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**Meeting with the Chair of the Committee on Innovation,  
Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships (CICPPP)**

**Report by the Chair**

## **Report by the Chair of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships (CICPPP)**

The Chair of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships (CICPPP), Mr. Stefano Firpo (Italy), is pleased to submit his report to the 118<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Executive Committee on 15 October 2021.

### **1. Introduction**

1. This report describes the main achievements of the CICPPP in the period July 2019–September 2021<sup>1</sup> as well as major activities planned for the remainder of 2021 and 2022. More information is contained in the report of the CICPPP on its fourteenth session, which was held on 2-4 June 2021 in Geneva in hybrid mode (ECE/CECI/2021/2).

2. The CICPPP's activities in the reporting period are based on:

(a) The Programmes of Work of the Economic Cooperation and Integration (ECI) Subprogramme for 2020 and 2021;<sup>2</sup> and

(b) The Intersessional Implementation Plans for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021.<sup>3</sup>

### **II. Achievements over the last two years**

#### **Innovation and Competitiveness**

3. The reporting period includes the production and launch of a range of good practices and recommendations emerging from policy dialogue; I4SD reviews for Kyrgyzstan and Georgia; and a successful pilot of a sub-regional review, the Innovation Policy Outlook for Eastern Europe and South Caucasus (IPO). This has triggered a range of reform initiatives; national action plans; two sub-regional action plans; and a range of requests for further ECE support and ECE input to government and donor planning.

4. Innovation, or broad experimentation with and learning from ideas to find out what works (and what does not), plays a critical role for 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and beyond – and is at the core of the mandate of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies (ToS-ICP). Activities supporting innovation policy include policy dialogue and recommendations; national Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews (I4SD reviews) – an in-depth analysis of national policies bringing the leading expertise and improvement-oriented recommendations in innovation policy; and national and regional capacity building around specific reforms or instruments to enable and promote innovation across the economy and society.

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<sup>1</sup> Due to COVID-19 meeting restrictions CICPPP did not hold its regular session in 2020. By decision ECE/EX/2020/IL.4 EXCOM approved Arrangements for the ECE Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships to conduct business remotely during the COVID-19 period. By decision ECE/EX/2020/L.11 EXCOM approved Special Procedures during COVID-19 period for subsidiary bodies of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships.

<sup>2</sup> The Programmes of Work for 2020 (ECE/CECI/2021/INF.6) and 2021 (ECE/CECI/2021/9) were adopted by the CICPPP at its fourteenth session on 2-4 June 2021.

<sup>3</sup> The Intersessional Implementation Plan for 2020 was adopted by the CICPPP intersessionally in August 2020. The Plan was subsequently approved by the Executive Committee at its 111<sup>th</sup> meeting on 5 October (ECE/EX/2020/L.6, Annex).

5. Following substantial extrabudgetary funding from, inter alia, Sweden and the Russian Federation, ECE has intensified and streamlined activities related to innovation and competitiveness in several ways. It has introduced a new flagship product, the Sub-regional IPO, which, after the pilot among the six countries of Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus, ECE is eager to regularly repeat and extend to other country groups, such as the Western Balkans, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and member States of the Special Programme for Economies of Central Asia (SPECA).

6. In a similar vein, and in line with the recommendations in a [2020 external evaluation](#), ECE has revamped its work on I4SD reviews, gradually streamlining the overall approach and documenting the underlying methodology. Whereas only one review was possible in every 12-18 months, the new optimised strategy containing similar features and the upgraded design, allows for three reviews to currently take place, alongside other ECE's activities. ECE has also aligned its approach to I4SD review follow up, with national capacity building involving trainings and outputs specifically targeting and stimulating ongoing reform efforts in the beneficiary countries.

#### ***Development of international good practices***

7. Through policy dialogue, CICPPP has developed a range of good practices on innovation for the circular economy, smart and sustainable cities, platforms for the sharing economy, diaspora engagement to promote innovation, and innovation-enhancing procurement.<sup>4</sup> In line with the decisions of the sixty-ninth session of the Commission, commission, several of these and future events will contribute to deliberations on the circular economy transition and the role of innovation in this regard.

