THE PEP 2014 Symposium

Green and healthy urban mobility: the role of urban and spatial planning

_DRAFT concept note prepared by the secretariat_

**Summary**

At its seventh session (Geneva, 22–23 October 2009), the Steering Committee of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) discussed ways to more actively engage member States and other stakeholders on priority issues for THE PEP (ECE/AC.21/SC/2009/7–EUR/09/5088363/7, para. 8). To that end, the Committee agreed that, beginning with its eighth session, in-depth discussions, or symposia, would be organized, including speakers from the private sector, academia, government and civil society (ECE/AC.21/SC/2009/8–EUR/09/5088363/8, para. 46).

Topics would be in line with the four priority goals of the Amsterdam Declaration, adopted by the Third High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment (Amsterdam, 2009) and address one goal per year. With the adoption of the Paris Declaration by the Fourth High Level Meeting, Goal 5 (“To integrate transport, health and environmental objectives into urban and spatial planning policies”) was added by the Fourth High Level Meeting. Following the High level Meeting, the extended Bureau of THE PEP Steering Committee confirmed the wish to continue holding THE PEP Symposia and decided that THE PEP 2014 Symposium would focus on the fifth goal. The proposed title for the 2014 Symposium is “Green and healthy urban mobility: the role of urban and spatial planning”.

THE PEP 2014 Symposium will be held on Wednesday, 19 November 2014 at the WHO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, beginning at 3 p.m. This concept note was prepared by the secretariat, for the consideration of the Bureau, to focus the issues to be covered by the 2014 Symposium and set forth a provisional programme of speakers.

**I. Introduction to the issues**

Transport trends impacting health and environment

1. _The challenge and why THE PEP process is key._ Transport plays an important role in people’s lives, whether in providing access to jobs, services, education and leisure; and in supporting economic
development. However, unsustainable transport can have a negative impact on their environment and their health. The rapid growth of road transport has affected health and environment through congestion, car crashes, air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and noise. It has contributed to sedentary lifestyles, especially in urban areas. The total external costs of transport in the European Union (EU) plus Norway and Switzerland in 2008 is estimated to amount to more than €500 billion per year, or 4% of total gross domestic product (GDP), which in 2008 in the European Union countries was about €12.5 trillion. Seventy seven percent of costs are related to Passenger transport and the rest is related to freight. On top of these, the annual congestion cost of road transport amounts to between €146 billion and €243 billion (delay costs), which is 1–2% of GDP [ref 1]. The following pressures from road transport in Europe may be considered by THE PEP to link transport, health and environment policies.

2. In the 32 member countries of the European Environment Agency, the length of road infrastructure increased by 36% between 1990 and 2005, while that of railways declined by 10% [ref 2]. The use of roads continues to increase, with more and more passenger- and tonne-kilometres travelled every year. The rising pressure on road infrastructure requires higher efficiency of transport systems if congestion is to be reduced. Road transport is a significant source of air pollution which has an impact on life expectancy in Europe¹. Lack of adequate physical activity is estimated to be associated with about 900 000 deaths per year in the European Region, where about 20–30% of adults are estimated to be obese. Walking and cycling could help integrate physical activity into daily life [ref 6] but are also subject to infrastructure and planning limitations that lead, among other factors to increased safety risks. Of the people dying in road traffic in the European Region, 27% are pedestrians and 4% cyclists [ref 7]. Up to 1.6 million healthy life-years are lost every year due to transport noise in EU cities [ref 8]. As to climate change in the EU, road transport is responsible for about 20% of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions, with CO2 being the main greenhouse gas [ref 9].

Making the link: transport policy, spatial planning, health and environment

3. As these effects are interlinked, a comprehensive approach is needed to promote a sustainable approach to mobility and transport. The way we fulfill our transport needs is determined by various factors, ranging from factors related to individual situations and preferences to environmental conditions and available options. As such, the built environment has a major influence on transport choices and is a major driving force for the organization and provision of transport infrastructure and services. However, the processes determining how the built environment develops are largely outside of the realms of environment and health and often also the transport sector. There is, moreover, a strong relationship between the way that space is planned and used and how people and businesses can access the services and facilities they need. Physical form, and in particular urban form, in terms of buildings and infrastructure, may change very slowly, but certain types of development, in certain locations, can have a major impact on travel patterns over long time periods². For example, urban sprawl and the development


of “out-of-town” malls and services, including health care facilities, have been closely intertwined with the growth of and reliance on private motorization, and have had a major and lasting influence on living, working and consumption patterns of hundreds of millions of people, particularly in urban areas. Good practices in spatial planning have made progress in stemming some unsustainable trends (for example, the UK’s policy of restricting further out-of-town retail developments and European and Australian neighbourhood planning to encourage walking and cycling). However, there remain many gaps in our understanding of how to deliver urban infrastructure that genuinely contribute to sustainable and healthy transport and mobility both in new area developments and in existing ones.

