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Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies

Seventh session

Geneva, 16–17 October 2014

Report of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies on its seventh session

I. Attendance

1. The Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies (TOS-ICP) held its seventh session on 16-17 October 2014. Around 75 experts representing national government agencies, academic institutions, the private sector and international organisations participated in the session. They came from the following twenty-eight UNECE member States: Andorra, Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Kazakhstan, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan. The following international organisations and agencies participated in the session: Central European Initiative, Eurasian Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Commission, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, World Intellectual Property Organisation.

II. Adoption of the agenda and election of officers (agenda item 1)

2. The agenda was adopted as contained in document ECE/CECI/ICP/2014/1.
3. In accordance with the Guidelines on Procedures and Practices for ECE Bodies (E/2013/37 E/ECE/1464, Annex III, Appendix III), the Team elected Mr. Johannes Leo (Austria) as an additional Vice-Chair.

III. Substantive segment (agenda item 2)

4. In accordance with a proposal made at its sixth session on 10-11 October 2013, the Team organised the substantive segment of the seventh session as an Applied Policy Seminar on “Smart Specialisation – Strategies for Sustainable Development”. The Seminar provided a platform for international knowledge-sharing and policy-learning in this area.

5. At its 69th session starting in September 2014, the General Assembly of the United Nations began discussions on the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. Inclusive and sustainable economic growth figures prominently in the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda. Innovation can make an important contribution towards advancing this agenda, as it helps to increase productivity, economise on scarce resources and change production and consumption patterns from unsustainable to sustainable.

6. Smart specialisation is a – relatively new – approach to innovation policy and to economic development. It is a strategy in which governments design and deploy their policy instruments on the basis of market signals in order to leverage existing capabilities, assets and competences in the enterprise sector with the objective of promoting innovation and generating new comparative advantages. Implementing smart specialisation strategies involves analysing the regional context and innovation potential; generating participation and ownership by all stakeholders; developing a shared vision of the future development path; implementation through a coherent policy mix; and monitoring and evaluation to create a feedback loop and to learn from experience.

7. The applied policy seminar laid the groundwork for developing good practices and policy recommendations for smart specialisation strategies that are relevant for countries and regions facing a variety of development challenges. The conclusions may also serve as a contribution to the implementation of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals at the regional level.

8. The applied policy seminar was organised in the following four thematic sessions.¹

- (a) Smart Specialisation Strategies: Why, What, and How?;
- (b) Smart Specialisation and Economic Development: Filling the Policy Gaps;
- (c) Smart Government for Smart Specialisation – Building Capacity for Policy Design and Implementation; and
- (d) Above and Beyond – Policy Coordination and Cooperation Across Regions

9. The first session discussed what smart specialisation strategies are, how they can be implemented, and why they may offer advantages over more traditional approaches to innovation and regional development policy. Discussions focused on:

(a) The key elements that distinguish the Smart Specialization approach from earlier, more traditional approaches to regional development or industrial policies are that in its *design* it is based on a so-called “entrepreneurial discovery process” of possible opportunities for developing new comparative advantages, and that in its *implementation* it attempts to go beyond getting the framework conditions right, while stopping short of picking winners.

(b) In the context of the Smart Specialization approach, the “entrepreneurial discovery process” essentially refers to a structured conversation of the business community, academic institutions, and other stakeholders with government agencies. The

¹ The presentations can be found at <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35927>

dialogue aims to identify the region's key existing strengths and capabilities and to create a shared vision of areas where future comparative advantage could be developed, building on the existing strengths and capabilities. As such, Smart Specialization Strategies take a bottom-up approach.

(c) In the pursuit of this shared vision, the government provides targeted policy support for activities designed to support the new comparative advantages.

(d) Conceptually, Smart Specialization is an inclusive policy approach in the sense that it does not have to be focused on high-technology activities or on research-and-development-led innovations. It can also accommodate strategies built on technology adoption and adaptation which are highly relevant for less advanced regions and countries.

(e) In order to be fully effective, regional Smart Specialization Strategies should combine the strengthening of local capabilities with measures that ensure linkages with other regions, and the leveraging of outside technologies and capabilities.

(f) In selecting activities for prioritization, it is important to consider: whether the activities lead to potential innovations and have spill-over effects; the degree of local collaboration of partners; the significance of the activities for the regional economy; the capacity of the region to maintain successful activities; the proximity to markets; and whether there is a need for public support or whether the activity would emerge on its own.

