

TRANSPORT HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT PAN-EUROPEAN PROGRAMME  
THE PEP

**38th Meeting of the Bureau of the Steering Committee  
of the Transport, Health and Environment  
Pan-European Programme (THE PEP), meeting in  
an extended format**

**12 November 2020, Online meeting**

ENGLISH ONLY  
23 November 2020

## REPORT OF THE MEETING

### I. INTRODUCTION AND PARTICIPATION

1. The thirty-eighth meeting of the Bureau of the Steering Committee of the Pan-European Programme on Transport, Health and Environment (THE PEP) was convened online, because of the persisting travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was organized in an extended format, as the main topics to be discussed related to the preparations for the Fifth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment.
2. The Bureau meeting was attended by its members from the following member States: Austria, France, Georgia, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Russian Federation, Serbia and Switzerland. Representatives from the following UNECE member States also attended: Armenia; Croatia, Ireland, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Slovakia, and Turkey.
3. Representatives of the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) of the Netherlands also attended, as well as representatives of the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport.
4. THE PEP secretariat was represented by Mr. Nicholas Bonvoisin, Ms. Virginia Fusé, and Mr. Ulysse Robach (UNECE Environment Division), Mr. Francesco Dionori (UNECE Sustainable Transport Division), and Ms. Francesca Racioppi, Mr. Massimo Cozzone and Ms. Nino Sharashidze (WHO/Europe).
5. Mr. Robert Thaler (Austria), Chair of the Bureau, opened and chaired the meeting.
6. The Bureau adopted the provisional agenda as proposed by the secretariat.

### II. THE FIFTH HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON TRANSPORT, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

7. The Chair recalled the decision of the Bureau to propose to the Steering Committee to postpone the High-level Meeting to 2021. As a representative of Austria, the host country of the Fifth High-level Meeting, the Chair presented three options for the High-level Meeting to be organized:
  - a. Option 1: the High-level Meeting organized face-to-face in spring 2022;
  - b. Option 2: the High-level Meeting organized in a hybrid mode, with some participants present in the meeting room at the United Nations premises in Vienna. This would be possible in two periods: 30 March-1 April or 26-27 April 2021;
  - c. Option 3: the High-level Meeting organized online in early summer 2021.
8. Bureau members and participants in the meeting expressed the following views:
  - a. Countries needed to receive exact dates for the meeting as soon as possible, as they need time to start the consultation process in the capitals;
  - b. Postponing the meeting for too long, for instance to 2022, might lead to a loss of momentum;
  - c. For either a hybrid or online versions there should be a way to give good visibility to the signing of the draft declaration.
9. The Bureau decided to propose to the Steering Committee that the Fifth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment be held in 2021 either online only or in hybrid form, not to lose the momentum.

### III. THE DRAFT VIENNA DECLARATION

10. The Chair recalled that there were several square brackets and points to clarify in the draft declaration, after the last preparatory meeting. Given the limited time at the Steering Committee, he decided to call for a Bureau meeting in an extended format to start addressing some of the pending issues and reconcile the different suggestions and ideas before the Steering Committee.
11. The secretariat presented an annotated version of the draft declaration, combining comments, questions and proposals from various Bureau members. The version with annotations had been shared with Bureau members before the meeting.
12. The Bureau decided to present to the Steering Committee an updated version of the draft declaration, finalized by the Chair and Vice-chairs, with the support of the secretariat. The updated version would also take in consideration general statements made on the current draft, in particular:
  - a. The draft declaration as presented at the current meeting was too long and, in some parts, it was too detailed for a document that should be read by ministers;
  - b. More discussions needed to be had concerning the challenges to be addressed in the draft declaration and the links with the brochure on THE PEP facts and figures.
13. The Bureau also:
  - a. Decided to suggest to the High-level meeting to consider mentioning in its report a sentence mandating the Steering Committee to complete the Workplan for 2021-2026;
  - b. Welcomed the proposal from France to organize an event, during its Presidency of the European Union, to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of THE PEP.

