



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
24 August 2021

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Rail Transport

Seventy-fifth session

Geneva, 17–19 November 2021

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the seventy-fifth session^{*}, ^{**}

to be held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Room Tempus 2
starting at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, 17 November 2021

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the provisional agenda.
2. Workshop: “Railways at the centre of the post-pandemic recovery – Connectivity through the railways”.
3. European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines.
4. Towards unified railway law in the pan-European region and on Euro-Asian transport corridors.
5. The Permanent Identification of Railway Rolling Stock.
6. International Passenger Railway Hubs.
7. Euro-Asian rail transport.
8. Trans-European Railway project.
9. Railway financing and Public-Private Partnerships.

* For reasons of economy, delegates are requested to bring copies of all relevant documents to the session. Documentation will not be available in the conference room. Before the session, documents may be downloaded from the website <https://unece.org/info/Transport/Rail-Transport/events/359087>. On an exceptional basis, documents may also be obtained by email (sc.2@un.org).

** Delegates are requested to register online at the following address: <https://uncdb.unece.org/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=UTmtvJ>. Participation is possible both virtually and in-person. To take part in the session in-person, delegates are kindly requested to additionally register at <https://indico.un.org/event/35345>. Upon arrival at the Palais des Nations, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate (14, Avenue de la Paix). In case of difficulty, please contact the secretariat by telephone (+41 22 917 2432) or by email (sc.2@un.org). For a map of the Palais des Nations and other useful information, see website: <https://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.html>.

10. Rail Security.
11. Innovation in Rail Transport.
12. Productivity in Rail Transport.
13. Climate Change and Rail Transport:
 - (a) Group of Experts on Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for Transport Networks and Nodes;
 - (b) Climate Change mitigation and the For Future Inland Transport Systems tool;
 - (c) Green logistics, eco-scoring and related matters.
14. Railway Reform.
15. Facilitation of international rail transport in the pan-European region:
 - (a) Facilitation of rail border crossings;
 - (b) Harmonization of technical specifications on different railway systems.
16. Rail Review.
17. Rail Statistics.
18. Improving Safety in Rail Transport.
19. Activities of Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies.
20. Activities of the European Commission in rail transport.
21. Activities of international organizations in rail transport.
22. Programme of Work 2022–2023.
23. Other business.
24. Election of officers.
25. Date and venue of next session.
26. Adoption of decisions.

II. Annotations

1. Adoption of the Provisional agenda

The first item to be considered is the adoption of the draft agenda.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/235

2. Workshop: “Railways at the centre of the post-pandemic recovery – Connectivity through the railways”

The Working Party may wish to consider the workshop on “Railways at the centre of the post-pandemic recovery – Connectivity through the railways”. As the recovery from the pandemic takes effect, it is important that policymakers focus their attention on ensuring that rail is at the centre of this recovery, making the most of its key role in connecting countries within and between continents. This workshop will discuss the central role of the rail sector in this recovery as well as identify how its key position in facilitating connectivity can contribute to that.

A summary of the workshop will be prepared following the session.

3. European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines

The Working Party may wish to be informed by the secretariat about its activities to increase the number of contracting parties to the European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC Agreement). Detailed information on the AGC Agreement, including the up-to-date and consolidated text of the agreement (ECE/TRANS/63/Rev.4),¹ a map of the AGC network, an inventory of compliance with AGC standards, information on the background, benefits and accession requirements for AGC (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2020/2) and the relevant Depository Notifications are available on the website of the Working Party.

The Working Party may also wish to be informed about the notification of changes to the AGC agreed at previous sessions of the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2020/4) and notified to the depository in New York as well as new amendment proposals as set out in document ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2021/2.

The Working Party will be updated on efforts being undertaken to update the joint AGC-AGTC online tool on technical parameters for operation on the E-Rail network.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/63/Rev.4, ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2020/2, ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2020/4
C.N.107.2020. TREATIES-XI.C.3, ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2021/2

4. Towards unified railway law in the pan-European region and on Euro-Asian transport corridors

The Working Party may wish to recall that at its seventy-fourth session in November 2020, it was not able to discuss the report of the Group of Experts on Unified Railway Law. This was due to the pandemic and liquidity restrictions at the United Nations Office of Geneva which had meant that the two meetings planned for 2020 had to be postponed, one of which to January 2021. A report of this last session was prepared.