(g) The success of Smart Specialization Strategies depends critically on the capacities of regional governments for effective policy design and implementation. Equally important is effective coordination across regions in order to avoid future duplication among regions that pursue specialization in similar technologies and markets.

(h) While the Smart Specialization approach has been put into action so far primarily in the European Union, there are also relevant examples of new and conceptually related approaches to regional innovation-based development policy outside the EU, increasing the scope for transnational learning and enhancing the innovation policy work done at the UN Economic Commission for Europe.

(i) Recent innovation policy in the United States recognises the importance of centres of innovation at the state level. Federal grants provide infrastructure support and act as a catalyst for state based innovation.

(j) State governments have recognized that successful innovation clusters require policy support and cooperation with key partners.

(k) Building on local expertise and regional strengths, partnering with industry to pool resources and share risks, investing in education and a trained workforce, and demonstrating long-term policy commitment are the keys for developing new regional innovation clusters.

10. The second session discussed the available experience with implementing smart specialisation strategies. It also discussed experiences from countries which have not implemented fully-fledged smart specialisation strategies, and the existing policy gaps. Examples from Austria, Bulgaria, Italy, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Spain were presented.

11. Among the main points discussed were the following:

(a) Innovation should be understood broadly as introducing anything new to a given local, regional or national market, rather than only as something that is new to the world. Particularly for less advanced countries, "low-technology" developments and the application of high technologies can be more effective than the creation of high technology.

(b) Because they are explicitly based on an analysis of a given region's existing strengths and capabilities, Smart Specialization Strategies can be an effective tool for creating "place-based" innovation and regional development policies, i.e. policies tailored to the respective level of regional development.

(c) Place-based growth strategies are important, particularly in an era of increasing constraints in terms of environmental and social sustainability, and a need for inclusive growth.

(d) At the same time, Smart Specialization Strategies pose specific governance and implementation challenges in terms of identifying roles and accountabilities, and mobilizing diverse stakeholders whose time horizons may vary.

(e) Any strategy needs to be designed based on the best available information. It is therefore important to provide the right incentives for business, academia and other stakeholders to engage in the process of assessing existing capabilities and identifying areas for the development of future comparative advantages based on these existing capabilities. There is also a need for broad public consultation in order to ensure public support and political commitment.

(f) This process should also be continuous as opposed to one-off. It should also be an open process with room for experimentation and an acceptance of the accompanying risk of failure.

(g) A broad-based, open and continuous approach helps ensure the "embeddedness" or permanence of policy initiatives, increasing the likelihood that they will have a lasting impact even after direct public support comes to an end.

(h) In addition, the ex ante conditionality imposed in the European Union is a possible way of ensuring a lasting impact by helping to secure political commitment to longer-term strategies.

(i) While decentralization and "bottom-up" decision making are important, there is also a need for coordination at the national and international levels, with the challenge being to create "platform" institutions while engaging at the local level.

(j) On the issue of monitoring and evaluation, it is important to focus on impact on a real-time basis as opposed to a historical focus on outputs. The real-time aspect of monitoring and evaluation is particularly important to facilitate policy learning on a continuous basis, with realistic and flexible intermediate goals.

(k) There was a debate on whether a decision made at the national or (in the case of the European Union) supra-national level to encourage all regions to use the same Smart Specialization "template" for their development policies might reduce the scope for policy learning and might lead to regions copying policies and priorities rather than tailoring them to their own circumstances.

(l) Beyond the issue of governance, there are certain barriers for successful implementation of Smart Specialization Strategies, including: low quality institutions, macroeconomic instability, and distortions of product, labour and financial markets. Firm-level barriers include poor access to foreign technology, limited absorption capacity due to skills gaps, and limited access to finance.

(m) The active support of local government and strong local innovation infrastructure, e.g. technoparks and incubators, are essential for the effective implementation of regional innovation policy. There is also a need to pay sufficient attention to building excellence in the leading innovative regions.

(n) Well-developed industry-science linkages are also essential for implementation, so that research results are put into practice. Relatedly, there is a need to leverage greater private sector investment in R&D, with public procurement potentially a strong demand-side incentive.

