



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
31 August 2021

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards

Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6)

Thirty-first session

Geneva, 24–26 November 2021

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Provisional agenda for the thirty-first session*

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva starting at 14:30 on Wednesday 24 November 2021, as a hybrid meeting in room Tempus 1.

Prior to the launch of the thirty-first session, a meeting on gender-responsive standards will be held from 10:00 to 13:00 on 24 November 2021 to discuss how standards help progress gender equality and women's empowerment.

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Election of officers
3. Matters arising
4. Advisory Group on Market Surveillance
5. Group of Experts on Risk Management in Regulatory Systems
6. Ad Hoc Team of Specialists on Standardization and Regulatory Techniques
7. Gender-Responsive Standards Initiative
8. Programme of work
 - (a) Report on capacity-building
 - (b) Programme of work for 2022

* The hybrid session will be held on 24 November 2021 from 14:30 to 17:30 and on 25 and 26 November 2021 from 10:00 to 13:00 and from 14:30 to 17:30. Simultaneous interpretation between English, French and Russian will be provided. Delegates are requested to register online at <https://indico.un.org/e/trade/wp6/wp6-31st-2021>. The session documents will be made available progressively at <https://unece.org/trade/wp6/wp6-31st-2021>. Please note that as part of its move to paperless meetings, the secretariat does not distribute paper copies of meeting documents. Additional information for delegates, including a map of the Palais des Nations meeting rooms, is available at: <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.html>.

- (c) Activities of other United Nations Economic Commission for Europe bodies and other international organizations of interest to WP.6
- (d) Working Party terms of reference
- 9. Panel discussion: circular economy and regulatory cooperation and standardization
- 10. Other business
- 11. Adoption of the report

II. Annotations

1. Adoption of the agenda

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information/decision</i>
<i>Provisional agenda for the thirty-first session</i>	ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2021/1	For decision

The *Provisional agenda for the thirty-first session* of the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6) was approved by the Bureau. It is based on the decisions adopted at the previous sessions.

The WP.6 Chair, with the assistance of the secretariat, will present the provisional agenda for adoption and will inform the Working Party of any proposed changes.

2. Election of officers

Member State delegations who are physically or virtually present in the meeting will elect the chair and a vice-chair for a two-year period, 2021–2023. Candidatures will be introduced formally by their respective delegations at the opening of this agenda item. Election procedures will be made available prior to the meeting.

3. Matters arising

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information/decision</i>
<i>Chair's Note on the Informal Virtual Consultations of the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies</i>	ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2020/2	For decision
<i>Revised Recommendation P on Risk Management in Regulatory Systems</i>	ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2020/11	For decision

The secretariat will report on recent developments in the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards and the Commission of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE).

In 2020, two topics were identified as business critical (election of Vice-Chair Chloupek and the revision of *Recommendation P on Risk Management in Regulatory Systems*, ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2020/11) and used the “Special Procedures during COVID-19 period for

subsidiary bodies of the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards” outlined in document ECE/EX/2020/L.10 of 5 October 2020. These were circulated on 9 November 2020 with a deadline of 20 November 2020 for any comments; none were received, and these two decisions were therefore adopted. The secretariat will present these and subsequently record them officially in the report of this session.

The Chair’s note from the Virtual Informal Consultation of November 2020 was also sent to all participants on 6 November 2020 with a deadline of 20 November 2020 for any comments. The secretariat will present the conclusions of this note and subsequently record them officially in the report of this session.

Working Party members will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments.

4. Advisory Group on Market Surveillance

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information/decision</i>
<i>Report on activities under the Advisory Group on Market Surveillance</i>	ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2021/3	For decision

The Advisory Group on Market Surveillance (MARS) was established in 2003 to be a forum for discussion for market surveillance, to increase transparency and visibility of the chain of control and to promote coherent best practices. The above report is presented to the Working Party for an endorsement decision.

Working Party members will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments.

5. Group of Experts on Risk Management in Regulatory Systems

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information/decision</i>
<i>Report on activities under the Group of Experts on Risk Management in Regulatory Systems</i>	ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2021/4	For decision
<i>Recommendation V on Addressing Product Non-Compliance Risks in International Trade</i>	ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2021/5	For decision

The Group of Experts on Risk Management in Regulatory Systems (GRM) was established in 2011 as a high-level and international partnership in the field of risk management. The above report is presented to the Working Party for an endorsement decision.

GRM also finalized a proposed *Recommendation V on Addressing Product Non-Compliance Risks in International Trade* (ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2021/5) which is presented to the Working Party for approval. This recommendation underlines the importance of an integrated risk management strategy to optimize overall border clearance times and costs while maintaining a high level of compliance.

Working Party members will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments.

6. Ad Hoc Team of Specialists on Standardization and Regulatory Techniques

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information/decision</i>
<i>Report on recent developments in the sectoral initiatives</i>	ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2021/6	For decision
<i>Education on standards-related issues: update on activities</i>	ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2021/7	For information

The Ad Hoc Team of Specialists on Standardization and Regulatory Techniques (START) was established in 1999 with an aim to assist member States' efforts to converge towards better regulations. This includes the reduction of non-tariff barriers to trade and harmonizing the content of technical regulations in key sectorial areas such as earth-moving machinery, equipment for explosive environments, pipeline safety, telecom and cybersecurity. Special focus is given to support efforts by schools, universities, vocational training institutions and other training and research establishments to integrate standards and standards-related issues in their curricula. The above reports are presented to the Working Party for an endorsement decision and for information.

Working Party members will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments.

