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High-level Meeting on Transport, Health
and Environment

**Steering Committee of the Transport, Health
and Environment Pan-European Programme**

Nineteenth session
Geneva, 27-28 October 2021

**Report of the Steering Committee of the Transport,
Health and Environment Pan-European Programme
on its nineteenth session**



I. Introduction

1. The Steering Committee of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) held its nineteenth session from 27 to 28 October 2021, in Geneva, in a hybrid format (both in-person and online participation) because of ongoing worldwide travel and meeting restrictions due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

A. Attendance

2. Delegations from the following member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO/Europe) attended the meeting: Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czechia, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine.

3. In addition, representatives of the following academic, private sector and civil society associations participated: the International Association of Public Transport, the University of Coimbra (Portugal), the European Environment and Health Youth Coalition and the World Bicycle Industry Association.

4. The joint secretariat (secretariat) was represented by members of the ECE Environment and Sustainable Transport Divisions and WHO/Europe.

B. Opening of the session and adoption of the agenda

5. The Chair, Mr. Robert Thaler (Austria), welcomed participants and expressed his regret at not being able to attend in person. He invited member States to actively engage in future activities implementing the Vienna Declaration.

6. Senior ECE and WHO/Europe managers welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of the nineteenth session of the Steering Committee as the first such session organized since the Fifth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment (Vienna, 17–18 May 2021). They invited member States to actively contribute to the discussions on the various agenda items.

7. The Steering Committee adopted the agenda for the meeting, as prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Bureau of the Steering Committee (ECE/AC.21/SC/2021/1–EUCHP2018924/4.1/1).

C. Election of Officers

8. The Committee elected Ms. Vigdis Ronning (Ministry of Health and Care Services of Norway) as Chair of THE PEP Steering Committee representing the health sector. Her entry into force as Chair had been delayed at the decision of the Steering Committee due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the eighteenth session of the Steering Committee (Geneva (online), 25–27 November 2020), in order to ensure continuity in view of the Fifth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment, the Committee had re-elected Mr. Thaler as Chair, representing the environment sector, Mr. Vadim Donchenko (Russian Federation) as Vice-Chair, representing the transport sector; and Ms. Ronning as incoming Chair, representing the health sector. The Committee thanked the outgoing Chair for his strong and committed chairing towards the High-level Meeting in difficult times.

9. Furthermore, the Committee elected Mr. Thaler, representing the environment sector, as one of its Vice-Chairs; and Mr. Eloïs Divol (Head, Strategic Review Unit, Ministry for the Ecological Transition of France) representing the transport sector, as its second Vice-Chair and in-coming Chair for the Steering Committee's twentieth session, in accordance with the amendment to the Rules of Procedure of the Steering Committee adopted at its first session (Geneva, 10–11 April 2001) and amended at its eleventh session (Geneva, 27–29 November 2013).

10. The Committee discussed the Bureau's composition and elected the following members of the Bureau:

(a) Transport sector: Mr. Divol, Mr. Donchenko and Mr. Matthias Rinderknecht (Switzerland);

(b) Health sector: Mr. Roberto Debono (Malta), Mr. Mihail Kochubovski (North Macedonia), Ms. Ronning, and Mr. Ion Salaru (Republic of Moldova);

(c) Environment sector: Ms. Biljana Filipovic (Serbia), Mr. Thaler and Ms. Nino Tkhilava (Georgia).

11. The Steering Committee thanked Mr. Mario Fruianu (Netherlands), representing the environment sector, who was stepping down from his role as Bureau member, for his work in previous years.

12. The Chair reminded the Committee that, according to the Rules of Procedure of THE PEP, the Bureau might consist of up to 15 members, and therefore invited member States to nominate additional Bureau members, in particular from the transport and environment sectors.

13. The Committee adopted the report of its eighteenth session (Geneva (online), 25–27 November 2020; ECE/AC.21/SC/2020/2–EUPCR2016697/5.3/2).