12. The third session discussed one of the most critical factors in determining the success or failure of Smart Specialization Strategies, which is the capacity of government agencies to design and implement these strategies. Among the main points discussed were the following:

(a) Smart Specialization builds on past activities, including 25 years of regional innovation policy in the European Union. One new element is that there is an increased emphasis on giving parity of esteem to non-government actors. However, the challenge remains practical involvement.

(b) Because Smart Specialization Strategies require new forms of cooperation between state agencies, the business community and other stakeholders, they also require new ways of designing and delivering public policies, putting public sector innovation high on the agenda for the first time.

(c) Public sector innovation is key for the successful implementation of Smart Specialization Strategies, and the state must become more entrepreneurial. Public services need to be citizen centric, while business support services should be focused on user needs.

(d) There is also a growing recognition of the importance of a social learning approach. Both the state and private sector can lack information, and they need to collaborate. They need to learn together in a trial-and-error process of experimentation. This is the “embedded state”, where state institutions form part of a network of institutions, as opposed to a hierarchy.

(e) Among the challenges for public sector innovation is that it requires more policy experimentation, while there is very limited tolerance of failure. Another challenge is that policy learning requires “speaking truth to power”, while open feedback to public authorities is often limited.

(f) The Smart Specialization policy community often remains too narrow, and needs to embrace traditionally risk-averse auditors, lawyers and politicians to support public sector innovation. Innovative public procurement is often hampered by restrictive audit and accounting practices, but significant progress can be made where there is an explicit political commitment to supporting innovative activities through public procurement.

(g) Smart Specialization Strategies require coordination across a significant number of ministries and public authorities, and this remains challenging.

(h) Smart Specialization Strategies without proper governance safeguards carry the risk of encouraging firms to engage in rent-seeking behaviour. Stakeholders need to be activated and motivated, but with appropriate mechanisms to avoid agency problems and regulatory capture. Political, business and bureaucratic incentives may be too short term, creating problems for elaboration longer term S3s.

(i) The level of political engagement is crucial, and a balance needs to be struck. Where it is at a too high level, there may be a low likelihood of commitment, while a lower (political) level of engagement may imply greater knowledge of substantive issues, but with limited possibility to influence political decisions.

(j) Ex ante conditionality of funding on Smart Specialization Strategies can be positive in terms of securing political commitment. However, there is always the challenge that “you get what you measure”, which may not include all desired policy outcomes,

especially those that are hard to measure. There is also sometimes a lack of attention to choosing suitable targets and metrics for outcomes.

13. The final session discussed how regional Smart Specialisation Strategies can be coordinated with national priorities and programmes, and between regions, including across borders. Discussions focused on:

(a) The potential usefulness of Smart Specialization platforms to facilitate trans-regional and transnational cooperation in relation to the development of Smart Specialization Strategies, with significant progress among EU member States. Peer review between regions can be useful, for example in comparing benchmarking and evaluation methodologies.

(b) There is a need for consideration of the interactions between regional Smart Specialisation Strategies and integration into global value chains. International networks are increasingly important for production and innovation, and Smart Specialization Strategies need to be developed with this reality in mind.

(c) While regional approaches can be diverse, they are increasingly focused on how to promote high-quality economic growth and production capabilities that can be used as a sound base to support social inclusion objectives.

(d) Regions and municipalities are becoming more important because the general public is demanding policy results, and there is increased local demand for concrete policy implementation.

(e) Meetings and dialogue are not always sufficient for meaningful collaboration. Cooperation does not always lead to better outcomes, and so should not be an objective in its own right. Jointly funded and implemented programmes are a way of ensuring meaningful and results-driven cooperation between ministries, the public and private sectors and regions.

(f) There is a range of coordination options for regional Smart Specialization Strategies. One possible framework for coordination between regions is a “Learn – Connect – Demonstrate – Upscale” approach.

14. The moderators thanked the speakers. Team members were encouraged to benefit from the outcome of the discussions and the circulated material, available on the website², in their future work.

IV. Review of the work of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies since the sixth session (agenda item 3)

15. The secretariat briefed the Team members on the outcomes of the activities carried out since the sixth session, which included:

(a) Policy Document: “Good Practices and Policy Recommendations on Aligning Entrepreneurship and Innovation Policies” (ECE/CECI/2014/9).