#### A. Annex I to the draft declaration (Facts and Figures)

14. The Chair recalled that the Steering Committee, at its seventeenth session, supported the preparation of a brochure on THE PEP facts and figures and thanked the Netherlands, and in particular of RIVM, who took the lead for the work. The secretariat presented a short summary on the preparation of THE PEP facts and figures. She reminded the participants that they had received three documents from the Netherlands connected to the brochure and she highlighted:
  - a. The links to the draft declaration (part of the text on the challenges to be used as Annex I to the draft declaration);
  - b. The deadlines that must be respected in preparing the brochure to ensure that needed text is published separately as an informal brochure and/or submitted officially for the High-level Meeting.
15. The Bureau member representing the Netherlands summarized the current situation concerning the work on the brochure. He also presented in more details two of the documents previously shared with the participants and asked for feedback from the Bureau and other participants on:
  - a. The main messages on the areas and challenges identified in the brochure;
  - b. The proposed follow-up for the preparation of the brochure;
  - c. The level of detail that should be included for each area or challenge.
16. The Bureau:
  - a. Requested participants to provide feedback to the Netherlands on the main messages on the areas and challenges;
  - b. Agreed on the way forward and, in particular, agreed on:
    - i. Creating an editorial board composed of seven to eight persons from the Bureau or other experts;
    - ii. Forwarding names of representatives of the secretariat and of the Bureau – two to five people – for the final editing;
    - iii. Providing names of experts who could be interviewed for the brochure. One possible name could be Francesca Racioppi;

- c. Requested participants to provide the information above by 20 November 2020 and requested the Netherlands to prepare an updated draft to be shown during the meeting of the Steering Committee on 25-27 November 2020.

17. The Bureau decided to suggest to the Steering Committee that only the main facts and messages should be included in Annex I and translated in the three official languages. The remaining part of the brochure should be presented as official document for the High-level Meeting.

#### B. Annex II to the draft declaration (Principles of Green and Healthy Sustainable Transport)

18. The secretariat provided an update on the drafting process for the Principles on green and healthy sustainable transport, being led by a dedicated task force. The task force proposed the inclusion of the recommendations emanating from its work as an annex to the draft declaration.

19. The Bureau:

- a. Agreed that the recommendations derived from the work of the task force (chapter 3 of the draft document) should be included as Annex II of the draft declaration and that a reference to it should be added in the body of the declaration;
- b. Requested participants to provide comments to the draft presented by the secretariat by 27 November 2020;
- c. Expressed appreciation for the work of the task force.

#### C. Annexes III, IV, V and VI to the draft declaration

20. The secretariat reported that, because of the limited time available, updates on Annex III “Pan-European master plan for cycling Promotion; Annex IV “Policy recommendations for eco-driving” and Annex V “Conclusions and recommendations of the handbook on sustainable urban mobility and spatial planning” were to be provided at the meeting of the Steering Committee.

### IV. PREPARATIONS FOR THE EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

21. The secretariat recalled that the eighteenth session of the Steering Committee of THE PEP had to take place online, because of restrictions to meetings and travel due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They also recalled that, because of a liquidity crisis, the United Nations Office at Geneva was not able to provide conference services and interpretation for the eighteenth session.
22. The secretariat also informed the participants that THE PEP trust fund was to cover the cost of interpretation and online connection through the WHO services, after the authorization received by exchange of emails with the Bureau.
23. The Bureau member representing the Russian Federation informed the meeting that his country’s permanent mission in Geneva planned to express its concerns to the United Nations Office at Geneva for failing to provide conference services to such an important official meeting.
24. The Bureau restated its agreement that THE PEP trust funds should cover the costs for interpretation and online connection for the Steering Committee.
25. The Bureau discussed the election of officers and Bureau members, in view of elections at the Steering Committee meeting. The Bureau decided to request to the Steering Committee that the current officers are re-confirmed, to assure continuity in view of the High-level Meeting. Bureau members present confirmed their intention to continue in their roles.
26. The secretariat informed the Bureau that Mr. Julien Fernandez from France, representing the transport sector, was not able to continue for another term, due to a change of position. The Bureau expressed appreciation to Mr. Fernandez for the work done.

### V. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

27. The Chair summarized the discussions and decisions of the meeting and closed the meeting.

