

2nd Informal Multidisciplinary Advisory Group Meeting on Transport Responses to the COVID-19 Crisis

8 September 2020

Interprefy 10h00 – 12h00 CET

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

*WP.5, 33rd session
Geneva, 8 September 2020
Agenda item 8 (a)*

TRANSPORT



ITC Mandate



- **At the 82nd session of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee (Geneva, February 2020), the Committee:**

*“Requested the secretariat, in close cooperation with the Bureau, with the support of interested governments and key stakeholders to conduct **necessary research on provisions in existing frameworks** and new needed areas of work to **promote cooperation between transport authorities** in the field of **counteracting the effects of emergency situations of cross-country nature, including epidemics and pandemics**, and present this information to Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (WP.5) in September 2020 for consideration of further steps and for inclusion to its programme of work.”*

- **1st Informal Multidisciplinary Advisory Group Meeting on Transport Responses to the COVID-19 Crisis, 9 June 2020**



Agenda for today



10h05-10h20 – Presentation of Working Document 10 “Taking stock of the resilience of the inland transport sector to pandemics and international emergency situations” (ECE/TRANS/WP.5/2020/10)

10h20-11h00 – COVID-19 responses - Updates by Governments and international and regional organizations

- World Health Organization perspective (WHO)
- European Commission
- CETMO
- World Customs Organization (WCO)

11h00-11h50 – Discussion on possible recommendations for further action by the inland transport community and the role of UNECE

11h50-12h00 – Wrap -up, agreement on next steps and closing



COVID-19 crisis initial impact

- Uncoordinated & unilateral actions resulted in huge delays at borders in many countries and made it increasingly difficult to keep transport and logistics supply chains function
- The delivery of essential goods, such as foods, pharmaceuticals and medical supplies were impacted
- Restrictions to cross-border and transit freight transport aggravated the economic and social impacts of the shock to the global economy



Available regulatory framework



- **World Health Organization International Health Regulations and its relevance for inland transport**
 - Striking a balance between protecting public health & avoiding interference with international transport and trade
 - Measures for crews and passengers (health declarations upon exit/ entry; collecting contact information for tracing purposes; later on use of vaccination certificate)
 - Measures for vehicles, cargo and containers (risk management through route tracking and tracing; issuance of e-sanitation certificates)

- **ECE legal instruments of possible significance in light of management of pandemics and cross-border emergencies**
 - Harmonization Convention (additional annex on international emergencies and pandemics?)
 - TIR/ eTIR (establishing a link)
 - CMR/ eCM



Available regulatory framework

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Available regulatory framework

- **ECE legal instruments of possible significance considering management of pandemics and cross-border emergencies**
 - **Harmonization Convention** [additional annex on international emergencies and pandemics?]
 - **TIR/ eTIR** [establishing a link between eTIR carnet and an (e-)health certificate for international truck drivers?]
 - **CMR/ eCMR** [digitalization of transport documentation to limit physical checks in transit and enable paperless solutions]
 - **Promotion of the use of ITS** [reduced frequency and duration of human-to-human contact while in transport]



Lessons learned for inland transport



- The **importance of immediate coordination** in response to the outbreak and the effective ongoing coordination at regional, national and international levels
- The importance of **efficient supply chains** and keeping goods moving
- The need to **collect and feed evidence and data into decision-making**
- **Significance of digitalization** turning transport processes contact free, safer and efficient
- The need for **clear communication to the public and to operators** on changes to procedures and new rules.
- **Engagement across sectors** (e.g. health, transport, customs, business) has been crucial in using an evidence-based approach to decision making



Lessons learned for border management



- Need for enhanced preparedness, use of electronic services, risk management
- Need for stronger coordination – use of whole of government approach, CBM, coordination with neighbouring countries and/ or at regional levels
- Streamlining and simplifying customs procedures – green lanes for freight traffic
- Transparency of documentary requirements



Recommendations for further action



■ At regulatory level:

- Continuation of the informal multidisciplinary group?
- Identify specific measures/ tools to be developed aimed at increasing the resilience of the inland transport system to future pandemics, e.g. emergency plans; conduct a stress test on the various ECE Conventions

■ At the level of existing legal instruments/ Conventions:

- Introduction of e-health certificates
- Rules for transiting and cooperation among transport authorities in case of pandemics/ cross-border emergencies

Recommendations for further action



- **At the level of digitalization:**
 - Support for transport/ trade digitalization
 - Development of online training tools on the use of eTIR, eCMR etc.

- **At the level of continuous regional/ inter-regional/ inter-governmental dialogue:**
 - Organization of multisectoral meetings as necessary (involving also maritime and aviation sectors) to share cross-sector experience
 - To be combined with the inter-regional forum?

- **Any other suggestions/ feedback/ recommendations?**



Thank you for your attention