14. Mr. Divol took over as acting Chair in the afternoon of the second day with the departure of Ms. Ronning, continuing discussions on item 6 (c).

II. Outcome of the Fifth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment and adoption of the report

15. The Fifth High-Level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment was held on 17 and 18 May 2021 in a virtual format, due to the pandemic. It was hosted by the Government of Austria, and Mr. Thaler, as representative of the host country, informed the participants of the outcome of the event.

16. In his presentation, Mr. Thaler highlighted the following aspects:

(a) The opening of the Fifth High-level Meeting, with a welcome address by the Federal President of the Republic of Austria, His Excellency Mr. Alexander Van der Bellen, and the chairing by the Austrian Federal Minister for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology and the Austrian Federal Minister for Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection, as well as the welcome by the ECE Executive Secretary and the WHO Regional Director for Europe;

(b) The fact that 46 ministers, deputy ministers and State secretaries had attended, raising the profile of the meeting and the importance of the adoption of the Vienna Declaration with the future oriented title "Building forward better by transforming to new, clean, safe, healthy and inclusive mobility and transport";

(c) The adoption and virtual signing of the first Pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion as a milestone in the promotion of climate-friendly, healthy and active mobility across the pan-European region;

(d) The decision to adopt, by 2023, a comprehensive pan-European strategy on transport, health and the environment and to elaborate draft proposals for possible legal instruments;

(e) The establishment of a new partnership: the Partnership on Child-and Youth-friendly Mobility. Additionally, the Partnership on Cycling Promotion and the TRANSDANUBE Partnership had been extended to, respectively, the Partnership on Active Mobility and the Partnership on Sustainable Tourism Mobility;

(f) Ahead of the High-level Meeting, the organization of 24 side events (webinar format) and a parallel virtual exhibition. The High-level Meeting, including side events, had been attended by around 850 participants from 41 countries;

(g) The offers by France to host the twentieth anniversary of THE PEP event in 2022 and by the Russian Federation to host the Sixth High-level Meeting in Moscow in 2025.

17. The Committee thanked Mr. Thaler for the presentation and his commitment in leading the preparations and negotiations as Chair of THE PEP, as well as the Government of Austria for hosting the event. It then discussed the report of the Fifth High-level Meeting and of the special session of the Steering Committee (online, 17 May 2021) (ECE/AC.21/2021/2–EUCHP2018924/4.3.2), as prepared by the secretariat.

18. The Committee adopted the report, agreeing to issue a corrigendum thereto to include elements raised by the host country of the Fifth High-level Meeting. The Committee requested the secretariat to also insert the elements mentioned by the host country into the upcoming publication containing the Vienna Declaration.

III. Planning the implementation of the Vienna Declaration

19. The Steering Committee decided to start discussing elements included in the Vienna Declaration in the following order: the drafting of the comprehensive strategy; the drafting of a proposal for a possible legal instrument; the communication strategy; and the planning for the implementation of the workplan for 2021–2025. Other items related to implementation mechanisms, such as the Partnerships, were discussed under the respective agenda items.

A. Strategy on transport, health and the environment

20. The Chair recalled the mandate from the Fifth High-level Meeting to develop a comprehensive pan-European strategy on transport, health and the environment, including a clear pathway for its implementation, to achieve the agreed vision and guide the further work of THE PEP, for adoption in 2023. She invited the secretariat to present a draft outline of the strategy (informal document No. 1).

21. The Steering Committee discussed the draft and:

(a) Established an ad-hoc working group under the Steering Committee to work on the draft strategy. Member States were invited to nominate participants to the group, which would be open ended;

(b) Recommended that, in drafting the document, the group would need to involve the Partnerships and other stakeholders, such as the International Transport Forum, and to use United Nations terminology and wording carefully;

(c) Agreed on the group's working methods, in particular, deciding that:

(i) The group would work online and in English only, unless extrabudgetary funds were provided to cover interpretation of meetings and translation of documents into the three ECE official languages;

(ii) The first meeting of the working group would be held in the first quarter of 2022;

(d) Requested that the group, supported by a consultant, present the first draft of the strategy at the twentieth session of the Steering Committee as an official document in the three ECE official languages, subject to it having been sufficiently developed.

