

**Economic and Social Council**

Distr.: General  
21 July 2022  
English  
English and French 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 4 of the provisional agenda

**Outcome of the meeting on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of  
the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme****Synthesis Report of the Meeting on the Occasion of the  
Twentieth Anniversary of the Transport, Health and  
Environment Pan-European Programme\*****Advance copy****Submitted by France**

1. As the first informal event of the French Presidency of the European Union for the Ministry of Ecological Transition, the 20th anniversary of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European programme (THE PEP) was held on January 13 and 14, 2022 by videoconference. This event opened with a welcome address by Jean-Baptiste Djebbari, Minister Delegate for Transport of France, via a pre-recorded video. Four round tables brought together THE PEP member states, the European Commission and representatives of civil society to discuss the impact of COVID on transport, the decarbonisation of transport, and mobility solutions tailored for cities and sparsely populated territories.
2. The debates over two half-days brought together about 100 representatives of THE PEP Member States, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the WHO Regional Office for Europe, the European Commission (DG MOVE and DG Energy) and civil society. The following countries were present: Austria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Georgia, Germany, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and Turkey.
3. The 20th anniversary of the Pan-European Programme on Transport, Health and the Environment marked a milestone for THE PEP, before the preparation of a new strategy that shall take into account the objectives of the Paris Agreement on climate change, including the achievement of carbon neutrality in the second half of the century.

---

\* The present document was submitted unedited.

4. The first round table highlighted a contrasted assessment of the impact of the health crisis on the ecological transition of transport. Some of the positive effects are the development of remote work, the increased use of cycling and micro-mobility in the city, the removal of least efficient vehicles, a reduced use of vehicle fleets, the decrease of business travel, the establishment of shorter and more reliable supply chains and the development of local tourism. The health crisis has also revealed fragilities and vulnerabilities in public transport. In addition to a decline of public transport ridership, the COVID crisis caused greater use of private vehicles and a massive increase of e-commerce.

5. The discussions mentioned the interesting fact that remote work has 100% positive effect in terms of productivity and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions only when implemented up to two days a week. Indeed, more than three days of remote work make it possible to live further away from the workplace, which tends to increase greenhouse gas emissions due to commuting. In order to strengthen the use of public transport, the smoothing of peak hours can increase the quality of service, making public transport more fluid and attractive. Another solution is to work on indoor air quality by improving ventilation and hygiene measures. The health crisis could also be an opportunity to redirect investments and challenge certain tax systems, such as excessively low diesel taxes or biased tax deductions that encourage fossil fuel consumption.

6. The second round table on transportation and climate change led to a consensus on the technological feasibility of massively developing electric vehicles to enable selling only zero-emission light-duty vehicles after 2035. As long as the electricity mix is decarbonized, electric vehicles are indeed an essential component of transport decarbonization. Speakers noted that hydrogen would probably be marginal in light-duty vehicles compared to E-vehicles. However hydrogen may be considered for heavier vehicles such as airplanes or trains. This ecological transition, in particular through the «Fit for 55» plan, is very ambitious objective and offers opportunities to relocate industry and employment within the borders of the European Union. Despite the technological consensus, other points remain challenging, for instance the modal shift for freight, which requires heavy investment to encourage the use of rail and inland waterways. Finally, support to the most vulnerable population should receive serious attention.

7. Round tables 3 and 4 focused on concrete solutions deployed in cities and sparsely populated territories. In cities, it appears essential to redistribute public space in order to establish a new hierarchy between the modes of transport. Consistent urban planning in line with the sustainable urban mobility plans promoted by the European Union should promote, by order of priority, walking, cycling, public transport, and individual cars. HEAT (Health Economic Assessment Tool), developed by the pan-European programme, models the impact of different travel scenarios in active modes and assigns a monetary value to health benefits. This paradigm shift requires investments in cycle paths, in secure parking areas for bicycles, in restructuring space allowing safe bike circulation especially at roads interconnection. Individual car use can also be discouraged, through the implementation of low-emission zones, urban tolls or increased parking rates. The reallocation of public space does not have to be static. It can be made dynamic, for instance by gradually transforming spaces reserved for morning delivery in bus lanes. Time dynamics can also be considered to optimize the demand for mobility. Finally, the reduction of speed limits, in particular to 30 km/h in built-up areas, can greatly contribute to these measures, but should be targeted at relevant areas, as users may refuse to respect them creating mistrust.

8. In rural or less densely populated areas, some communities place more emphasis on private cars. Bikes, but especially e-bikes appear relevant on some roads. Special attention should be paid to cycling routes. For longer journeys, shared mobility can be strengthened through car-sharing, carpooling and bicycle and walking connections to public transport along with secure parking spaces. Furthermore, it would be necessary to adapt public transportation through transport on demand, smaller buses or dynamic bus lines. Such investments are not always economically viable and rely on national solidarity, especially during the implementation phase of new lines. Mobility would be more adapted if the mobility needs were understood better. Strong communication should also always support the launch of a new line, to encourage ridership.

9. In all territories, economic tools, such as subsidies, taxes, bonuses for vehicles conversion or purchase of low-emitting vehicles, can be complemented by non-economic incentives, such as nudging, through smartphone applications informing users on the impact of their mobility, in order to make them reflect on it.

---