8. Following several capacity building events and supporting analytical work, a handbook on “Supporting Innovative High Growth Enterprises in Eastern Europe and South Caucasus” and a policy handbook on “Business Incubators for Sustainable Development in the SPECA Subregion” were published in 2021.

9. Following the CICPPP mandate, ToS-ICP assembled a task force under the guidance of its Bureau on developing innovation policy principles for sustainable development. These principles should capture and explain systematically the range of insights and good practices that have emerged since ToS-ICP was established through policy dialogue and publications.

#### ***Policy analysis and recommendations***

10. The Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Kyrgyzstan was launched in the country during a conference hosted by the national focal point Kyrgyz Patent. It contains 24 recommendations on improving innovation policy in Kyrgyzstan with some 80

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<sup>4</sup> The twelfth session of ToS ICP hosted a policy seminar on “Smart and Sustainable Cities: The Role of Governance and Innovation Policy”, covering experience among city-level efforts to become smart and sustainable – a leading element in boosting their potential roles as hubs for innovation for sustainable development. The analysis and discussion were published in a paper welcomed by CICPPP (ECE/CECI/2021/3). The informal consultations of ToS ICP in October 2020 featured webinars on “Building Back Better: Using Platforms to Enable Sharing and Progress towards the Circular Economy” and “Building Back Better: Innovation-enhancing Procurement for Sustainable Development”. The good practices and recommendations emerging from the discussion were published in two policy papers welcomed by CICPPP in June 2021 (ECE/CECI/2021/4 and ECE/CECI/2021/5). A webinar on “Leveraging Diasporas to Promote Innovation for Sustainable Development” was held prior to the session of the Committee, on 31 May 2021, to share best practice experiences between countries and experts, summarised in agenda item 2 (Annex I).(ECE/CECI/2021/1 6 29).

specific policy actions. This has informed, with ECE support (see below) a range of follow-up reforms and initiatives.

11. The Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Georgia was published and launched in a high-level event in 2021, with the recommendations informing several on-going reform efforts such as a national innovation strategy and a ministerial innovation council. The chapter on innovation-enhancing procurement in particular triggered a concerted effort, to which ECE is contributing through targeted national capacity building. Innovation-enhancing procurement is also a policy area of great relevance for the circular economy transition.

12. The draft Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of the Republic of Moldova has been submitted for external review in August 2021, and will be completed, published, and launched in 2021. The review takes an additional step in the direction of a consolidated methodology and process, including upgraded design and a standardized analysis of sustainable development, innovation performance, and the innovation system followed by three in-depth chapters on diaspora engagement for innovation, innovation and technology transfer infrastructure, and science-industry linkages.

13. The draft Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Uzbekistan was submitted for external review in September 2021, and will be completed, published, and launched by the second quarter of 2022 with a similar structure, including in-depth chapters on science-industry linkages and innovation infrastructure. This review is part and parcel of a successful drive to engage Uzbekistan further under the framework of SPECA and the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development.

14. The process for the forthcoming Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Armenia started with an initial meeting and agreement on process and content in September 2021.

15. The next edition of the Sub-regional IPO for Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus is in preparation, co-ordinated by a formalized network of national focal points and experts meeting regularly. It will be published in 2022.

***Policy advice and capacity-building to implement recommendations and good practices***

16. To help put into practice the recommendations in the 2017 I4SD review, three physical and three virtual capacity-building events in Belarus led to a draft roadmap on using public funding to subsidize, catalyze, and fund innovative projects through venture capital and other forms of private equity in co-operation with development banks and private investors. This process piloted a revised approach to national capacity building following such reviews that foresee several meetings and a local task force around a specific reform effort with substantial underlying momentum.

17. Similarly, following up on the 2020 I4SD review of Georgia, the same process has been applied – this time on the topic of innovation-enhancing procurement in co-operation with the Georgia Innovation and Technology Agency (GITA) and the Georgian state procurement agency. At the request and with the agreement of the Government of Georgia, a handbook on innovation-enhancing procurement, collecting best practices and case studies on innovation-enhancing procurement, a topic highly relevant for the circular economy transition, and identifying recommendations for the State Procurement Office of Georgia will be published by the end of 2021. In December 2021 a study tour on innovation-enhancing procurement in an ECE country will be organized for four Georgian officials.

