national legislation with a view to establishing a legal basis for the implementation of sustainable transport policy at national and local levels; (ii) analysis of the possibility and effectiveness of use of different economic mechanisms aimed at enhancement of ecological sustainability of the transport sector; and, (iii) establishment of the engine fuel quality control system.

6. The Working Party asked the secretariat to incorporate this item into the “Activities of ECE bodies of interest to the Working Party” at its future sessions, and requested the secretariat to bring to its attention new developments when considered to be within the competence of the Working Party.

IMPLEMENTATION OF PAN-EUROPEAN TRANSPORT CORRIDORS AND AREAS

7. The representative of the Russian Federation informed the Working Party that Germany, Poland and the Russian Federation, at the recent Third International Euro-Asian Conference on Transport (10-11 September 2003, St. Petersburg), addressed the European Union demanding the extension of the Pan-European Transport Corridor No. 2 to Yekaterinburg. The representative of Germany informed the Working Party about recent developments on pan-European corridors Nos. 2, 3 and 4, and the representative of Poland informed the Working Party about the recent developments on the pan-European corridor No. 6. He further noted that TEM and TER Project Central Offices would assume the functions of the Secretariat for Pan-European Transport Corridor 6.

8. The representative of the European Union informed the Working Party about the recent developments related to the EU work on Pan-European Transport Corridors. In this context, she mentioned the results of the work of the High-Level Group on the trans-European (TEN-T) network and the report of the group, containing new infrastructure priorities that was released in June 2003. She further informed the Working Party about her institution’s work on the revision of the guidelines for the TEN-T network, the outcome of the meeting of the Corridors and Areas Co-ordinators Group held in Brussels in June 2003, and the forthcoming update of the Corridors and Areas Status Report in 2004. She concluded by reiterating the interest that the EU attaches to infrastructure developments, not only in the enlarged European Union but also in the Mediterranean region, Western Balkan and new EU neighbouring countries.

9. Noting that the new update of the Status Report on pan-European Transport Corridors and Areas will be issued next year, the Working Party asked the European Commission to present the updated report at the next session of the Working Party.

10. Emphasizing the importance of numerous changes which have occurred in the infrastructure field since 1993 when the report “Infrastructure bottlenecks and missing links in the European transport network” (TRANS/WP.5/R.44) was first presented, the Working Party

asked the secretariat to prepare a proposal on how this document could be updated and information collected from member countries to be further used in the promotion of pan-European and Euro-Asian transport infrastructure development.

11. Further noting that important changes have been taking place in the development and planning of Pan-European transport infrastructures since the Third Pan-European Transport Conference (Helsinki, 23-25 June 1997), the Working Party had a preliminary exchange of views about the need to convene a possible Fourth Pan-European Transport Conference in the near future. The Working Party decided to convey this idea to the Inland Transport Committee for its deliberation at its next session.

EVALUATION OF INLAND TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

(a) Development of a European-wide methodology for project appraisal

12. The Working Party noted with satisfaction that “A Set of Guidelines for Socio-Economic Cost Benefit Analysis of Transport Infrastructure Project Appraisal” had been printed in English and Russian as planned. It recommended that the future revision of the Guidelines should also incorporate the social aspects of transport infrastructure project appraisal as well as a reference to relevant aspects of the phased approach to transport infrastructure development. Furthermore, the Working Party asked member Governments to promote the use of these Guidelines when and if appropriate thus contributing to the standardization of the methodology used for transport infrastructure project appraisal throughout the UNECE region and, in particular, for appraisal of projects on Euro-Asian transport links.

(b) Phased approach to transport infrastructure developments

Documentation: TRANS/WP.5/2003/1; TRANS/WP.5/2003/2.

13. The representative of the TEM Project Central Office informed the Working Party about the outcome and conclusions of the Meeting on Motorway Stage Construction organized by TEM PCO and held on 7-8 November 2002. He particularly mentioned recommendations concerning the general aspects of the approach, cost/assessment considerations and technical aspects of the phased approach.

