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ACTIVITIES OF ECE BODIES OF INTEREST TO THE WORKING PARTY

Integrated transport and environment

Transmitted by the European Environment Agency (EEA)

Note: The European Environment Agency wishes to inform the Working Party about the new events regarding development and implementation of integrated transport and environmental strategies. The secretariat reproduces below the document received from the European Environment Agency (EEA).

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TERM – extending the geographical scope to the accession countries

The third indicator-based report developed under the transport and environment reporting mechanism (TERM) is currently under development and will be published by the end of 2002. Previous reports (TERM 2000, TERM 2001) described the progress the EU is making towards the integration of environmental concerns in its transport policies. TERM 2002, the latest version, has a focus on the accession countries, and compares the trends in this region with recent EU developments. Thus, TERM 2002 constitutes a first step to gear the accession countries into the information system. The final aim of the report is to help the various countries to learn from their respective experiences.

Main data sources and TERM structure

One of the purposes of TERM is to put existing data to good use, to identify the main gaps and shortcomings, and to gradually help to improve and streamline existing EU data collection systems. Eurostat is the main statistics deliverer for the previous EU reports, but statistics on the accession countries proved for the time being too limited within Eurostat. Therefore TERM 2002 also draws heavily on UNECE transport statistics where ACs are concerned. Eurostat – as in previous reports – delivered the majority of transport-related statistics covering the Member States.

TERM has to address various target groups, ranging from high-level policy makers to technical policy experts. It is therefore set up as a 'layered' information system. The main report aggregates the key-messages for each of the indicators. The indicator fact sheets constitute a much more detailed information layer, in which each indicator is thoroughly analysed and assessed. These indicator fact sheets form the reference information system of the main report.

Main findings as concerns data availability and quality

In the process of developing TERM, all used data (covering the EU as well as the ACs) is carefully analysed and crosschecked between different sources (merely Eurostat and UNECE). The main findings are that the used data

- is qualitatively modest up to good, but remains subject of improvement
- slightly deviates by source and needs to be harmonised
- is relatively old (most recent year for transport statistics for this year's version is usually 1999) but the data can still sufficiently reveal trends.

Harmonisation of methodologies for future data collection, but also of stored statistics in the databases of UNECE, Eurostat, IEA etc., remains important from EEA's point of view.

Where do we stand now and what will we do in the near future?

TERM 2002 will shortly be published. This report will be probably the last one in the annual series of reports, as the EEA wishes to lower the frequency of TERM reporting. Nevertheless, the fact sheets will be annually updated as these provide input for various other EEA reports.

In the next years, TERM related activities would be focused around:

- Development of focus studies/reports: three years of working with transport and environment statistics have made it clear that some indicators need more in-depth analysis. In particular indicators relating to transport costs, prices and internalisation and the indicators dealing with spatial planning and accessibility require more in depth studies and expert consults.
- Further strengthening of the TERM network: continue to link with and learn from national experiences/experts and other international initiatives. The TERM interest group within the European Environment Information and Observation Network (EIONET) – an Internet based information platform – will be further developed for this purpose and hopefully linked with other transport and environment initiatives.
- Further improving data quality: some transport data sets need further development. In particular passenger transport demand (passenger-km) and freight transport demand (tonne-km) data sets need further harmonisation, as much discussion about TERM is still stranded in discussing data quality instead of trend-analysis.

The Commission is currently investigating the development of a legal framework for TERM. This should ensure the long-term continuation of the system and the provision of appropriate funding for Member States, Eurostat and the EEA.

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The report as well as the indicator fact sheets can be downloaded from the EEA's Internet site:

http://themes.eea.eu.int/Sectors_and_activities/transport