22. The Chair encouraged members of the Steering Committee to also provide written inputs before the first meeting of the ad-hoc working group.

B. Options for possible legal instruments

23. In the Vienna Declaration, member States also decided to: “establish an ad hoc working group to analyse different legal options to give effect to our vision and strategy, and elaborate draft proposals for possible legal instruments and present them for consideration by the Steering Committee, which will agree on a proposal for adoption at the Sixth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment”.

24. The secretariat presented informal document No. 2 containing background material for the Steering Committee to brainstorm on the implementation of the mandate referred to in paragraph 23 above. Following discussions on informal document No. 2, the Steering Committee was invited to consider that:

(a) The outcome of the work on the topic needed to be consistent and coherent with the work done to draft the strategy on transport, health and environment and that the work under one topic needed to feed into the work on the other topic;

(b) Before thinking about possible legal instruments, there needed to be an assessment of the current status and of the needs to which legal instruments could respond;

(c) If two groups were to work separately on the strategy and possible legal instruments, they would need to hold additional joint meetings to share information;

(d) The same group – though possibly with a different composition – could work on both mandates, with different starting times;

(e) If a single ad hoc open-ended working group were to be established, it could work on the basis of the terms of reference included in annex II to informal document No. 2.

25. The Steering Committee discussed the informal document and agreed the following:

(a) The need to develop proposals on possible legal instruments for THE PEP was felt more urgently in 2021 than at the beginning of THE PEP;

(b) It was important to look at gaps in transport, health and environment policies and legislation before starting to prepare proposals for possible legal instruments; therefore, the work to assess the current status, as presented in the informal document, was important also in view of identifying possible solutions;

(c) The work on the strategy and on proposals for legal instruments should be coherent and consistent. To that end, the same group would deal with both issues. Work on the strategy would start in 2022, while work on the legal framework could start once a preliminary assessment had been completed;

(d) It was important to involve one or more legal experts. Their involvement would also be important in convincing member States of the outcome of the assessment and ensuring that the proposal was of added value at the international level;

(e) The terms of reference for the ad-hoc working group as contained in annex II to informal document No. 2 were also to be used for the ad-hoc group when working on the strategy.

C. Communication activities

26. The Chair recalled that the Fifth High-level Meeting had decided to elaborate a communication strategy to raise awareness of opportunities for and benefits of sustainable and healthy transport and disseminate the results of THE PEP work.

27. The secretariat presented a draft outline of the communication strategy, including its strategic objectives, target audience, guiding principles and concrete tools, products, services and channels of communication, as contained in informal document No. 3. The Steering Committee discussed the outline and agreed that it was important that the communication strategy and the actions contained therein be tailored to the in-kind and financial resources made available to the secretariat.

28. The Steering Committee agreed that the communication strategy should be ready by 2023, at the same time as the comprehensive strategy on transport, health and environment (see section III. A. above).

D. Planning the implementation of the workplan for 2021-2025

29. The Vienna Declaration contained a mandate to “develop further and monitor the workplan’s implementation through the Steering Committee”. The secretariat presented the content of the workplan and the areas that needed further development.

30. The Steering Committee discussed a way forward to implement the mandate from the Declaration and concluded that:

(a) Members of the Steering Committee should provide their responses to questions contained in the presentation by the secretariat, at the latest by the end of January 2022;

(b) The workplan should be completed by the next meeting of the Steering Committee and presented in the three official ECE languages;

(c) The monitoring of the workplan could be done through continuation of questionnaire-based reporting and the annual presentation of the programme of work;

(d) An advanced version of the workplan would be discussed at the Bureau meeting in the summer of 2022. Furthermore, the meeting in January 2022, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of THE PEP, could be another opportunity to develop further the document.

