

Proposal to start a study on THE PEP “facts and figures”

I. Introduction

1. As part of preparations for the Fifth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment (Vienna 2020), member States have been discussing challenges related to the transport, health and environment in the UNECE/WHO Europe area.
2. A drafting group created by the Bureau of the Steering Committee of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) was responsible to work on the draft declaration for the High-level Meeting. In drafting the declaration, they identified ten challenges currently faced by member States and concerning the intersection of transport, health and environment in the region.
3. The drafting group, at its second meeting (The Hague, 6-7 June 2019) agreed that having facts and figures related to the challenges identified would help in positioning THE PEP and highlighting its role in addressing them. The member of the drafting group representing the Netherlands took the lead and drafted, with the support of the secretariat, the current document.
4. This document provides a proposal for a study on the current challenges related to transport, health and environment in the region. The result of the study would substantiate the need for a transition in transport and mobility, as described in the draft declaration.
5. The Bureau is invited to comment on this document and decide on the way forward.

II. The 10 challenges on transport, health and environment

6. The drafting group, during its work on the draft declaration, identified challenges that need to be addressed urgently through integrated policies to transition to a clean, safe, healthy and inclusive mobility.
7. Among the challenges identified, the drafting group decided to focus on the following:
 - (a) Ambient air pollution, which causes about half a million premature deaths per year in the WHO European region;
 - (b) Traffic noise, which causes millions of healthy years of life to be lost annually with, for example, about 1.6 million years lost in EU member States alone;
 - (c) Greenhouse gas emissions from inland transport, which account for a large and growing proportion of total emissions;

(d) Physical inactivity, which causes about 1 million deaths per year in the WHO European region;

(e) Socioeconomic disparities and exclusion, which result from poor quality transport services;

(f) Road traffic injuries, which are globally the leading cause of death among young people aged 5–29 years;

(g) Economic inefficiency due to externalization of health, environment and congestion costs, with, in rich countries, city-dwellers losing nearly \$1,000 a year while sitting in traffic,

(h) Land take and the loss of biodiversity;

(i) Unsustainable behaviours related to transport and mobility;

(j) Incoherent policymaking and the lack of cross-sectoral coordination.

8. The drafting group believes that information on the above-listed challenges is often available, through research carried out by entities such as WHO, the European Environment Agency (EEA), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations system at large and universities and academia.

9. Often this information is scattered from the geographical perspective. For instance, data is available for a given set of countries, but not for the entire UNECE/WHO-Europe region, or only for certain cities and not for the entire country, or only globally. Information is also often scattered from the substantial perspective, as it might focus only one sector and not on the intersection of transport, health and environment.

III. Objectives of the proposed study

10. The objectives of the proposed study are to:

(a) Provide the High-level Meeting with key facts and figures related to transport, health and environment in the UNECE/WHO-Europe region;

(b) Identify what information is available on THE PEP challenges and for which substantial or geographical areas information is missing;

(c) Provide the Steering Committee and, ultimately the High-level Meeting with information to decide whether additional research is needed on given areas for which data and information are currently missing;

(d) Elaborate the content of a brochure on “THE PEP facts and figures” for the Fifth High-level Meeting.

III. Proposed organization of work and timeline

11. The drafting group suggested that research be carried out by two or three scientific journalists, academics or a research institution. The task would be to:

(a) Elaborate a short study containing an overview of integrated facts and figures related to transport, health and environment in the UNECE/WHO-Europe region;

(b) Identify what information is available on THE PEP-related topic and for which substantial or geographical areas information is missing.

12. The Netherlands committed to identify resources to support this study. Other member States, especially those represented in the Bureau, are invited to identify resources to contribute to the study, so that it would be a joint efforts of member States under THE PEP.

13. Before the study takes place, a small group, created under the Bureau, would need to:

(a) Finalize the terms of reference of the study;

(b) Decide how to address research on some broad challenges, for example (i) unsustainable behaviours related to transport and mobility; and (b) incoherent policymaking and the lack of cross-sectoral coordination, for which the scope could be narrowed, or indicators identified;

(c) Supervise the work of the scientific journalists (or others) and report to the Bureau.

14. The work of this group could be carried out through electronic means or with meetings back to back with events already scheduled. The secretariat could provide to the scientific journalists some basic information on the areas identified, to the best of its knowledge and on the basis of its current resources.

15. The results of the study should be available before the Fifth High-level Meeting and should be reproduced in a brochure containing, when possible, infographics.

16. A first outline of the study should be presented to the Bureau at the latest by January 2020.

IV. Role of the Bureau

17. Bureau members are invited to consider contributing to the overall study by:

(a) Being a member of the small group;

(b) Identifying in-kind or financial resources to carry out the study;

(c) Supporting the study by liaising with relevant organizations, such as EEA and OECD, with the aim of identifying and sharing information with the authors of the study.