II. The policy response

4. Despite the interrelationship between spatial planning and transportation, and the profound effects of such interaction on quality of life and the environment, in most urban areas of the world land use and transportation have historically not been planned in a way that promotes sustainable mobility and transport. As a consequence, the Paris Declaration, adopted in April 2014 at the Fourth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment, included Priority Goal 5: “To integrate transport, health and environmental objectives into urban and spatial planning policies”. The Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) 2014 Symposium aims to explore the issue of integrating THE considerations/aspects with urban and spatial planning, including developing capacities to do so, in order to reduce the impact of transport on health, the environment and support green and healthy mobility and transport as well as sustainable livelihoods. Through Goal 5 of the Paris Declaration THE PEP aims to focus political and public attention on urban and spatial planning that takes account of the importance of integrating transport, environment and health objectives into the process of planning and designing of our cities, with a particular focus on making cities more resilient to current and future demographic and environmental changes.

5. Globally, the United Nations are working with governments, civil society and other partners to shape a development framework to meet the needs of people and planet, providing economic transformation and opportunity to lift people out of poverty, advancing social justice and protecting the environment. Two of the pillars of this Rio+20 agenda (The future we want) are sustainable cities and energy efficiency. Cities are hubs for commerce, art and culture, ideas, social development, science, productivity and much more. However, many challenges exist to maintaining cities that are also centers of job creation and economic vitality and prosperity, using natural resources efficiently and avoiding negative impacts on health. The future we want includes cities of opportunities, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transportation and more for all.

6. UNEP [ref] suggests that it is critical to look at both national and urban policy levers; and at the conditions that will enable cities to make the transition to a green economy models. In practice, sustainable and healthy cities will require a coalition of actors across public, private and civil society sectors – and multilevel governance models that allow these actors to come together effectively. Numerous instruments for enabling sustainable and healthy cities are available and tested but need to be applied in a tailored, context-specific way. It is suggested that in contexts with strong local government
planning instruments can advance greater urban sustainability. City governments need to coordinate policies and decisions with other levels of government, but more importantly, they need to be equipped with strategic and integrated planning capacities.

7. The Global Report on Human Settlements 2013 (Planning and Design for Sustainable Urban Mobility) of UN-Habitat highlights the transportation challenges experienced in many cities and identifies examples of good through better and integrated urban planning. However, many cities experience considerable institutional, regulatory and governance problems when trying to address urban mobility challenges through urban planning. In many cases national, regional and local institutions may be missing or their responsibilities may be overlapping, and even in conflict with each other. It is essential that all stakeholders in urban transport, including transport, health, environment and urban planning are engaged in the governance and development of urban mobility systems. To ensure effective integration of transportation and urban development policies, it is essential that urban transportation and land-use policies are fully integrated at all levels of government.

8. UN-Habitat’s Governing Council Resolution 24/2 calls upon member States to step up efforts to improve urban mobility, to ensure better access to goods and services and to reduce traffic accidents and air pollution through improved urban planning, better public transport and facilities for non-motorized transport, such as walking and cycling. Further, UN-Habitat’s Governing Council also encourages Governments to consider seriously increasing urban density through intensification of land use, as part of improved urban planning, so as to reduce [...] demand for transport and energy use, and to overcome a growing social divide, spatial fragmentation and resulting land use patterns (UN-Habitat Governing Council, Resolution 23/17). Action 8 of the UN Urban Environmental Accords (http://www.sustainablepg.org/accords/accords.php) calls upon cities to ‘Adopt urban planning principles and practices that advance higher density, mixed use, walkable, bikeable and disabled-accessible neighborhoods which coordinate land use and transportation with open space systems for recreation and ecological restoration’.

WHO

9. Recognizing the importance of sustainable transport for achieving and maintaining health, the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe together with its Member States committed to work together through the Parma Declaration on Environment and Health in 2010 towards creating environments that allow for safe cycling and walking a reduce emissions of air pollution and noise from transport activities. The new health policy for Europe, Health 2020, further expands on this by aiming to support actions across government and society to significantly improve the health and wellbeing of populations, reduce inequalities and create, among others, supportive environments and resilient communities. Resilient and empowered communities respond proactively to new or adverse situations, prepare for economic, social and environmental change and cope better with crisis and hardship.

UNECE

Transport
10. The Inland Transport Committee (ITC) is a unique body specialized in inland transport with the overarching goal of promoting sustainable mobility and transport. Activities of the ITC and its subsidiary bodies contributing to the development of inland transport in a safe, efficient and environmentally friendly way take the form of policy dialogue and regulatory work, analytical activities, as well as capacity building and technical assistance. As a tradition, during its annual meeting the Inland Transport Committee organizes high level policy debates on timely topics. The high level policy segment of the 2015 session of ITC will be on sustainable urban mobility and transport.