IV. Preparation of an event on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme

31. The Chair recalled that, at the fifth High-level Meeting, a representative of France had announced that the Government of France wished to host a meeting in Paris in 2022 to take stock of progress on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of THE PEP.

32. A representative of France presented an outline of the event, which would take place ideally in person, in Paris, on 13 and 14 January 2022. Member States were invited to suggest panellists for the round tables indicated in the presentation. An official invitation would be sent closer in time to the event.

33. The Committee thanked the representative of France for the kind offer of the Government of France and discussed a way forward. It agreed that:

(a) The secretariat would forward the presentation to focal points to help them identify panellists and topics for the event;

(b) The outcome of the meeting should be reported as an official document in the three official languages of ECE at the twentieth session of the Steering Committee;

(c) The in-person meeting could be an opportunity to organize a back-to-back meeting of the Bureau or one of the Partnerships.

V. Implementation of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme

A. Financial matters

34. The secretariat informed the Steering Committee of the amount and use of extrabudgetary funds made available to ECE and WHO/Europe in 2020 and 2021 (ECE/AC.21/SC/2021/4–EUCHP2018924/4.1/4).

35. It was noted that, in the period 2020–2021, despite travel restrictions, expenditure had been incurred for holding virtual meetings, in particular, for providing online interpretation platforms. Work on the strategy on transport, health and environment and the communication strategy would require additional resources.

36. It was also noted that the document did not include the in-kind contributions that member States had provided over the reporting year. In-kind contributions had, in particular, been provided for: Partnership meetings and management; participation in the work of the task force on the development of recommendations for green and healthy sustainable transport; and the organization of relay race workshops. The secretariat also thanked Austria for the large in-kind contribution for the organization of the 2021 High-level Meeting. The document did not include the cost of the secretariat.

37. The Steering Committee thanked Austria, France, Serbia and Switzerland for their financial contributions and pledges.

38. The Chair highlighted that, to work in a sustainable way to implement the Vienna Declaration, the trust fund needed to receive resources in a sustainable and predictable way. She informed the Committee that Norway was considering providing a financial contribution for 2022 and encouraged other member States to do the same.

39. The Steering Committee adopted the report and mandated the secretariat to prepare a report on the status of THE PEP trust fund to be presented at the Committee's twentieth session.

B. Programme of work for the period 2021–2022

40. The secretariat presented the draft programme of work for the period 2021–2022 (ECE/AC.21/SC/2021/3–EUCHP2018924/4.1/3), highlighting the approach previously adopted by the Steering Committee, under which planned activities had been mapped against the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

41. The secretariat also highlighted that the pandemic was still affecting travel possibilities, although some member States were able to be represented in person at the nineteenth session of the Steering Committee. The secretariat also invited the Committee to endorse activities planned for 2022 reflecting the decisions taken in the current session and to provide guidance for the coming years.

42. The Steering Committee adopted the document and mandated the secretariat to prepare a similar document in the three official languages of ECE for the next session of the Steering Committee. Furthermore, the Committee:

(a) Requested the secretariat to include the meetings of the Partnerships in the programme of work for the period 2022–2023, when information was available;

(b) Acknowledged the importance of more effectively using THE PEP website to disseminate information on activities under the Partnerships and decided to explore how that could be done.

43. The Chair recalled that one of the side events during the Fifth High-level Meeting had been on gender mainstreaming. The event “Transport, Health and Environment: The Gender Perspective” (10 May 2021) had been opened by the ECE Executive Secretary. The Chair also stressed the importance of the topic, which had not previously been addressed under THE PEP, and which she said should be further and better explored. She then invited the secretariat to present the paper “Gender Mainstreaming in the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme” (informal document No. 6).