(b) Policy Document: “Innovation in the public sector” (ECE/CECI/2014/3);

(c) Innovation Performance Review of Armenia (ECE/CECI/21);

(d) Guidebook on “Innovation in the Public Sector” (ECE/CECI/22);

² <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35927>

(e) Completion of the UNDA project "Building the capacity of SPECA countries to adopt and apply innovative green technologies for climate change adaptation", together with the UNECE Team of Specialists on Public-Private Partnerships;

(f) Training materials on "Fostering Innovation for Climate Change Adaptation: Options for Central Asia and Azerbaijan". The training materials incorporate findings from the above UNDA Project "Building the capacity of SPECA countries to adopt and apply innovative green technologies for climate change adaptation". The training materials have been used and validated at the High-level Policy Seminar on Promoting the Introduction of Green Technologies in Haifa, Israel in December 2013 (cf. paragraph (k) below).

(g) Joint National Seminar and Stakeholder Meeting on the Promotion and Financing of Innovative Green Technologies, Astana, Kazakhstan, 23-25 October 2013, organised in cooperation with the UNECE Team of Specialists on Public-Private Partnerships;

(h) Roundtable on the European Experience in Supporting Innovative Enterprises, organised as part of the Novosibirsk Venture Fair, Novosibirsk, Russian Federation, 14-15 November 2013;

(i) Regional Meeting on the Promotion and Financing of Innovative Green Technologies, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 19-20 November 2013, organised jointly with the UNECE Team of Specialists on Public-private Partnerships and in cooperation with the Government of Kazakhstan as an expert segment of the 2013 SPECA Economic Forum;

(j) Workshop on innovation in the public sector, Minsk, Republic of Belarus, 26 November 2013, organised together with State Committee on Science and Technology of the Republic of Belarus;

(k) High-level Policy Seminar on Promoting the Introduction of Green Technologies, Haifa, Israel, 17-19 December 2013, jointly with the Government of Israel;

(l) Contribution to the conference "International Clustering and Technology Match-making", Kazan, Russian Federation, 23 April 2014;

(m) Contribution to the IXth Kazan Venture Fair, Kazan, Russian Federation, 24 April 2014;

(n) Policy advisory workshop on public support to venture capital financing, Astana, Kazakhstan, 28 May 2014, jointly with the National Agency for Technological Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan;

(o) High-level meeting on Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development in SPECA Countries and the sixth session of the SPECA Project Working Group on Knowledge-based Development, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, 11 June 2014.

(p) High-level workshop on innovation policy and environmental challenges, Minsk, Belarus, 19 June 2014, jointly with the State Committee on Science and Technology of Belarus.

16. The delegation of Armenia highlighted the importance of the recently published Innovation Performance Review for policy development, and welcomed the upcoming policy workshop in Yerevan as an opportunity to discuss concrete policy implementation measures.

17. The representative of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia also commended the quality of work.

18. The Team expressed its gratitude to the Government of the Russian Federation and the Eurasian Development Bank for their financial and in-kind contributions towards its work.

19. The Chair expressed satisfaction as to the outcomes and the work carried out, stating that the TOS-ICP has effectively responded to the needs of countries with economies in transition, in accordance with its mandate. TOS-ICP has been useful, and its policy recommendations, advice and activities have been of great value to member States.

V. Implementation plan for work to be undertaken in the remainder of 2014 and in 2015 (agenda item 4)

20. The secretariat presented the implementation plan.

21. The secretariat also briefed the Team on the current draft of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the role of innovation policy in achieving them, and the process of implementation at the regional level.

22. The representative of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia expressed their interest in collaborating with UNECE in the field of innovation policy in order to bridge the gap between the ESCWA and other regions for building national innovation ecosystems and for establishing a regional hub for innovation.

23. The Team adopted the implementation plan for work to be undertaken in the remainder of 2014 and in 2015 in accordance with the indicative Programme of Work of the Subprogramme on Economic Cooperation and Integration in 2014-2015 (ECE/CECI/2014/2).

