



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
19 August 2021

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships

Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies

Thirteenth session

Geneva (hybrid), 1-2 November 2021

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda and election of officers

Annotated provisional agenda for the thirteenth session

To be held as a hybrid meeting with possibility of in-person or remote participation at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting on 1 November at 15:00 in room XXI*

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda and election of officers.
2. Substantive segment: Leveraging Innovation for the Circular Economy.
3. Review of the work of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies since the twelfth session.
4. Inter-sessional Implementation Plan for 2021-2022.
5. Other business.
6. Adoption of the report of the session.

* All delegates should register online at <https://indico.un.org/e/tos-icp13>. Delegates attending the meeting remotely will receive a link to the session in the days prior to the meeting. Delegates attending the meeting in person at the Palais des Nations are requested to present themselves with a valid identification card/passport at the Pass and Identification Unit of the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, Avenue de la Paix 8-14, for the issuance of an identification badge. Additional information for delegates, including a map of the premises, is available on the ECE website at <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.html>.



II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information/discussion</i>
Agenda	ECE/CECI/ICP/2021/1	Information
Inter-sessional implementation plan for 2021-2022	ECE/CECI/2021/2, Annex II	Information
Progress report on the Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Moldova	ECE/CECI/ICP/2021/INF.1	Discussion
Progress report on the Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Uzbekistan	ECE/CECI/ICP/2021/INF.2	Discussion
Progress report on the work of the Task Force on Innovation Policy Principles	ECE/CECI/ICP/2021/INF.3	Discussion
Overview of developing and fundraising for further activities supporting innovation for sustainable development	ECE/CECI/ICP/2021/INF.4	Discussion

1. Adoption of the agenda and election of officers

Documentation: ECE/CECI/ICP/2021/1

1. The Team will adopt its agenda.
2. The objectives of the thirteenth session are to:
 - (a) Discuss and address topical, substantive issues related to the programme of work of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies (ToS ICP);
 - (b) Review the outputs and activities carried out since the twelfth session in 2019 and agree on an implementation plan for work to be carried out until the fourteenth session in 2022. The Team held informal consultations in November 2020.
3. The Team may elect officers to its Bureau as required and in accordance with the Guidelines on Procedures and Practices for ECE Bodies (E/ECE/1468, Annex III para.V.8. p. 18). The term of office of any newly elected officers will begin at the end of this session.

2. Substantive segment: Leveraging Innovation for the Circular Economy

4. The substantive segment will be a policy seminar on “Leveraging Innovation for the Circular Economy”, which will provide a platform for international knowledge-sharing and policy-learning in this area; it is a follow-up meeting on ToS session in 2017, which was dedicated to the Circular Economy. The segment will respond to the outcomes of the 69th Commission session devoted to the topic “Circular Economy and the sustainable use of natural resources”, which was held on 20-21 April 2021. At the 69th Commission, member States flagged the importance they attach to the Circular Economy transition in the ECE region, in connection with the 2030 Agenda and as part of the efforts to “Build Back Better” post COVID-19.

5. Accordingly, in their decision B(69) paragraphs 10–14,¹ member States charted the way towards concrete actions in support of the transition, including for the ECE intergovernmental machinery and the secretariat, with concrete implications for ToS ICP.²

6. The Team has worked on Circular Economy in several activities, including its dedicated session on the topic in 2017, its session on the fourth industrial revolution in 2018, its session on smart and sustainable cities in 2019, as well as a session on innovation-enhancing procurement for the Circular Economy and the platform economy at its informal consultations in 2020.

7. In 2017, the Team dedicated its substantive session to the topic “Towards the Circular Economy - Innovation Policies for Sustainable Production and Consumption” and identified best practices and policy recommendations for policy makers to boost innovation and the transition to the Circular Economy.

8. The Team identified and recommended potential policies to facilitate the transition to the Circular Economy:

- the adoption of regulatory instruments, including better implementation and enforcement of related existing legislation; revisions to relevant legislation, new measures and regulations;
- the implementation, use and adoption of smart regulation, standards and codes of conduct;
- the adoption of fiscal incentives including taxes, charges and levies, and the promotion of information and advisory services and awareness raising campaigns;
- the promotion of public investment in Research and Development (R&D), skills and training and infrastructure, industrial symbiosis and clusters, innovation-enhancing procurement;
- the encouragement of innovation and the acceleration of public and private investment in resource efficient technologies, systems and skills;
- the abolishment of environmentally harmful subsidies and tax breaks; and
- the creation of better market conditions for products and services that have lower impacts across their life cycles and that are durable, repairable and recyclable.