7. Gender-Responsive Standards Initiative

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information/decision</i>
<i>Report on activities of the Gender-Responsive Standards Initiative 2020–2021</i>	ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2021/8	For information

The Gender-Responsive Standards Initiative (GRSI) was established in 2016 in order to mainstream gender in the activities and management of standards developing bodies. The above report is presented to the Working Party for information. In addition, a verbal report of the GRSI meeting to be held in the morning of 24 November 2021 will be provided.

Working Party members will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments.

8. Programme of work

(a) Report on capacity-building

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information/decision</i>
<i>Progress report on the Standards for Sustainable Development Goals project, phase II</i>	ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2021/9	For information

The Working Party will have before it a progress report on phase II of the project on Standards for Sustainable Development Goals for noting.

Working Party members will have an opportunity to clarify questions and provide comments.

(b) Programme of work for 2022

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information/decision</i>
<i>Programme of work of the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies for 2022</i>	ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2021/10	For decision

The Working Party will have before it a draft programme of work for 2022 for decision. This document has been reviewed and validated by the Bureau of WP.6 as well as the chairs of all of WP.6 subgroups.

The Working Party requests the renewal of the mandates of its three subgroups (MARS, GRM and START) for a further two-year period from the thirty-first session until the end of the thirty-third session as presented in the annexes of document ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2021/10.

Working Party members will have an opportunity to clarify questions and provide comments.

(c) Activities of other United Nations Economic Commission for Europe bodies and other international organizations of interest to WP.6

Delegates will be briefed about activities of other international organizations on matters of potential interest to WP.6. Representatives from other international organizations will be invited to highlight areas for potential cooperation with WP.6 as well as current and future activities of relevance. This will include topics of international regulatory cooperation, conformity assessment and accreditation, metrology and others.

Delegates will also receive reports on active cooperation with other ECE bodies of interest to the Working Party.

Working Party members will have an opportunity to clarify questions and provide comments.

(d) Working Party terms of reference

In December 2019, an evaluation of ECE support to the advancement of WP.6 proposed that the Working Party review and update its *Terms of reference*¹ in line with the *Guidelines for the establishment and functioning of working parties within ECE* (ECE/EX/1, paragraph 3(d)) to assess and propose necessary adjustments to the mandate and status of WP.6. The evaluation further suggested that this review reflect as appropriate the priorities of the 2030 Agenda.

Delegates will have the opportunity to provide initial input on this topic and discuss the strategic directions. These will be taken up by the newly elected Bureau to provide the *Revised terms of reference* for consideration and approval at the thirty-second session.

9. Panel discussion: circular economy and regulatory cooperation and standardization

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information/decision</i>
<i>Circular economy and regulatory cooperation and standardization</i>	ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2021/11	For information

This agenda item will respond to the outcomes of the sixty-ninth session of the Commission held on 20 and 21 April 2021, devoted to the topic of “circular economy and the sustainable

¹ See: https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trade/wp6/documents/ref-docs/ToR_eng.pdf.

use of natural resources.” In the Commission decisions, ECE member States flagged the importance they give to the circular economy and charted the way forward towards concrete actions in support of a circular economy transition, including guidance for the ECE intergovernmental machinery and the secretariat. This item of the agenda will explore how the deliverables of WP.6 can contribute to the circular economy transition and explore associated themes which may be taken into consideration by the Working Party.

This agenda item will be organized as a high-level panel discussion to discuss circular economy and its relation to regulatory cooperation and standardization. It will address potential ways in which WP.6 can contribute to circular economy, including through effective conformity assessment, risk management, regulatory cooperation and gender inclusiveness. A background document and panel discussion synopsis will be developed and made available prior to the event. Working Party members will be invited to actively participate in the discussion and propose how this theme might be best addressed within WP.6.

10. Other business

The Working Party will discuss any other business raised, including the tentative dates of its thirty-second session in 2022.

11. Adoption of the report

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information/decision</i>
<i>Report on the thirty-first session of the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies</i>	ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2021/2	For decision

The Working Party will be invited to adopt the decisions and draft report of its thirty-first session.

III. Tentative timetable

<i>Time</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Introduced by</i>
Wednesday, 24 November		
14:30–14:45	Opening	WP.6 Chair and secretariat
14:45–15:00	Item 1: Adoption of the agenda	WP.6 Chair
15:00–15:15	Item 2: Election of officers	Secretariat
15:15–15:30	Item 3: Matters arising	Secretariat
15:30–16:00	Item 4: Advisory Group on Market Surveillance	MARS Chair
16:00–16:30	Item 5: Group of Experts on Risk Management in Regulatory Systems	GRM Chair
16:30–17:00	Item 6: Ad Hoc Team of Specialists on Standardization and Regulatory Techniques	START Chair
17:00–17:30	Item 2: Finalization of the election of officers	Secretariat

<i>Time</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Introduced by</i>
Thursday, 25 November		
10:00–10:30	Item 7: Gender-Responsive Standards Initiative	GRSI Coordinator
10:30–11:00	Item 8 (a): Report on capacity-building	Secretariat
11:00–11:30	Item 8 (b): Programme of work for 2022	WP.6 Chair
11:30–13:00	Item 8 (c): Activities of other United Nations Economic Commission for Europe bodies and other international organizations of interest to WP.6	Secretariat and invited speakers
13:00–14:30	Break	
14:30–17:30	Item 9: Panel discussion on circular economy and regulatory cooperation and standardization (part 1)	Secretariat and invited speakers
Friday, 26 November		
10:00–13:00	Item 9: Panel discussion on circular economy and regulatory cooperation and standardization (part 2)	Secretariat and invited speakers
13:00–14:30	Break	
14:30–15:30	Item 8 (d): Working Party terms of reference	WP.6 Chair
15:30–16:00	Item 10: Other business	WP.6 Chair
16:00–17:30	Item 11: Adoption of the report	Secretariat