24. The following outputs and activities will be delivered:

Implementation Plan 2014

(a) Finalisation of the two policy documents listed under para.15 (a) and (b) above (documents ECE/CECI/2014/9 and ECE/CECI/2014/3). These documents were submitted to the eighth session of CECI in February 2014, where Member States took note of them and concluded that they should “be circulated to member States and other stakeholders for further elaboration by means of interactive electronic discussions”. The two documents will be revised in light of comments received from the Team. The revised versions will be submitted to the forthcoming session of the sectoral Committee overseeing the work of the Team;

(b) Finalisation of the Guidebook on “Innovation in the Public Sector” (ECE/CECI/22);

(c) A document on good practices and policy recommendations on “Smart Specialisation Strategies”. This document will be prepared on the basis of the results of the substantive segment of the seventh session of the TOS-ICP and will be submitted to the forthcoming session of the sectoral Committee overseeing the work of the Team;

(d) Presentation and launch of the Innovation Performance Review of Armenia in Yerevan;

(e) Initiation of preparatory work for the Innovation Performance Review of Tajikistan;

(f) Capacity-building seminar on “International Technology Transfer: Policies and Practices”, organised jointly with the National Agency for Technological Development of Kazakhstan in Astana as a follow-up to the Innovation Performance Review of Kazakhstan;

(g) A policy advisory workshop on the new National Strategy for international cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation of Kazakhstan in follow-up to the Innovation Performance Review of Kazakhstan;

(h) A capacity-building seminar on “Innovation Cooperation between the Public and the Private Sector”, organised jointly with the Belarus Academy for Public Administration in Minsk as a follow-up to the Innovation Performance Review of Belarus;

(i) A session on public sector innovation at the International Conference on “Electronic Governance and Open Society: Challenges in Eurasia” in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation.

Implementation Plan 2015

25. The Team discussed proposals for work to be undertaken in 2015. Proposals included:

(a) A document on good practices and policy recommendations on a selected topic under the common theme, “Policies for Innovation and Knowledge-based Development in the 21st Century” on the basis of an applied policy seminar to be held at the 2015 session of the Team. The following proposals for topics were received:

- How to generate and foster high-growth innovative SMEs?
- Entrepreneurship education and skills as a key for competitiveness and jobs.
- The role of innovation policy in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
- Development and diversification of the innovation policy instruments aiming enhancing sustainability of production and consumption: fiscal stimulus, eco-clusters and eco-industrial parks, networks, platforms and partnerships for knowledge transfer (business associations - science centers - universities); investment funds for green businesses.
- Policy and tools to support eco-innovation and technological modernisation for small and medium enterprises (SME) in agro-processing (particularly in rural areas), in energy- and resource intensive production, in waste management.
- Indicators and surveys/questionnaires to provide impact assessment of innovation policy (eco-innovation) on competitiveness and economic growth: value added and jobs creation, expanding markets, enhancing the environmental sustainability of the region and eco-efficiency of industries or services.

The Bureau will decide on the topic in consultation with the secretariat;

(b) A Guidebook on Smart Specialization Strategies;

(c) A contribution to the substantive segment of the annual session of the inter-governmental Committee overseeing the Team’s work;

(d) An Innovation Performance Review of Tajikistan (work initiated in 2014);

(e) Seventh session of the SPECA Project Working Group on Knowledge-based Development.

(f) Subject to availability of extrabudgetary funding, preparatory work on an Innovation Performance Review of another country; the secretariat received expressions of interest from the Governments of Azerbaijan, Belarus and the Kyrgyz Republic;

(g) An international conference to take stock of the lessons learned from the Innovation Performance Reviews conducted so far, and to discuss how to move forward the programme of Innovation Performance Reviews as the Team embarks on a second cycle of reviews, to be organised jointly with the State Committee on Science and Technology of Belarus;

(h) An international conference on the role of innovation policy in achieving the sustainable development goals, to be organised jointly with the Government of Israel;

(i) Capacity-building activities and policy advisory workshops to support the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Innovation Performance Reviews, subject to demand from member States in which reviews have been conducted and subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources;

(j) Sub-regional capacity-building and knowledge sharing conferences and workshops on policies for promoting innovative, knowledge-based development, subject to demand from member States and the availability of extrabudgetary funding;

(k) The Newsletter on Knowledge-based Development;

26. The delegation of Tajikistan highlighted the importance of innovation for the future development of the country and welcomed the planned implementation of an Innovation Performance Review of Tajikistan.

27. The delegation of Belarus stated the importance of the first Innovation Performance Review of their country in 2010-2011 and reiterated their request for a second Review to assess the progress made on the implementation of recommendations from since the original Review. They also looked forward to the international conference to take stock of the lessons learned from the Innovation Performance Reviews conducted so far.