14. The Working Party noted the reports on the phased approach to transport infrastructure developments submitted by Finland and Norway and appreciated a brief presentation of approaches and methodologies used in the two countries. Furthermore, the Working Party noted the document (TRANS/WP.5/200/7) presented by the secretariat at its thirteenth session in 2000, in which the TEM and TER standards, as well as prospects and limits of the phased approach, were highlighted. The Working Party felt that the document still offers a useful assessment of potentials and limits of the phased approach to infrastructure developments.

15. The Working Party also took note of the presentation of the representative of the European Investment Bank (EIB) on the evaluation of transport projects at the EIB. The Working Party, in particular, noted some critical questions related to the selection of the methodology for project appraisal (cost-benefit analysis, multi-criteria analyses), as well as practical problems of temporal project phasing. The experience of the EIB has shown so far that

motorways and high-speed trains are more appealing for financing than ordinary roads or ordinary railways. However, such solutions might not always be the most efficient in the light of traffic levels and costs. In instances when budget constraints become pronounced, the phased approach could offer an alternative for an efficient use of funds.

16. The Working Party asked the TER PCO to make an additional effort and organize in the near future a workshop on a phased approach to transport infrastructure developments, similar to the one organized by the TEM PCO.

17. The Working Party also asked the secretariat, to consider possible ways of combining experiences of various member countries and organizations as reported so far, and propose a draft set of guidelines that could assist member countries when considering to apply the phased approach to their transport infrastructure developments.

EURO-ASIAN TRANSPORT LINKS

(a) Meetings on Euro-Asian transport links

18. The Working Party took note of the information about the forthcoming meeting (November, Istanbul) on developments along the Southern Euro-Asian Transport Corridor. Underlining the pivotal role of the secretariat in the development of this corridor, the Working Party requested that the secretariat take part in the forthcoming Ad hoc meeting on the Euro-Asian transport link between Istanbul and Almaty (Istanbul, November 2003).

19. The representative of the Russian Federation informed the Working Party about the outcome of the Third International Euro-Asian Conference on Transport (11-12 September 2003, St. Petersburg). The great interest for the future development of Euro-Asian transport links was manifested by the attendance of 37 national delegations and a great number of international organizations, institutions and other participants. In two days, policy makers and other participants discussed potentials and perspectives of further development of Euro-Asian transport links.

20. The final Declaration of the Conference was circulated to the participants. The Working Party agreed, within its competencies, to continuously follow up the strategy and initiatives as outlined in the Declaration of the Third St. Petersburg Conference. The Working Party welcomed the announcement that the Fourth International Euro-Asian Conference on Transport is scheduled to take place in September 2006 in St. Petersburg. In view of the fact that the future development of the Euro-Asian land transport links requires a wider international participation and concerted effort, the Working Party requested that all European and Asian countries concerned with developments of transport infrastructures between Europe and Asia should be involved in its future work in order to ensure the coverage of all possible transport routes.

21. The representative of Poland informed the Working Party about the outcome of the Conference on Euro-Asian transport links which was held in Katowice on 29 May 2003. Several Ministers of Transport from European and Asian countries attended the Conference. The final Declaration of the Conference as well as informative material on the logistic centre in Slawkow (located in Poland at the end of wide gauge railway line in Europe) were circulated to the participants.

22. Recalling its recommendation and the support by the Inland Transport Committee, concerning the establishment of a Task Force on the development of Euro-Asian Transport links, as envisaged by the UNECE/UNESCAP Strategic Vision document on Development of Euro-Asian Transport Links, the Working Party noted that such a Task Force had not yet been established. The participants were of the opinion that further work on the development of Euro-Asian land transport links should continue in the framework of the Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics. In this connection, the Working Party asked the secretariat to provide information on constitution of the Task Force at its next session.

23. In order to continue its involvement in the development of Euro-Asian land transport links, the Working Party asked the secretariat to request information from Governments, international organizations (EC, World Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Road Union, International Road Federation, International Union of Railways, OSZhD, etc.) and other relevant authorities on ongoing developments along all four Euro-Asian land transport corridors and to present this information at its next session.