44. The Committee discussed the paper. Among the elements discussed were:

(a) Support on gender mainstreaming received by Serbia through the ECE Environment Division. The representative of Serbia explained that, thanks to the support, her country had created a gender working group and allocated a budget for work on gender mainstreaming. Her country was ready to support additional work on that issue and the integration of gender aspects into transport, health and environmental matters. She explained that her country had taken the lead in the Western Balkans region and, on 30 November 2021, was to host a subregional workshop to share experiences on the topic;

(b) The importance of proper scoping of the work on gender under THE PEP, considering also the work already carried out under different frameworks, for instance, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, and maintaining the use of terminology consistent across United Nations programmes;

(c) Seeing gender mainstreaming as the first step in implementing the recommendation on social inclusion contained in the “Recommendations for Green and Healthy Sustainable Transport”.

45. The Committee expressed appreciation for the presentation and the raising of the topic under THE PEP. The Committee also decided that further work on gender mainstreaming should be done under THE PEP and that it should be included in the workplan for the period 2021–2025. The secretariat should identify the right position and wording in the workplan. The secretariat informed the meeting that the decision would be compliant with policies at the ECE level.

C. Implementation mechanisms of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme

46. Representatives of leaders of the Partnerships took the floor to report on updates since the High-level Meeting (see following paras. for main elements of the presentations and of the subsequent discussions).

1. Partnership on Active Mobility

47. A representative of Austria informed the Steering Committee that, at its first meeting after the Fifth High-level Meeting, the Partnership on Active Mobility had agreed to work separately on its two mandates: to implement the Pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion and to develop a master plan on active mobility. For the implementation of the Pan-European Master Plan on Cycling Promotion, the Partnership was also counting on cooperation with the ECE Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics and the adoption by the ECE Inland Transport Committee of terms of reference to create an expert group dealing with the infrastructure module.

48. On the master plan on active mobility, the Partnership had agreed that it would focus on walking in everyday life, not for leisure activities, while keeping in mind potential conflicts among road users.

49. The representative of Austria informed delegates that his country was exploring possibilities for establishing a centre of competence, as mentioned in the Vienna Declaration, and invited other members of the Steering Committee to contact him should they wish to contribute to that work.

50. The Chair invited the Partnership to consider how to involve more countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. A closer partnership with the Russian Federation could help to support such involvement.

2. Partnership on Sustainable Tourism Mobility

51. The representative of Austria informed the Committee that, at its first meeting since the extension of its mandate, the Partnership on Sustainable Tourism Mobility had agreed on its objectives, activities and products, which should be developed before the Sixth High-level Meeting.

52. Members of the Steering Committee were invited to nominate members to the Partnership and to communicate the contact details of a focal point through the Austrian lead partner. The next meeting of the Partnership would be in spring 2022, possibly in person. Members of the Committee were also invited to share information about interesting developments regarding sustainable mobility in tourism and to promote the Partnership outside THE PEP.

53. Participants took the floor to comment on the Partnership. The representative of Switzerland informed the participants that Swissmobile, a platform and application to support sustainable mobility in tourism, could provide interesting tools for the Partnership. The representative of the Russian Federation said that cycling tourism was increasingly popular in his country and pointed to the cooperation with the Nordic countries under the Green Mobility Initiative. Representatives of the European Cyclists' Federation announced the Federation's intention to join the Partnership.

3. Partnership on Eco-Driving

54. The representative of Austria (lead country) presented guidelines for eco-driving, with the summary for policymakers having been adopted as part of the Vienna Declaration. The guidelines would also be made available in Russian and German. Activities being carried out focused on eco-driving seminars for electric vehicle users. The Partnership was also exploring the possibility of holding eco-driving seminars for construction vehicles.

55. The Committee was also informed that the German Agency for International Cooperation had funded pilot seminars on eco-driving in Georgia and that the Partnership was following that activity. Furthermore, the Partnership envisaged organizing a meeting in 2022. More information would be communicated through the secretariat.