9. This year the policy seminar will provide an opportunity for delegates to take stock of the progress made in the implementation of those recommendations and share experiences and best practices in the ECE region. Particular attention will be given to national innovation and Circular Economy roadmaps, the adoption of support mechanisms for business, particularly to SMEs, innovation-enhancing procurement and the support to the platform and sharing economy. The Team will discuss developments and progress in the region in the last 4 years and recommend further action.

10. Issues for discussion include – but are not limited to – the following:

(a) How can ECE countries further encourage innovative entrepreneurship for a Circular Economy – what are the support mechanisms in place – policy, regulatory and financial, and what can be improved?

(b) How can ECE countries ensure the right regulatory framework for innovation – addressing regulatory barriers for activities and business models (the role of law, standards and norms)?

(c) What are the possible incentives to enable innovation to deliver new and more sustainable business practices (e.g. taxation, subsidies)? What is the role of innovation-enhancing procurement to promote the transition to the Circular Economy?

¹ https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/E_ECE_1494_e_Final.pdf

² See paragraphs 10-14 of Decision B(69): https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/E_ECE_1494_e_Final.pdf

(d) How can ECE countries support and facilitate the contribution of the platform economy to the Circular Economy transition?

(e) How should countries ensure policy consistency (i.e. how to align policy support to entrepreneurship, innovation and sustainable development)?

11. This policy seminar will lay the groundwork for developing good practices and policy recommendations on leveraging innovation for the Circular Economy in the ECE region; a policy paper will be developed as contribution to the session of the ECE Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships in spring 2022.

3. Review of the work of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies since the twelfth session

Documentation: ECE/CECI/ICP/2021/INF.1; ECE/CECI/ICP/2021/INF.2 ; ECE/CECI/ICP/2021/INF.3

12. ToS-ICP members will be briefed on main outcomes and highlights of the work since the twelfth session, including:

(a) the policy documents on “Building Back Better: Using Platforms to Enable Sharing and Progress towards the Circular Economy” and on “Building Back Better: Innovation-enhancing Procurement for Sustainable Development”; submitted to the 2021 session of the ECE Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships;

(b) the first results of the work of the Task Force on Innovation Policy Principles;

(c) progress with the national Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews of Armenia, the Republic of Moldova and Uzbekistan;

(d) progress with the sub-regional Innovation Policy Outlook (IPO) of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine;

(e) progress on the capacity building programme on innovation-enhancing procurement for Georgia, based on the recommendations of the Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Georgia;

(f) the publication of a Handbook on “Supporting Innovative High-Growth Enterprises in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus” and on-line trainings on policies and support mechanisms to Innovative High-Growth Enterprises for the Eastern Europe and Caucasus sub-region, carried out in March 2021;

(g) support to the implementation of the Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development of the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), including the forthcoming policy handbook on business incubators and development of an Action Plan to support implementation of the Strategy under the 12th tranche UN Development Account (UNDA) project “Strengthening innovation policies for SPECA countries in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”;

(h) organization of the annual session of the Working Group on Innovation and Technology for Sustainable Development of the UN Special Programme for SPECA with ESCAP;

(i) contributions to the capacity building workstream of the UN Inter-agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development;

(j) in cooperation with ECE Trade sub-programme, support for selected member States on request in developing road maps or action plans for the Circular Economy transition in selected fields, including innovation-enhancing procurement, under the 13th tranche UNDA project “Accelerating the transition towards a Circular Economy in the ECE region”

(k) contributions to the Regional Forum for Sustainable Development in 2021;

(l) launch of pilot episodes of the podcast series Innovation Matters.

13. Members of the Team will be invited to take stock of past activities and to discuss effective means for the dissemination of the Team's outputs.

4. Inter-sessional Implementation Plan for 2021-2022

Documentation: ECE/CECI/2021/2, Annex II; ECE/CECI/ICP/2021/INF.4

14. The secretariat will inform the Team of the main outcomes of the fourteenth session of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships held in a hybrid format on 2-4 June 2021.

