

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
21 July 2022

English only

Economic Commission for Europe**World Health Organization
Regional Office for Europe****High-level Meeting on Transport, Health
and Environment****Steering Committee of the Transport, Health
and Environment Pan-European Programme****Twentieth session**

Geneva, 17–19 October 2022

Item 5 (a) of the provisional agenda

**Implementation of the Transport, Health and Environment
Pan-European Programme: Strategy on transport, health
and the environment****Reports from the Ad hoc Working Group on Strategy and
Possible Legal Instruments****Advance copy****Note by the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European
Programme secretariat***Summary*

The Fifth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment (Vienna, 17–18 May 2021) decided 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.

At its nineteenth session (Geneva, 27–28 October 2021), the Steering Committee established an ad hoc working group under the Steering Committee to work on the draft strategy. It further agreed on the group's working methods, in particular, deciding that 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 official languages of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

The present document contains the reports of the first two meetings of the ad hoc working group.

Background

1. The Fifth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment (Vienna, 17–18 May 2021) decided 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 2023.¹
2. At its nineteenth session (Geneva, 27–28 October 2021), the Steering Committee established an ad hoc working group under the Steering Committee to work on the draft strategy. It further agreed on the group's working methods, in particular, deciding that 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 official languages of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.²
3. Annexes I and II to the present document contain, respectively, the reports of the first and second meetings of the ad hoc working group.

¹ EUCHP2018924/4.3.2/Add.1, para. 3.

² ECE/AC.21/SC/2021/2–EUCHP2018924/4.1/2, para. 21.

Annex I

Summary report of the Ad hoc Working Group on Strategy and Possible Legal Instruments on its first meeting (online, 29 March 2022)

I. Session 1: Introduction and participation

1. The first meeting of the Ad hoc Working Group on Strategy and Possible Legal Instruments of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) – henceforth “the Group” – was convened online as per the requirements agreed by the Steering Committee at its nineteenth session (Geneva, 27–28 October 2021).¹
2. The first meeting was attended by transport, health and environment sector representatives of the following member States: Armenia, Austria, France, Malta, North Macedonia, Norway, Russian Federation, Spain and Switzerland. The Partnership on Sustainable, Low-Carbon Transport was also represented.
3. THE PEP secretariat was represented by Mr. Nicholas Bonvoisin, Ms. Virginia Fusé and Ms. Amy Choi (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Environment Division), Mr. Francesco Dionori and Ms. Shan Liu (ECE Sustainable Transport Division), and Ms. Nino Sharashidze and Mr. Massimo Cozzone (World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO/Europe)).
4. Ms. Vigdis Rønning (Norway), Chair of THE PEP Bureau, opened the meeting. ECE and WHO/Europe representatives also welcomed participants.
5. The Group adopted the provisional agenda as proposed by the secretariat.²
6. The secretariat informed the Group that the Outline for the Pan-European strategy on transport, health and the environment (informal document No. 1) and the Draft Terms of Reference for the Ad hoc Working Group and proposed Timeline of Work (informal document No. 2), had been circulated for comment prior to the meeting.

II. Session 2: Election of the Co-Chairs

7. The Chair of THE PEP Bureau suggested that the two Vice-Chairs of THE PEP Bureau, Mr. Eloïs Divol (France) and Mr. Robert Thaler (Austria), be elected as Co-Chairs of the Group. The members of the Group agreed. In the absence of Mr. Thaler, Mr. Divol chaired the remainder of the meeting.

III. Session 3: Strategy on transport, health and environment

8. The secretariat reiterated the need to hire a consultant to support the work. If external funding were provided, then interpretation of the meetings and translation of documents would also be possible.
9. The members of the Group agreed that a consultant should be hired to assist the work of the Group, as the secretariat lacked the resources to provide the necessary support to the development of a draft strategy to be shared with the Steering Committee.

¹ Informal document No. 2, available at <https://thepep.unece.org/index.php/events/nineteenth-session-steering-committee-transport-health-and-environment-pan-european>.

² All documentation for the meeting is available at <https://thepep.unece.org/events/first-meeting-pep-ad-hoc-working-group-strategy-and-possible-legal-instruments>.