11. The list of studies in the area of sustainable urban mobility and transport includes *Sustainable Urban Public Transport and Mobility*, a study that summarizes public transport policies in the ECE region and illustrates practical solutions for, and results of, their implementation in various capitals. The study *Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation to International Transport Networks* recognizes that for most cities in developing countries, the pressure to adapt to climate change is mounting and measures vary considerably depending on political, cultural, historical and climatic conditions. The study identifies areas where transport infrastructure and services will likely be most affected and reviews national initiatives, case studies and research projects as well as experiences on adaptation measures specific to a variety of transportation modes. On the basis of this review, existing best practices in national policies for risk management and resilience enhancement are identified. The study *Transport for Sustainable Development*, originally published in 2011, analyzed the role of transport as a key determinant of sustainable development both as an enabler and as an important activity on its own. The role of sustainable transport in meeting sustainability objectives was looked at from the angle of its key attributes, namely accessibility, affordability, safety, security and environmental friendliness. This paper will be updated and scaled-up to global coverage in the cooperation of other UN Regional Commissions and key international organizations in the field of inland transport, such as UIC, IRU, and IRF.

12. Other activities and outputs include the decision-making support tool for sustainable transport policies *For Future Inland Transport Systems (ForFITS)*. More than half of the world's greenhouse gas emissions come from urban areas and transportation is among the key energy users. (ForFITS helps governments and municipalities to assess how much CO₂ is emitted by the inland modes of transport and through scenario building to select transport mitigation policies that are most appropriate for them.

13. The Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) Package for sustainable mobility was adopted and published by the ITC in February 2012. ITS play an important role in shaping the future ways of sustainable urban mobility and transport. The package included (i) the analysis of benefits ITS can offer to solving transport issues and the review of best practices, (ii) a strategy for promotion of ITS, (iii) a road map for the role of UNECE.

**Environment**

14. The Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) is the overall governing body of UNECE environmental activities. CEP work is based on several strategic pillars:

- Providing the secretariat to the Environment for Europe process and participating in the regional promotion of Agenda 21;
• Development and carrying-out of environmental performance reviews in the UNECE countries non-members of OECD;
• Overseeing UNECE activities on environmental monitoring, assessment and reporting;
• Increasing the overall effectiveness of UNECE multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and facilitating the exchange of experience on MEAs' implementation.
• Participating and/or facilitating the exchange of experience in a number of cross-sectoral activities undertaken under the leadership of UNECE (e.g. education for sustainable development, transport, health and environment (THE PEP), green buildings), or in partnership with other organizations (e.g. environment and security initiative, European environment and health process).

15. The CEP works to support countries to enhance their environmental governance and transboundary cooperation as well as strengthen implementation of the UNECE regional environmental commitments and advance sustainable development in the region. Its main aim is to assess countries' efforts to reduce their overall pollution burden and manage their natural resources, to integrate environmental and socioeconomic policies, to strengthen cooperation with the international community, to harmonize environmental conditions and policies throughout the region and to stimulate greater involvement of the public and environmental discussions and decision-making.

**Housing and land Management**

16. The UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management (CHLM) is the only intergovernmental body in the UNECE region addressing housing, urban development and land management challenges. It serves as a forum for exchange of experiences and best practices; it also assists member States through assessments of countries' housing, land and urban development systems, development of policy guidance, provision of advisory services and capacity-building activities.

17. CHLM prepares studies to promote activities relevant to spatial planning which result in compact, efficient and inclusive cities and low-carbon and disaster resilient urban development. This also addresses issues relevant to information, communication and technology for urban planning and informal settlements. Among these studies, Spatial Planning - Key Instrument for Development and Effective Governance with Special Reference to Countries in Transition (ECE/HBP/146) identifies the role and benefits of spatial planning, the particular challenges vis-à-vis spatial planning that face countries in transition, its key principles, the division of roles and responsibilities, the main stages in the process of developing spatial plans, and priority actions for countries in transition. The report Climate Neutral Cities (ECE/HBP/168) outlines a range of systemic interrelated measures to be implemented at a city level for a progressive transformation towards low-energy, low-carbon, highly resilient and ultimately climate neutral cities. UNECE Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management include strategic analysis of and policy recommendations for the improvement of the countries' housing urban development and land administration systems. Country profiles have been developed so far for 17 countries in the UNECE region.
18. In January 2013, a survey on Challenges and Priorities in Housing and Land Management in the UNECE Region\(^3\) was published, which confirmed that the highest priority of UNECE member States in this area is on realizing compact cities (i.e. increasing density and efficiency of urban areas) and low carbon and climate neutral urban development, followed by smart city initiatives.