28. The delegation of Kazakhstan expressed strong interest in further capacity building activities and policy advisory workshops to support the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Innovation Performance Review of Kazakhstan.

29. The Team of Specialists thanked the Russian Federation for its generous financial support for the planned work.

30. The Chair encouraged Team members to participate in the planned activities and events. He also reminded the Team that capacity-building activities require support through extrabudgetary funding and in-kind contributions and encouraged the Team to contribute to raising such extrabudgetary support.

31. The secretariat introduced a conference room paper with options for creating working groups, organising committees and editorial boards from within the membership of the Team to facilitate the implementation of the work plan (Annex I). The purpose of these options is to (i) leverage the expertise of the Team to further increase the number and quality of activities and outputs that can be delivered; (ii) further increase ownership by the Team of its work; and (iii) give more visibility and recognition to the Team members who contribute most actively to the work.

32. The Team supported these options for creating working groups, organising committees and editorial boards and invited the Bureau and the secretariat to work together to create any recommended organising committees, editorial boards and/or working groups. The Chair invited Team members to consider contributing to any groups, task forces and editorial boards to be established.

VII. Other business (agenda item 5)

33. The Team agreed that its next meeting be held on 12-13 October 2015, subject to confirmation of room availability. Any changes in these dates will be made in consultation with the Bureau.

VIII. Adoption of the Report of the session (agenda item 6)

34. The Team adopted the Report of the session.

Annex I

Options for creating working groups, task forces and editorial boards to facilitate the implementation of the work plan

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

The mandate of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies (TOS-ICP) is to support the implementation of the programme of work of the UNECE Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration (CECI) in areas related to the promotion of the knowledge-based economy and innovation. The Team facilitates the exchange of experiences gained and lessons learned, as well as of good practices in these areas among ECE member States. In its work, the TOS-ICP responds to the needs of Governments, and takes into account the needs of the private sector, consumers, the academic and business communities, and civil society.

In accordance with its Terms of Reference, the TOS-ICP engages in the following activities:

(a) Organizing an international policy dialogue on knowledge-based economic development in the UNECE region with the aim of identifying international good practices and policy recommendations on selected key issues within the mandate of the Team. As part of this policy dialogue, the Team will hold applied policy seminars as part of its annual sessions;

(b) Preparing synopses of good practices and policy recommendations on selected key issues within the Team's mandate for discussion and endorsement by CECI;

(c) Broadly disseminating the above good practices and policy recommendations;

(d) Subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, and on request from Governments, carrying out assessments of national innovation systems and policies ("Innovation Performance Reviews") with the aim of providing peer-reviewed policy recommendations to improve national innovation performance;

(e) Subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, and on request from Governments, providing advice on the implementation of policy reforms in areas within the mandate of the Team; and

(f) Subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, and in cooperation with Governments of countries with economies in transition, organizing technical assistance and capacity-building activities on issues within the mandate of Team. These activities will be organized on a national and a sub-regional basis.

The purpose of creating working groups, task forces and editorial boards would be to (i) leverage the expertise of the Team to further increase the number and quality of activities

and outputs that can be delivered; (ii) further increase ownership by the Team of its work; and (iii) give more visibility and recognition to the Team members who contribute most actively to the work.

II. Options

1. Policy Dialogue

The main venues for the policy dialogue are the applied policy seminars held as part of the annual sessions of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies. On an ad hoc basis, the policy dialogue is also carried out at policy conferences organized outside Geneva in cooperation with host governments.

The Team could envisage creating organizing committees for the applied policy seminars to be held at its annual sessions in 2015 and 2016, and for policy conferences organized outside Geneva.

In the case of conferences outside Geneva, representatives of the host government would be invited to serve on the respective organizing committees.

The organizing committees' tasks could be to:

- (a) Develop the structure of the respective seminar and conference programs, determining the number, titles and contents of the sessions;
- (b) Identify and recruit leading international experts as speakers and moderators;
- (c) Advise speakers and moderators on the content of their presentations, ensuring a strong and coherent programs; and
- (d) Advertise the seminars and conferences and ensure wide participation.