(b) Organization of demonstration trains

Documentation: TRANS/WP.5/2003/3-TRANS/SC.2/2003/3; TRANS/WP.5/2003/4-TRANS/SC.2/2003/4; TRANS/WP.5/2003/5-TRANS/SC.2/2003/5.

24. The Working Party took note and appreciated the information from Romania, the Russian Federation and Turkey on the organization of runs of demonstration trains on their territories. The Working Party asked the representatives of Romania, the Russian Federation and Turkey to inform the Working Party about new developments regarding the demonstration runs of block trains at its next session. It also invited other countries planning to organize demonstration runs of block trains to inform the secretariat about their intentions.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Documentation: TRANS/WP.5/2003/6, Informal document No.2.

25. The Working Party took note of the outcome of an informal Ad hoc meeting convened in order to formulate concrete aspects of the relationship between transport and economic development. It noted that, due to the complexity of the relationship between transport and economic development and the inconclusiveness of the evidence about their mutual effects, the relationship between transport and economic development requires further and additional national as well as international research efforts. The Working Party agreed with one of the conclusions of the informal meeting, according to which the focus should be on non-investment considerations and measures that could improve the effects of transport on economic development without adversely impacting the environment and the potential for further economic growth.

26. In order to further contribute to the study of this multifaceted relationship, the Working Party asked the secretariat to collect information from member Governments on results of related research and studies, studying and evaluating the changing role of transport at the various stages of economic development for its next session. The Working Party agreed to continue elaborating

various aspects of this relationship, as outlined in the report of the informal meeting, in more detail at its future sessions.

FINANCING SCHEMES OF TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Documentation: TRANS/WP.5/2003/7 and Add.1-2; Informal documents No.1, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

27. The Working Party noted that the issue of financing schemes of transport infrastructure had raised considerable interest that was manifested by a large number of replies to the secretariat inquiry. It was felt that all replies containing a variety of national experiences merited a more detailed consideration, in particular those replies outlining a comparison between various financing schemes, and their advantages and disadvantages.

28. The Working Party agreed to continue discussing various approaches to financing of transport infrastructure and experiences gained with applying different financing techniques at its further sessions. It further decided to consider the experiences with privately financed transport projects in member countries. To this end, it asked the secretariat to address the member Governments with the request for information on privately-financed and successfully concluded transport infrastructure projects in order to identify the best practices for involvement of the private sector in the financing of transport infrastructure projects.

29. Furthermore, the Working Party asked the secretariat to prepare a document summarizing Governments' replies to questions on financing schemes of transport infrastructure, and submit it to the forthcoming EC-ECMT-UNECE-EIB Seminar on "Transport Infrastructure Development for a Wider Europe" (27-28 November 2003, Paris) as the Working Party's contribution to the proceedings of the Seminar.

TRANSPORT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

Documentation: TRANS/WP.5/2003/13.

(a) Mediterranean Transport Study Centre and Transport Training Centre

30. The Working Party took note of and appreciated the information on the work in progress and planned activities of CETMO. It asked the Directors of CETMO and TRANSCEM to report on the results of work of both centres at its next session.

(b) Transport developments in the Mediterranean Region

31. Noting the lack of support for the initiative of the secretariat to solicit financial support from other United Nations Regional Commissions for the organization of the Seminar on freight flows in the Mediterranean, the Working Party asked the secretariat, together with the CETMO secretariat, to contact other international organizations and explore other possible sources of finance in order to ensure financial support for the organization of the Seminar on freight flows in the Mediterranean region scheduled to be held in 2004.

(c) Europe-Africa permanent link through the Strait of Gibraltar

Documentation: E/2003/45.

32. The Working Party noted the report on the Project for a Europe-Africa permanent link through the Strait of Gibraltar and asked the secretariat to submit to its eighteenth session (2005) new information on activities carried out under this project.

ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION

Documentation: TRANS/WP.5/2003/8.

33. The secretariat provided the information on the UNDA Project on Capacity Building for the Development of Interregional Transport Linkages. In implementing this project, the UNECE and UNESCAP had been focusing mainly on Euro-Asian transport links. Joint letters of UNECE and UNESCAP have been sent to 17 selected beneficiary countries inviting them to participate in the Project and to nominate a focal point. In the meantime, most of the countries have already done so.