4. Partnership on Child- and Youth-friendly Mobility

56. The representative of Austria recalled that the Partnership on Child- and Youth-friendly Mobility was referred to in the Vienna Declaration, and that the Partnership had taken stock of the Youth Position Paper presented by youth representatives at the Fifth High-level Meeting. The main objectives of the Partnership were to allow youth to: take action to implement the Vienna Declaration; create opportunities for exchange of knowledge and good practices; develop guidelines, toolboxes and a summary of good practices; and create a pan-European master plan on child- and youth-friendly mobility. Members of the Steering Committee were invited to identify members for the Partnership, so that they could participate in its first meeting (scheduled for 23 November 2021).

57. Representatives of member States welcomed the establishment of the Partnership and encouraged the leaders to create synergies with other Partnerships, for instance the Partnership on Active Mobility.

5. Partnership on Health Economic Assessment Tools

58. The secretariat, leading on the Partnership, informed the meeting that the Health economic assessment tool (HEAT) for cycling and walking had been presented at several meetings and events and was being used by a growing number of member States. Further work on its implementation was ongoing to improve the user interface, especially for users with limited access to data. In response to growing interest from countries beyond the ECE and WHO/Europe regions, and thanks to additional funds received from WHO headquarters, the WHO/Europe secretariat had worked to expand HEAT with global features.

6. Partnership on the Integration of Transport, Health and Environmental Objectives into Urban and Spatial Planning

59. One of the leaders of the Partnership, representing the Russian Federation, informed the participants about a round table event on “Urban planning and travel behaviour” (online, 17–18 November 2021), organized by the Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation, in cooperation with the International Transport Forum.

60. The leaders of the Partnership also informed the Committee about another element of the Partnership: international academic cooperation between universities in France and in the Russian Federation. That cooperation had suffered because of pandemic-related barriers but would be reinitiated as soon as health conditions allowed.

7. Partnership on Jobs in Green and Healthy Transport

61. The representative of France announced the country’s intention to contribute to a new study on jobs in green and healthy transport, considering the interest that previous studies under THE PEP had raised. The new study could focus on sustainable urban logistics, a topic that had raised significant interest in various forums. A consultation with other member States to identify the exact focus of the study could be organized at the beginning of 2022. The implementation of the new study was to be considered a specific output for item 6 in the table in the Programme of work for 2021–2022 (ECE/AC.21/SC/2021/3-EUCHP2018924/4.1/3).

62. Other members of the Steering Committee were invited to participate in the new study, including through financial contributions.

8. Adoption of Partnership descriptions

63. The Steering Committee adopted the descriptions of the Partnerships on Active Mobility and on Sustainable Tourism Mobility, as included in informal document No. 4. The leaders of the Partnership on Child- and Youth-friendly Mobility were to send their Partnership description to the secretariat. The Steering Committee would be invited to adopt the description at its twentieth session.

64. Representatives of the Partnerships on Sustainable Tourism Mobility and on Active Mobility asked the Steering Committee to explore how better to use THE PEP website to advertise the work of the Partnerships. The secretariat was requested to explore possibilities from a technical perspective.

9. Relay races

65. The representative of the Russian Federation reported that, on 25 October 2021, a new relay race workshop had been organized in Saint Petersburg (Russian Federation). The topic of the event had been “Combining urban and transport planning – how to deal with street and road networks congestion using urban planning methods”. The Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation and the International Centre for Social and Economic Research “Leontief Centre” had been among the partners organizing the event, which had taken place in the framework of the “Strategic Planning Leaders Forum 2020–2021: Reality 2020 and Agenda for the Next Decade” (25–26 October 2021).

66. More than 200 people had attended the meeting online and approximately 50 had been present in person. Participants could hear experiences from Austria, Germany, Greece, the Russian Federation and Sweden. For smaller cities in the Russian Federation it was important to hear experiences from bigger cities and from other countries on new forms of mobility and transport technologies.