18. Several steps have been taken to support efforts to put the recommendations of the Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Kyrgyzstan into practice. ECE support helped put together a new Action Plan based on the review; secure dissemination and

discussion in the Donor Coordination Council; and set up a task force meeting regularly to develop a strategy with a new approach to innovation infrastructure in the country.

19. The eleventh session of the SPECA Working Group on Knowledge-based Development was held alongside a regional workshop on Innovation and Technology Applications for Sustainable Development in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan on 26-27 June 2019. The first annual session of the SPECA Working Group on Innovation and Technology for Sustainable Development, the new name of this body, was held 30 July 2020, chaired by Kazakhstan.

20. This Working Group co-ordinates efforts to put into practice the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development. Several ECE strands of support contribute to these efforts. A study trip to Moscow on incubators and science parks for SPECA countries took place in October 2019. ECE developed and discussed in a November 2020 meeting a science, technology, and innovation (STI) gap analyses for the seven SPECA countries. The work on new industrial policy for technological upgrading in the SPECA countries was discussed, and the outline of the handbook on “Business Incubators for Sustainable Development in the SPECA Subregion” was presented. These activities were carried out with the support of the UNDA project “Strengthening innovation policies for SPECA countries in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (2020-2023).

21. Regional and sub-regional capacity building activities were held regularly in cooperation with other organisations. Several workshops on policies for promoting innovative, high-growth enterprises in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus led to a dedicated policy handbook, published in 2021 (see above). Drawing on the handbook, a series of online trainings for stakeholders from the region were held on 16-22 March 2021. A regional training on “Innovation for sustainable development” was organized jointly by ECE and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva on 28 March 2019. A regional training seminar on selected aspects of innovation policy was organized jointly with UNCTAD and other interested UN agencies in the framework of the Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology, and Innovation for Sustainable Development in Belgrade in November 2019. Under pillar 3 of P166 capacity building in co-operation with regional commissions, ECE and UNCTAD organized a week-long training on innovation, investment, and entrepreneurship in Skopje in September 2021 for policy makers from transition countries.

### **Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)**

22. The focus of the work on public-private partnerships (PPPs) is on developing international PPP standards, recommendations, guidelines, tools and best practices in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and facilitate their implementation in countries through demand-driven national, regional, and international capacity building activities to assist member States in improving their legal and regulatory framework and develop pipelines of infrastructure projects. The UNECE Guiding Principles on People-first PPPs for the SDGs provide the normative basis for the work on PPPs.

23. The five People-first PPP outcomes for the SDGs, as elaborated in the Guiding Principles on People-first PPPs for the SDGs, adopted by the CICPPP at its thirteenth session in March 2019, have become an authoritative and highly respected source for policy makers on the appropriate institutional requirements for a new model of PPPs aligned with the SDGs. The People-first PPP approach for the SDGs and the UNECE Guiding Principles are now included among the key policy recommendations to Heads of State and Government in the context of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for

Development.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, a number of countries, such as Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine, are implementing the People-first PPP approach in their national policies and legislation to ensure that PPP projects are undertaken in full compliance with the SDGs.

24. In the reporting period, three major policy instruments were elaborated, including guidelines on promoting People-first PPP Waste-to-Energy projects for the Circular Economy submitted as a contribution to the high-level segment and cross-cutting theme of the sixty-ninth session of the ECE in April 2021. Furthermore, over 1,000 policy makers and practitioners from ten countries benefitted from PPP capacity-building and policy advisory activities.

***Development of standards, guiding principles, and recommendations***

25. The ECE continued its work to elaborate international standards, guidelines, and policy recommendations on People-first PPPs for the SDGs.

26. The first version of the People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology for the SDGs (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/3/Rev.1) was published in 2020. The Working Party welcomed the document very warmly, which it considered as an excellent basis going forward, and encouraged its dissemination and use during a pilot phase pursuant to a plan of action (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2, Annex II) implemented in 2021. The People-first PPP Evaluation Methodology for the SDGs (Methodology) was developed in two phases: Phase I in 2020 by a multi-disciplinary project team composed of over 100 experts; and in Phase II in 2021 by a core group of experts working closely with the Bureau of the Working Party and the secretariat. The revised Methodology in its self-assessment form is submitted to the Working Party at its fifth session in November 2021 for endorsement.