34. The implementation of the Project has started, and will last for five years. The objective of the project is to assist beneficiary countries in strengthening their national capacities for developing land and land-cum-sea transport linkages by promoting interregional cooperation in order to facilitate interregional trade and tourism. Among the activities are envisaged: elaboration of a study, preparation of country reports, organization of workshops, provision of advisory services, etc. The UNECE and UNESCAP are currently determining the criteria to be used to identify the relevant interregional transport linkages. The preparatory work for the elaboration of the in-house study foreseen by the project has already started. In close cooperation between the UNECE and UNESCAP, the relevant transport networks have been identified and a detailed outline of the study, showing the division of labour between the respective Regional Commissions is being developed and is expected to be completed shortly.

35. The first policy-level expert group meeting/workshop of the Project is tentatively scheduled to take place in November/December 2003. The UNECE-UNESCAP are currently discussing the possibility of holding the meeting back-to-back with the session of the SPECA Project Working Group on Transport and Border Crossing Facilitation with Kazakhstan as the lead country of the Group.

36. The Working Party appreciated the detailed presentation of activities related to the assistance to countries with economies in transition and asked the secretariat to report again on this item at its next session. It also reiterated its invitation to Governments and relevant international organizations and institutions to contribute to the UNECE Trust Fund for Assistance to Countries in Transition (TFACT) and inform the secretariat as to the type of assistance which would be forthcoming.

COHERENT EUROPEAN SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURES

Quality of service concept

Documentation: TRANS/WP.5/2003/9; and TRANS/WP.5/2003/10.

37. The Working Party continued discussing the quality of service concept. It noted that this concept could be approached from the point of view of a Government, a user or provider of the transport service. Furthermore, the Working Party noted that it would be possible to further develop elements of the concept by looking separately at each transport mode and corresponding transport infrastructure in order to arrive at the elements of the quality of service for each transport mode and its infrastructure network.

38. Noting the complexity of the issue of quality of service, the Working Party agreed to continue discussing the quality of service concept at its next session. It asked the secretariat to circulate a questionnaire containing only the quality of service indicators from Governments' point of view (as indicated under 2.2 in document TRANS/WP.5/2003/10) to member Governments and ask them to provide information on all available quality of service indicators. In addition the Working Party further asked the secretariat to present a summary of all replies for its consideration at the next session for further elaboration of the indicators of the quality of transport service.

DEVELOPMENT OF A EUROPEAN TRANSPORT DATABASE SYSTEM

Documentation: TRANS/WP.5/2003/11.

39. The Working Party noted the report by the secretariat on development of a European transport database system and asked the secretariat to present an updated version of the report on this issue at its eighteenth session in 2005.

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2004-2008

Documentation: TRANS/WP.5/2003/12.

40. The Working Party approved its draft programme of work for 2004-2008, as reproduced in the annex to this report.

OTHER BUSINESS

41. The Vice-Chairman proposed and, after an exchange of views, the Working Party agreed to hold a two-day session in future. The Working Party's seventeenth session is tentatively scheduled for 20-21 September 2004.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

42. In accordance with the decision of the Working Party, the decisions taken at its sixteenth session were adopted at the end of the session. The report of its sixteenth session, including the

above decisions, was established by the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman with the assistance of the secretariat, for submission to the Inland Transport Committee.

Annex

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2004-2008

PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 02.1: TRANSPORT TRENDS AND ECONOMICS

Review of general trends with regard to transport development and transport policy and analysis of specific transport economic issues Priority: 1

Description: Review and exchange of information on general trends in the development of transport and of specific transport economic issues including transport development in the Mediterranean Region.

Work to be undertaken: The Committee and the Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (WP.5) will consider and carry out the following activities:

1) CONTINUING ACTIVITIES

- (a) Study of economic aspects of transport taking into account (i) the integration process going on within the ECE region, and (ii) the reform processes under way in transition countries by monitoring current changes in transport in order to identify, promote and spread positive examples for transport development.