The Working Party may wish to be informed about the progress of meetings in 2020 and 2021 and discuss the next steps in preparing URL.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/GEURL/2021/2, ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2021/1

5. The Permanent Identification of Railway Rolling Stock

The Working Party may wish to be updated on developments in 2021 related to the activities of the Group of Experts on the Permanent Identification of Railway Rolling Stock.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/PIRRS/2021/2, ECE/TRANS/SC.2/PIRRS/2021/7

6. International Passenger Railway Hubs

The Working Party may wish to be updated on developments in 2021 related to the activities of the new Group of Experts on International Passenger Railway Hubs.

As part of this agenda item, the Working Party may wish to recall that, at its seventy-third session, it had welcomed the adoption of the new Convention on the facilitation of border crossing procedures for passengers, luggage and load-luggage carried in international traffic by rail by ITC on 22 February 2019. The opening for signature in Geneva was announced on

¹ www.unece.org/trans/main/sc2/sc2_AGC_text.html.

4 April 2019. The Working Party may wish to discuss next steps on this subject in light of the work being carried out in this Group of Experts.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/HUBS/2021/2, ECE/TRANS/SC.2/232

7. Euro-Asian rail transport

The Working Party may wish to recall that at its seventy-third session a workshop was held on: “Making rail freight more competitive and the coordinated development of the rail network with a focus on how to work together at the government and sectoral levels on EATL”. Following the seventy-third session a summary publication was prepared by the secretariat and is available on the Working Party’s webpage.

The Working Party may wish to be informed about and discuss new developments on Euro-Asian rail transport corridors, its involvement in developing the Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL) project, including the results of the recent meetings on EATL and developments in relation to the “Sustainable Inland Transport Connectivity Indicators”.

Following the decision of the Working Party at its seventy-second session, the Working Party may wish to be informed about developments in the Eurasian Rail Alliance Index (ERAI).

Documentation

Publication: “Making rail freight more competitive: The coordinated development of the rail network with a focus on how to work together at the government and sectoral levels on EATL”

8. Trans-European Railway project

The Working Party will be informed by the project manager of the Trans-European Railway (TER) project about the activities in 2021: the concrete results, the plan for subsequent years and the efforts to increase the number of participating countries.

The Working Party may wish to review the results and consider how to further support and contribute to the TER project. The Working Party may also wish to be informed about activities related to the High speed masterplan, in particular the new publication “High speed Masterplan for the TER region Phase 2 – A general background to support further required studies”.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/WP.5/2021/3, publication: “High speed Masterplan for the TER region Phase 2 – A general background to support further required studies”

9. Railway financing and Public-Private Partnerships

The Working Party may wish to be informed about developments in the ECE Guiding Principles for People-First Public-Private Partnerships for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as well as the role of public-private partnership projects being undertaken in the rail sector.

The Working Party may also wish to be informed about the development of public private partnerships in the railways financed by international financing institutions.

10. Rail Security

The Working Party may wish to be informed about the developments in rail security, including updates on the Rail Security Observatory and the ongoing collaboration with the International Union of Railways (UIC) on security matters.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2018/2

11. Innovation in Rail Transport

In line with the ECE road map for promoting the use of Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) that contains 20 global actions for 2012–2020 (“Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) for sustainable mobility”, 2012). The Working Party may wish to recall that at its last session it discussed document ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2019/5 prepared by the secretariat on continuing work in this area.

The Working Party may wish to recall that it agreed to the creation of a rail innovation observatory aimed at sharing with member States best practice innovations that could further help develop the competitiveness of the railways. The aim would also be to assist in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and work towards the achievement of technology pillar of the ITC strategy. The Working Party may wish to be updated on the creation of the observatory noting that this item could not be discussed at the seventy-fourth session of the Working Party due to resource limitations on interpretation.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2019/5

12. Productivity in Rail Transport

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its last session, it agreed to sending f the productivity questionnaire provided in document ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2020/7. The Working Party may wish to be informed about the data gathering efforts made and the information received as contained in ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2021/2.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2020/7, ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2021/2

13. Climate Change and Rail Transport

(a) Group of Experts on Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for Transport Networks and Nodes

The secretariat will inform the Working Party about the work of the group and especially about the work to be done which is relevant to rail transport.