A. Objectives and scope of the strategy on transport, health and the environment

10. The secretariat noted that there had been an initial discussion on the strategy's objectives and scope at the nineteenth session of the Steering Committee.³ As per said discussion, those two points were dealt with together. A representative of the Russian Federation had provided comments on the Outline for the Pan-European Strategy on transport, health and the environment, noting that the scope of the strategy should cover not only THE PEP but also transport, health and environment, as set out in the Vienna Declaration.⁴

11. The Group discussed what was to be considered as falling within and outside the scope of the strategy, noting that THE PEP had not dealt with maritime or aviation transport as a whole, nor had it ever considered matters relating to long-distance international freight or passenger movements. The secretariat noted that: the actions and the activities within the strategy needed to fit within the wider framework of the Vienna Declaration; and that, if the strategy was defined too widely, it would need to involve the Inland Transport Committee, the Committee on Environmental Policy and other relevant bodies and that casting the net too widely would make the strategy unimplementable and difficult to translate into actions for THE PEP.

12. The members noted that the key issues of urban or suburban transportation, as well as transportation in rural areas, and impacts on human health and environment needed to be included, along with aspects of transport externalities.

13. The members of the Group agreed that the strategy should be "objective-oriented" and that it should be implemented until 2030 (tentative end year).

14. Participants thanked the secretariat for the preparation of the outline of the strategy and discussed the scope of the strategy, noting that the outline provided needed to be worked on further in view of the discussions. The updated version of the outline would be circulated to members by the secretariat within two weeks and there would be a commenting period of two weeks. Having incorporated comments of the Group, the secretariat would share the outline with members of the Steering Committee for comments, to ensure the widest possible agreement on the scope of the strategy.

15. The secretariat also briefed participants on the work on gender in transport, health and environment, and underlined the importance of mainstreaming gender to achieve the objectives of the strategy.

B. Discussion on financial matters

16. The secretariat introduced the discussion, noting that the Russian Federation had offered to provide funding to ECE for the development of a project that would have as one of its main components the funding of consultancy support, interpretation and translation of documents related to the development of the strategy and the Group's meetings. It was noted that, at the 121st session of the Executive Committee of ECE (Geneva, 3 and 24 March 2022) (resumed session)), the above-mentioned project had been approved.⁵ However, wider limitations on the implementation of new extrabudgetary projects meant that, currently, that project could not be implemented.

17. While thanking member States for their financial contributions, the secretariat noted that, over the past four years, it had repeatedly stated at Steering Committee sessions that the financial position of THE PEP trust fund (ECE and WHO trust funds) was unsustainable and

³ ECE/AC.21/SC/2021/2–EUCHP2018924/4.1/2, paras. 20–21.

⁴ ECE/AC.21/2021/3–EUCHP2018924/4.3.3, para. 3.

⁵ EXCOM/CONCLU/121, paras. 108–110, available at https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/EXCOM%20-%20Conclu-121_0.pdf; and informal document No. 2022/12, available at https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/Item%2010_ECE_EX_2022_12_XB_THE%20PEP.pdf.

was suffering from a continual reduction in ongoing annual expenditure that was not being matched by member State contributions. Any deviation of funds to the work of the Group could further worsen that problem, for instance, if the Steering Committee were to decide to reallocate funds from other parts of the budget.

18. The members of the Group agreed on the importance of having specific consultancy support but were unable to identify funds within its membership to cover the cost of such support. Consequently, the Group asked the secretariat to prepare a document highlighting potential options for the financing of said consultancy support. Once agreed by the Group, the document could form the basis of a request to THE PEP Steering Committee to seek alternative, interim funding for the activities of the Group, potentially seeking to redistribute funds within THE PEP trust funds held by ECE and WHO/Europe to prioritize the work of the strategy.

IV. Session 4: Next steps

19. The Group agreed to provisionally set the time and date of the next meeting as 9 a.m. to noon (Central European Time) on 31 May 2022. The Co-Chair summarized the discussions and decisions of the meeting and closed the meeting.