Output expected: Report on transport development when needed. Priority: 2

- (b) Periodical review of new important policy developments relating to inland transport in UNECE member countries in order to make the medium- and long-term evolution of transport more transparent. The Working Party WP.5 will examine all decisions, general and specific, recently taken in member countries likely to have implications in the organization of transport and take into account the findings arrived at during international meetings focusing on salient issues of transport development.

Output expected: Reports on developments in inland transport of member countries (every five years; next report: 2007). Priority: 1

- (c) Consideration of the developments of main European traffic lines in order to ensure transport links with Pan-European Transport Areas.

Output expected: Report on transport development in Pan-European Transport Areas (2004) Priority: 2

- (d) Monitoring of the developments of the Pan-European Transport Corridors in co-operation with the EC.

Output expected: Report on progress made in the implementation of the Pan-European Transport Corridors (2004). Priority: 1

- (e) Study of the interrelationship of the UNECE Agreements (AGR, AGC, AGTC and its Protocol, AGN) and projects (TEM, TER) with the Pan-European transport network planning procedure with a view to:

- indicating the major international transport routes to be considered for improvement and modernization, establishing priorities and a timetable taking into account those parts of the networks where there are bottlenecks and missing links;

- assessing the cost of this infrastructure plan and making suggestions for financing it.

Output expected: Biannual report on coherent European system of international transport infrastructure (2004). Priority: 1

- (f) Further elaboration of the elements of the joint ESCAP/UNECE programme on the development of Asia-Europe land transport links as well as the analysis of results of international meetings on the problem.
Output expected: Report on Euro-Asian transport links (2004). Priority: 1
- (g) Financing schemes of transport infrastructure
Output expected: Report on national experiences Priority: 1
- (h) Development of efficient management frameworks for transport infrastructure maintenance and operation, thus optimizing the need for new investments (linked to the development of the Quality-of-Service concept). Priority: 2
Output expected: Report on the quality of transport services (2004).
- (i) Improvement of existing transport planning methodologies, including environmental aspects and the relationship between transport and economic development. Priority: 2
- (j) Improving inter-modal coordination and integration with a view to establishing a balanced European transport system Priority: 2
- (k) Collection of data concerning investments in transport infrastructures and study of the effects upon such infrastructures of developments in modal split taking into account, in particular, external costs in order to highlight the interaction between infrastructure and modal development. Priority: 3
- (l) Activities for assistance to countries in transition regarding institutional adaptation of government administration and of transport enterprises to market economy. This also includes support through the UNECE Trust Fund for Assistance to Countries in Transition (TFACT).²
Output expected: Annual report on assistance to countries with economies in transition (2004). Priority: 1
- (m) Strengthening of cooperation with the Mediterranean Study and Training Centres, the results of which will be submitted to the Committee, to enable all ECE countries to benefit from the activities carried out including the organization of workshops.
Output expected: Annual report on activities of the Study and Training Centres (2004). Priority: 2

² A detailed list of subjects is circulated in document TRANS/1999/11.

(n) Analysis of transport developments in the Mediterranean Basin and the Black Sea region and the promotion of international transport agreements to permit, in particular, Mediterranean countries to adhere to them. Priority: 3

(o) Information on the studies on the Europe/Africa Permanent Link through the Strait of Gibraltar.

Output expected: Biannual report by Governments of Morocco and Spain on progress made in the analysis of the Europe/Africa Permanent Link through the Strait of Gibraltar distributed by the secretariat (next report: 2005). Priority: 3

2) ACTIVITIES OF A LIMITED DURATION

(a) As follow-up to the Conference on Transport and the Environment: Development and implementation of programmes to establish attractive networks taking into account such aspects as intermodality, interoperability and environmentally sound vehicles.³

³ In addition to the above item, the Working Party wishes to be associated with activities on transport and environment concerning, in particular, development of methodologies for setting up databases, implementation of scientific programmes, assistance to countries in transition, development of environmental guidelines, external costs, analysis of questions related to the protection of sensitive areas (see also items I (c), (d), (g), (h); III (e); IV (c), (f) in the Programme of Joint Action).