67. Because of the pandemic, it had not been possible to pass on the new relay race “baton” of THE PEP, which had been presented at the Fifth High-level Meeting. The Steering Committee invited other member States to organize relay races in the future.

D. Monitoring progress in the implementation of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme

68. The secretariat recalled that, at its eighteenth session, the Steering Committee had decided to continue with questionnaire-based reporting, but on a biannual basis. The Committee had mandated the secretariat to update the questionnaire after the Fifth High-level Meeting to integrate new elements from the Vienna Declaration.

69. The Steering Committee agreed that the questionnaire could provide a means to identify challenges faced by member States in implementing THE PEP and to receive recommendations from member States on activities that they wished to see organized, based on the challenges identified.

70. One of the leaders of the Partnership on Active Mobility informed the Steering Committee that the Partnership could contribute to the development of the questionnaire, as there would be several issues linked with its activities.

71. The Steering Committee requested the secretariat to:

(a) Include the comments received by email immediately prior to the session of the Steering Committee in the questionnaire, and to circulate an updated version for further comments to the focal points;

(b) Finalize the questionnaire and present it in the three official languages of ECE to the Steering Committee for approval at its twentieth session;

(c) Send the updated questionnaire to focal points by the end of 2022, or the beginning of 2023, for completion and to summarize its outcome by the twenty-first session of the Steering Committee.

72. The representative of Germany informed the meeting about its national cycling plan, which contained the country’s vision and targets for cycling until 2030, as well as providing guidance for national, federal and local levels and the private sector and academia. Civil society had been involved in consultations to prepare the plan. One of the plan’s key targets was to double the km cycled by 2030, an approach estimated to save 3 million–4 million tons of carbon dioxide per year. One objective of the plan was to reduce the number of accidents involving deaths of cyclists by 40 per cent, while the guiding principle was “vision zero” in terms of road injuries.

73. The representative of North Macedonia highlighted the fact that, in many countries, the effects of the pandemic had interrupted progress towards more sustainable mobility. It was, therefore, important to renew the work on sustainable mobility, including to implement the 2030 Agenda. North Macedonia would need support to respond to the new challenges. In the country, greenhouse gas emissions had increased by 21 per cent between 2014 and 2016 and road transport was a significant contributor to air pollution. Traffic levels were expected to increase, with a growing national vehicle fleet and with more than 40 per cent of vehicles being over 20 years old. National policies in the country could not support increased procurement of more energy efficient vehicles. The Institute of Public Health of the Republic of North Macedonia had concluded a study on economic savings from walking by using HEAT in 2020. HEAT had been applied to 191 people and had determined total economic savings of €108,809 for one year. The study, available in English, was to be published soon after the meeting and would be made available through the secretariat.

74. The representative of Switzerland informed the participants about updates to public rail transport for passengers and freight. At the end of 2020, a planned rail-based tunnel for rail and freight passenger transportation had been opened for operation. Mobility data infrastructure was being created to promote multimodal mobility services. Different service providers would be free to access, use and exchange data concerning multimodality, without any commercial interest. The Federal Office of Transport was promoting the replacement of end-of-life diesel-driven regional buses with electric vehicles. Cantons had a service agreement requesting local authorities to co-finance the process. Switzerland was elaborating a federal law on cycling networks, which should be adopted by the end of 2022, or the beginning of 2023, and should allow for better coordination between the cantons to design a network. The Federal Council was also to adopt a strategy on sustainable tourism by the end of 2022, or the beginning of 2023. The strategy would also include sustainable mobility patterns and could be also brought to the attention of the Partnership on Sustainable Tourism Mobility. The Federal Office of Public Health had been promoting projects on active mobility and an active-mobility-friendly lifestyle for many years.