Annex II

Summary report of the Ad hoc Working Group on Strategy and Possible Legal Instruments on its second meeting (online, 31 May 2022)

I. Session 1: Introduction and participation

1. The second meeting of the Ad hoc Working Group on Strategy and Possible Legal Instruments of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) – henceforth “the Group” – was convened online as per the requirements agreed by the Steering Committee at its nineteenth session (Geneva, 27–28 October 2021)¹ and on the date fixed at the Group’s first meeting (online, 29 March 2022).²
2. The second meeting was attended by transport, health and environment sector representatives of the following member States: Armenia, Austria, France, Malta, Montenegro, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia and Switzerland. The Partnership on Sustainable, Low-Carbon Transport was also represented.
3. THE PEP secretariat was represented by Mr. Nicholas Bonvoisin and Ms. Amy Choi (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Environment Division), Mr. Francesco Dionori and Ms. Shan Liu (ECE Sustainable Transport Division), and Ms. Nino Sharashidze and Mr. Massimo Cozzone (World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO/Europe)).
4. Mr. Eloïs Divol (France), Co-Chair of the Group, opened the meeting. Mr. Robert Thaler (Austria), also Co-Chair, was absent. ECE and WHO/Europe representatives also welcomed participants and made a link to the Seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (Budapest, 2023).
5. The Group adopted the provisional agenda as proposed by the secretariat.³
6. The secretariat informed the Group that the Outline for the pan-European strategy on transport, health and the environment, including the proposed timeline of work and the draft terms of reference for a consultant, had been circulated prior to the meeting.

II. Session 2: Strategy on transport, health and environment

7. A representative of the secretariat provided a summary of the discussions in the first meeting of the Group and of the subsequent activities, including commenting periods for the outline of the strategy and the consultant’s terms of reference. She noted that Austria, the Russian Federation and Slovenia had provided comments on the outline during the three-week commenting period that had begun on 8 April 2022, and that the Partnership on Sustainable, Low-Carbon Transport had made suggestions regarding the terms of reference.
8. The Group reviewed the outline and the comments made and agreed on a revised version.
9. The Co-Chair then turned to the timeline for the development of the strategy. He noted that the current geopolitical situation had hampered the funding and recruitment of a consultant and might slow the development of the strategy. The Group decided that it would

¹ Informal document No. 2, available at <https://thepep.unece.org/index.php/events/nineteenth-session-steering-committee-transport-health-and-environment-pan-european>.

² ECE/AC.21/SC/2022/9–EUCHP2219536/1.1/9, annex I, para. 19.

³ All documentation for the meeting is available at <https://thepep.unece.org/events/second-meeting-pep-ad-hoc-working-group-strategy-and-possible-legal-instruments>.

be more realistic to foresee discussion of the advanced outline of the strategy, rather than a first draft of the strategy itself, at the twentieth session of the Steering Committee of THE PEP (17–19 October 2022). In addition, the Group agreed to propose to the Steering Committee that it review at its session the timeline for finalization of the strategy.

10. The Group considered that, if a consultant could be recruited rapidly, it might still be possible to submit a draft strategy for adoption by the Steering Committee at its twenty-first session (November 2023). However, the timeline should be amended to avoid unduly raising expectations, with the adoption being planned for, but not certain on, that occasion. In addition, the timeline was amended to reflect the extensive consultation of member States and other stakeholders in 2023 that would be needed for finalization of the draft strategy.

III. Session 3: Resources for the strategy on transport, health and environment

11. A representative of the secretariat provided an update on the financing of the consultant to support preparation of the strategy. He recalled the consultation by email of the Bureau and, subsequently, the Steering Committee, on the use of funds from the trust fund for that purpose. Those bodies had confirmed that \$35,000 might be used from the trust fund managed by ECE to hire a consultant.

12. The Group reviewed the terms of reference and the comments made, aligned the document more closely with the revised outline of the strategy, agreed on a revised version and decided to allow a period of one week for its members to carry out a final check of the document. A representative of the secretariat indicated that, once the terms of reference had been finalized, a notice would be issued on the United Nations career website (careers.un.org) and circulated to members of the Group so that they might forward the notice to qualified candidates.

IV. Session 4: Next steps

13. The Group agreed to meet again from 9 a.m. to noon (Central European Time) on 28 September 2022. The Co-Chair closed the meeting.