(b) Climate Change mitigation and the For Future Inland Transport Systems tool

The Working Party will be informed about the developments in 2020 of the For Future Inland Transport Systems (ForFITS) project. The aim is to develop and implement a monitoring and assessment tool for carbon dioxide emissions in inland transport, including a transport policy converter to facilitate climate change mitigation. The Working Party may wish to discuss ForFITS and railways.

(c) Green logistics, eco-scoring and related matters

The Working Party may wish to be informed about developments in this area.

14. Railway Reform

The Working Party may wish to be informed about the developments on railway reform, building on the workshop held at the seventy-first session of the Working Party.

Documentation

“Railway Reform in the ECE Region” (ECE, 2018)

15. Facilitation of international rail transport in the pan-European region

(a) Facilitation of rail border crossings

The Working Party may wish to be informed about developments in the new annex 9 to the “Harmonization Convention” on facilitating rail border crossings in the pan-European region. The Working Party may also wish to discuss the draft survey developed by the secretariats of SC.2 and the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) on Annex 9 (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2021/4). This survey is to be discussed at the session of WP.30 in October 2021. Any decisions at this meeting would be communicated to SC.2 at its seventy-fifth session.

Member States may also wish to share best practices in implementing the Harmonization Convention at the session.

(b) Harmonization of technical specifications on different railway systems

The Working Party may wish to be informed by the Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSJD) and/or the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) about improvements in the 1,435 mm and the 1,520 mm broad gauge railway systems, and about the results of the work of the OSJD/ERA Working Group on Interoperability.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2021/4

16. Rail Review

The Working Party may wish to recall that at its seventy-third session, it had discussed document ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2019/7 setting out investment-related data on projects and the mapping of this information on a GIS platform.

The Working Party may wish to discuss this topic further.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2019/7

17. Rail Statistics

The Working Party may wish to be informed about the ongoing work in rail statistics and its relevance to the Working Party, in particular, the work of the Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6).

18. Improving Safety in Rail Transport

The Working Party may wish to recall that at its seventy-second session it had decided to widen the scope to safety at level crossings to cover all relevant areas of rail safety. The Working Party may wish to be informed about developments in this area.

In line with discussions at the seventy-third session of SC.2, the Working Party may also wish to discuss developments related to the Code of Practice on the Packing of Cargo Transport Units administered by the Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics.

19. Activities of Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies

The Working Party will be informed about activities of ITC, its Bureau, subsidiary bodies and other United Nations organizations on matters of interest to the Working Party.

20. Activities of the European Commission in rail transport

In line with standard practice, the Working Party may wish to be informed about recent activities and plans for the future work of the European Commission (DG Move) in rail transport.

21. Activities of international organizations in rail transport

The Working Party may wish to be informed about recent activities and plans for the future work of other international organizations and stakeholders in the field of rail transport.

22. Programme of Work for 2022–2023

The Working Party may wish to recall that at its seventy-third session it approved the document on the implementation of the ITC strategy (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2019/2). At its seventy-fourth session the Working Party then adopted its new terms of reference adjusting its approach to reflect the implementation of the ITC strategy (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2020/1). This document was then subsequently approved by the Inland Transport Committee. Based on these documents, the secretariat has prepared a draft programme of work for the period 2022–2023 (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2021/3) which the Working Party may wish to consider.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2019/2, ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2020/1, ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2021/3

23. Other business

The Working Party may wish to discuss other business.

24. Election of officers

The Working Party may wish to elect a Chair and possibly Vice-Chair(s) for its sessions in 2022 and 2023.

25. Date and venue of next session

The next session of the Working Party is tentatively scheduled to be held from 16 to 18 November 2022 in Geneva.

26. Adoption of decisions

In accordance with the decision of the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/190, para. 6) and established practice, the Chair will briefly summarize the decisions at the end of the session. Following the session, the secretary, in cooperation with the Chair and Vice-Chair(s), will draft a report on the outcome of the session for transmission to ITC.

III. Tentative Timetable

Wednesday, 17 November	3-6 p.m.	Items 1 and 2
Thursday, 18 November	10 a.m.-1 p.m.	Items 3-7
	3-6 p.m.	Items 7-13
Friday, 19 November	10 a.m.-1 p.m.	Items 13-18
	2.30-5.30 p.m.	Items 19-25