**Non-governmental organizations**
19. Non-governmental organizations play an increasingly crucial role in advancing sustainable urban mobility solutions.

20. The International Association of Public Transport (UITP) is specialized on public transport. UITP brings together public transport authorities and operators, policy decision-makers, scientific institutes and the public transport supply and service industry, representing an international network of 3,400 members located in 92 countries covering all modes of public transport.

21. [add more on other non-governmental organizations’ work in this field]

III. **Organization of THE PEP 2014 Symposium**

A. **Proposed content of Symposium**

22. The proposed topic of THE PEP 2014 Symposium is “Green and healthy urban mobility: the role of urban and spatial planning”, reflecting the main components of Paris Goal 5. It makes reference to the importance of planning for future livelihoods through sustainable transport in a setting of ongoing changes. Questions to be answered and issues to be addressed at THE PEP 2014 Symposium may include the following:

(a) What do we understand under sustainable and healthy urban planning and what improvements do we expect from integrating transport, health and environment goals into urban and spatial planning?

(b) Which transport, health and environment goals need to be considered when thinking of integrating transport and urban planning?

(c) Is integrated urban and spatial planning only about infrastructure?

(d) How can existing urban and spatial planning frameworks be influenced or modified to integrate transport, health and environment concerns?

(e) Which capacities (and where) need to be built to include transport, health and environment considerations in integrated urban and spatial planning?

(f) What demographic and environmental changes are cities’ transport systems facing today and in the future and how can they be addressed through integrating environment, transport and health considerations in urban and spatial planning?

(g) Which barriers need to be overcome in making strides in integrating environment, health and transport in urban planning?

\(^3\) http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=32606
(h) What can be learned from the experiences of those who have pioneered integrating transport, health and environmental concerns into urban and spatial planning policies?

(i) Where can THE PEP best deliver added value to the member states?

B. Proposed format of the Symposium

23. The Symposium will be part of the twelfth session of THE PEP Steering Committee (Geneva, 19-21 November 2014). It will take place at the WHO headquarters on 19 November 2014 from 3 to 6 p.m., with interpretation (English, French and Russian), opening with a keynote address, followed by a panel discussion, beginning with brief statements from six panellists, and a moderated discussion.

24. The secretariat will summarize the discussions for the Steering Committee on the following day, 20 November, under item 1 of the provisional agenda. The Committee will be invited to review the results of the Symposium and to consider possible follow-up actions in the context of THE PEP and its future work programme. A detailed programme of THE PEP 2014 Symposium, including speaker and panellists, will be available in October 2014.
Annex – DRAFT programme

THE PEP 2014 Symposium: Green and healthy urban mobility: the role of urban and spatial planning
Wednesday, 19 November 2014, beginning at 3 p.m.

3–3:10 p.m.
Welcome and opening remarks (THE PEP Chair and moderator)

3:10–3:30 p.m.
Key note
Sustainable urban mobility within and beyond existing urban and spatial planning boundaries
Andreas Kopp, World Bank

3:30–4:00 p.m.
Open floor discussion with key note speaker

4:00–4:30 p.m.: Coffee break

4:30–5:50 p.m.
Panel discussion: “Integrating transport, health and environment objectives into urban and spatial planning policies”
Abstract: The panel will address the issue of integrating THE priorities in urban and spatial planning in order to reduce the impact of transport on health, the environment and land use, increase energy efficiency and support green and healthy mobility and transport as well as sustainable livelihoods. Specific focus could be given to reducing emissions and increasing physical activity, universal design, resilience to climate change, accessibility and transport efficiency and reliability. Discussions can be guided by the questions formulated under section III.A. above.
Format: Brief interventions by the six panellists of 5 minutes each, followed by a general discussion with panel and subsequently opened up for questions from the floor.
Proposed panellists: It is proposed that the panellists provide the following perspectives:
- health (a representative from WHO or the French Healthy Cities Network, to cover quality of health in UNECE cities and patterns relevant to the socioeconomic status of cities, their size of the city, quality of health care and social system, to the wealth of a country, how GDP/capita and HDI are correlated, the availability of public transport etc.
- transport, to cover tension between urban/spatial and transport planning from a policy/legal but also institutional perspective, especially in relation to public transport, walking and cycling.
- environment (UNEP or ICLEI)
- urban and spatial planning from the regional perspective (a representative from CHLM/UNECE or one of the lead authors of UN-Habitat Global report on human settlements 2013)
- urban and spatial planning from the city perspective (representative from a good practice city in the European Region)
- spatial planning at national level (Hauke Fehlberg, Federal Office for territorial development, Switzerland)

5:50–6 p.m.
Final considerations, conclusions and closing remarks