Implementation Plan for 2021-2022

15. The Team will discuss proposals for work to be undertaken in the remainder of 2021 and in 2022 in accordance with the Inter-sessional Implementation Plan for 2021-2022 of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships (ECE/CECI/2021/2, Annex II).

16. The plans and proposals reflect demand expressed by member States as well as the resources available to the secretariat. Proposals include:

Events

17. The 2022 session of the Working Group on Innovation and Technology for Sustainable Development of SPECA will be organized together with ESCAP. A policy conference will be organised back-to-back with the session.

National Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews

18. Two national Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews, of the Republic of Moldova and of Uzbekistan, are being finalised in cooperation with the respective Governments. The review of the Republic of Moldova will be launched in late 2021, with the review of Uzbekistan to be launched in early 2022. A review of Armenia will be initiated and first fact-finding meetings with international experts and national stakeholders will be conducted in the first half of 2022.

Innovation Policy Outlook

19. Regular meetings of the network of IPO national focal points will be organized to exchange good policy practices and build government capacity to implement policy recommendations from the IPO. A follow-up publication documenting progress and analysing 2-3 select policy issues in-depth will be published in 2022 under the guidance of the network.

Innovation Policy Principles and Strategy

20. A task force convened by the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies will further develop draft policy principles on selected aspects of innovation for sustainable development. A broad multi-stakeholder consultation process will be continued based on the first task force meeting in May 2021.

Capacity building

21. In follow-up to the national Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Georgia, ECE will carry out a capacity building programme for Georgia on the topic of innovation-enhancing procurement, as per agreement with the Government. The capacity building activities include a handbook on innovation-enhancing procurement based on international best practices, and a study tour for four Georgian officials to one of the ECE member States.

22. Following the finalization of the Innovation for Sustainable Development review of Moldova, ECE will agree with Moldova a capacity building programme for 2022.

23. Under the SPECA Working Group on Innovation and Technology for Sustainable Development, an Action Plan for the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development will be developed based on the gap analyses carried out for all SPECA

countries in 2020. Additional national capacity building will be provided upon request to SPECA countries on the basis of these gap analyses, a Handbook on “ Business incubators to promote sustainable development in the SPECA sub-region” as well as a review of best practices in new industrial policy prepared in 2020. Kyrgyzstan is the first country to have requested such capacity building support. The Action Plan for the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development and associated capacity building activities will be implemented with the support of the UNDA project “Strengthening innovation policies for SPECA countries in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.

24. ECE will continue contributing to the capacity building workstream of the UN Inter-agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development following a successful pilot webinar in 2020 and contribute to other UN agencies workstreams, such as UNCTAD P166 capacity building on STI for ECE countries. ECE will develop further episodes of the new podcast series Innovation Matters and invites suggestions for topics and speakers.

25. Building on the Team’s existing work on innovation for the Circular Economy and on innovation-enhancing procurement, and in cooperation with the ECE Trade sub-programme, ECE will support selected member States on request in developing road maps or action plans for the Circular Economy transition in selected fields as part of the 13th tranche UNDA project “Accelerating the transition towards a Circular Economy in the ECE region”.

26. The Team is invited to consider and agree on the implementation plan for its work in the remainder of 2021 and in 2022.

27. UNECE is actively looking for extrabudgetary funding to support increased engagement, including in SPECA countries, Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus, and the Western Balkans. The secretariat will present possible activities and resource needs for 2022 (ECE/CECI/ICP/2021/INF.4).

5. Other business

28. The Team will decide on the date for its fourteenth session. The secretariat proposes 14-15 November 2022.

6. Adoption of the report of the session

29. The report will be adopted at the end of the session.

Annex

Provisional timetable

<i>Time</i>	<i>Agenda Item</i>
Monday, 1 November 2021	
15:00 – 18:00	Item 1. Adoption of the agenda and election of officers Item 2. Substantive segment: Leveraging Innovation for the Circular Economy
Tuesday, 2 November 2021	
10:00 – 11:00	Item 3. Review of the work of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies since the twelfth session
11:00 – 13:00	Item 4. Inter-sessional Implementation Plan for 2021-2022
15:00 – 15:30	Item 5. Other business
15:30 – 18:00	Item 6. Adoption of the report of the session