2. Development of Good Practices

Good practices are developed based on the policy dialogues held at the annual sessions of the Team and, where applicable, at the policy conferences organized outside Geneva in cooperation with host governments.

The Team could envisage creating an editorial board for the development of good practices. The board could invite members of the organizing committee of the policy dialogue from which the good practices are drawn to serve as co-editors.

The editorial board's tasks could be to:

- (a) Provide guidance to the secretariat for drafting the good practices;
- (b) Organize an international peer review by electronic means of the first draft of the good practices;
- (c) Moderate this peer review;
- (d) Review the second draft before submission to the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration in order to ensure the results of the peer review are incorporated appropriately; and
- (e) Present the good practices at the annual sessions of the UNECE Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration for endorsement.

3. Policy Assessment and Advice

The main vehicle through which policy assessment and advice are provided is the series of national Innovation Performance Reviews. The assessments and advice offered in the reviews are based on the good practices developed by the Team, and the reviews follow a common structure.

The Team could envisage creating a working group to strengthen the methodological basis for these reviews and to support the process of policy learning. Participation by members who have participated actively in previous reviews, as authors and/or peer reviewers, would be encouraged.

The working group's tasks could be to:

- (a) Organize an international conference to take stock of the lessons learned from the Innovation Performance Reviews conducted so far, and to discuss how to move forward the programme of Innovation Performance Reviews as the Team embarks on a second cycle of reviews;
- (b) Produce a policy-oriented synopsis of these lessons;
- (c) Produce a handbook on the methodology for Innovation Performance Reviews, to be published by UNECE;
- (d) Provide guidance to the secretariat on methodological questions; and
- (e) Report on the results of its activities at the annual sessions of the UNECE Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration for endorsement.

4. Outreach Activities and Dissemination

It is difficult to overstate the importance for the Team to reach out to its stakeholder communities and to disseminate the result of its work in order to keep abreast of policy developments and emerging needs for the Team's services, and in order to mobilize political, financial and expert-level support for its activities. Among the vehicles for accomplishing these goals are the Newsletter on Knowledge-based Development, official UN publications with the proceedings of policy seminars, and press releases. Social media have so far not been used to any significant extent.

The Team could envisage creating one or several working groups to support outreach and dissemination.

The tasks of these working groups could be to:

- (a) edit the Newsletter on Knowledge-based Development ; this would include identifying suitable topics to be covered and recruiting authors to cover them ; reviewing submissions, providing feedback to authors, and approving final drafts ; one deliverable would be to increase the frequency of issues of the newsletter over time;
- (b) edit the proceedings of policy seminars and conferences as official UN publications ; the tasks would be to recruit seminar and conference speakers as authors, to provide guidance on first drafts, and to review final drafts before publication;
- (c) create, animate and moderate a discussion group on LinkedIn and/or other professional networks on topics related to the Team's work; and
- (d) report on their activities at the annual sessions of the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration.

III.Modalities

The members of the envisaged organizing committees, editorial boards, and/or working groups would be nominated by the bureau of the Team in consultation with the secretariat based on expressions of interest from Team members. The secretariat would be an ex-officio member of each committee, board or group. Each committee, board or group would elect a chairperson and at least one vice-chairperson.

Members of organizing committees, editorial boards, and/or working groups would serve in their individual capacity and agree to be guided by the Terms of Reference of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies and by the Programme of Work of the UNECE Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration.

The committees, boards or groups would work under the overall guidance of the Bureau of the Team and would receive full organizational support from the secretariat.

Upon their inception, the envisaged organizing committees, editorial boards, and/or working groups would establish workflows with milestones and corresponding deadlines, taking into account UN internal rules and procedures that need to be followed for the submission and translation of documents and publications, and for the financing of travel and per diems of speakers and other contributors.

The envisaged committees, boards or groups would hold video or phone conferences at regular intervals to coordinate their work and to ensure that deadlines are met. The secretariat would prepare the minutes of these meetings and circulate them among the committee members and the members of the bureau of TOS-ICP.

The committees, boards or groups would be created initially for a period of two years. At the end of the two-year period, the Team would review their work and decide whether or not they should continue.

IV.Way forward

At its Seventh Annual Session, the Team is invited to consider the above proposals. Based on the recommendations from the Team, the Bureau and the secretariat will work together to create the respective organizing committees, editorial boards and/or working groups.