VI. Strengthening synergies with other international organizations and processes

75. The secretariat updated the Committee on synergies with other international organizations and processes, although they had been limited by the pandemic. In January 2021, the ECE Sustainable Transport Division had taken over the chair of the World Bank-run Sustainable Mobility for All initiative. That allowed the secretariat to be involved in a number of activities to showcase work on THE PEP at the global level until December 2022.

76. On 14 and 16 October 2021, the Second Global Sustainable Transport Conference had been held in Beijing. A United Nations inter-agency report – published on the occasion of the Conference – contained references to the work of THE PEP, its publications and studies.

77. A publication entitled Sustainable Mobility and Smart Connectivity (on the ECE nexus in that regard and containing information on THE PEP activities) had been issued in April 2021, on the occasion of the sixty-ninth session of the Economic Commission for Europe (Geneva (hybrid), 20–21 April 2021).

78. A study by the ECE Sustainable Transport Division on car sharing and car pools in Central Asia had provided an opportunity to showcase THE PEP and its activities to countries in Central Asia.

79. The secretariat had represented THE PEP at an event organized by the International Labour Organization entitled “Technical meeting on the future of decent and sustainable work in urban transport services” (Geneva, 30 August–3 September 2021), through an intervention.

80. THE PEP had also been represented at a WHO-led side event entitled “The Health Argument for Climate Change: The COP26 Health Programme” (hybrid, 9 November 2021) during the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Glasgow, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 1–12 November 2021).

81. THE PEP had also been represented at the 2021 United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia Economic Forum (Tashkent (hybrid), 17–18 November 2021). Mr. Donchenko, outgoing Vice-Chair of the Steering Committee at that time, had been invited to deliver a presentation on “Sustainable transport and trade for a green and inclusive economy after the pandemic”.

82. The secretariat also presented potential synergies with the European Environment and Health Process. The Declaration of the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (Ostrava, Czechia, 13–15 June 2017) encouraged member States to implement activities under THE PEP. The Declaration established a Working Group on Collaboration of Local and Subnational Authorities to enhance cooperation between subnational authorities. To strengthen synergies between THE PEP and the European Environment and Health Process, the Steering Committee was invited to nominate a representative of THE PEP as a recognized stakeholder of the European Environment and Health Process.

83. In preparation for the next European Environment and Health Process Ministerial Conference (tentatively scheduled for 2023), WHO/Europe was organizing a series of high-level policy dialogues – the Bonn (Germany) dialogues – dealing with different topics. It was suggested that one dialogue could focus on transport, mobility and health, and could be organized jointly with ECE in the framework of THE PEP.

84. The Steering Committee expressed appreciation to the secretariat for having achieved so much in a difficult year, during which many meetings had been cancelled or postponed.

85. A representative of Austria informed the meeting about the upcoming European Conference on Mobility Management “Beginning a New Era – Accelerating Shifting on Sustainable Mobility” (Cascais (Portugal), 24–25 November 2021) and the 2022 European Conference on Mobility Management (Turku (Finland), 31 May–2 June 2022).

VII. Other business

86. No information was presented under the agenda item.

VIII. Date and venue of the next session of the Steering Committee and of the next Bureau meetings

87. The Steering Committee decided that the Bureau should meet, possibly online, at the beginning of 2022 and hold its summer meeting not later than the first week of July 2022, to be able to prepare and submit official documents by the first week of August and be ready for the next session of the Steering Committee. The summer Bureau meeting could take place in Bonn (Germany) or be hosted by one of the countries of the Bureau members.

88. The Committee asked the secretariat to hold the twentieth session of the Steering Committee on 17–19 October 2022 and provide interpretation in the three official languages of ECE.

89. The Committee asked the secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, to produce a report of its nineteenth session to be made available as an official document in the three official languages of ECE.

90. The Chair thanked all member States for their support and activities within THE PEP. He also expressed his appreciation for the joint secretariat’s efforts to support and facilitate THE PEP and the excellent preparation of the hybrid meeting of the Steering Committee.