27. The work on the People-first PPP/Concession Model Law (Model Law) has progressed during the reporting period and remains on track to be concluded in 2021. Phase I of the Model Law was concluded in 2020, and work on Phase II was concluded in July 2021. A consolidated version of the Model Law is expected to be submitted by the Bureau to the Working Party at its fifth session, with a recommendation for its endorsement.

28. The Guidelines on promoting People-first PPP Waste-to-Energy Projects for the Circular Economy (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/5) were recognised by the Working Party at its fourth session in December 2020 as a good basis for further development as a contribution to the high-level segment and cross-cutting theme of the sixty-ninth session of the Economic Commission for Europe in April 2021.

29. PPP Standards in health policy, water, and sanitation and in urban rail are in various stages of preparation.

***Analysis***

30. The secretariat continues expanding the compendium of case studies as part of a campaign to collect 500 case studies that demonstrate the UNECE People-first PPP outcomes for the SDGs. Some 160 case studies have been collected so far, some of which have been measured and scored against the People-first PPP outcomes and the SDGs using the first version of the Evaluation Methodology developed by a multi-stakeholder Project Team.

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<sup>5</sup> See “Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond: Menu of Options for the Consideration of Heads of State and Government (Part II)”, September 2020 available at: [https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/financing\\_for\\_development\\_covid19\\_part\\_ii\\_hosg.pdf](https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/financing_for_development_covid19_part_ii_hosg.pdf)

***Policy advice and capacity-building to implement standards, guiding principles and recommendations***

31. The fifth edition of the UNECE International PPP Forum was held in Geneva in a hybrid mode on 22-26 April 2021 on the theme of “Building Back Better through People-first PPPs” with an international debate on the topic. A highlight of the Forum was a competition for the Building Back Better infrastructure award. The competition was a means to incentivize countries and project managers to test the first version of the Methodology in its self-assessment form and provide feedback on its improvement. Sixty-five projects from over 20 countries were submitted, and eleven of them were showcased at the Forum. The winners of the award were chosen directly by the participants through electronic voting: a first for the UNECE PPP Programme.

32. During the reporting period, the following policy advisory missions and capacity-building activities (in chronological order) were organized by the secretariat:

(a) Belarus: regional PPP workshop jointly organised by the ECE with the PPP unit of Belarus and the Brest City administration (Brest, 27 July 2019);

(b) Kuwait: high-level training workshop on PPPs in the Ports sector jointly organised by the ECE with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) (Kuwait City, 27 July 2019);

(c) Tajikistan: field mission to review the PPP law of Tajikistan jointly organised by the ECE with the State Committee on Investment and State Property Management (Dushanbe, 19-21 August 2019);

(d) Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, and the Russian Federation: study tour for Kyrgyz senior government officials to learn about PPP institutional capacity in Belarus and the Russian Federation, facilitated by the ECE (Minsk and Moscow, 26-31 August 2019);

(e) Kyrgyzstan: field mission to Kyrgyzstan to prepare guidelines to assist the public sector in the process of identification and initiation of People-first PPPs for the SDGs, jointly organised by the ECE with the Ministry of Economy (Bishkek, 3-5 September 2019);

(f) Belarus: workshop to present the draft PPP guide prepared by the ECE for the regional authorities in Brest jointly organised by the ECE with the Ministry of Economy and the local authorities in Brest (Brest, 24 October 2019);

(g) Kyrgyzstan: seminar to present the guidelines prepared by the ECE to assist the public sector in the process of identification and initiation of People-first PPPs for the SDGs, jointly organised by ECE with the Ministry of Economy (Bishkek, 30 October 2019);

(h) Kyrgyzstan: roundtable discussion on “New PPP legislation in the Kyrgyz Republic”, jointly organised by the ECE with the Ministry of Economy (Bishkek, 31 October 2019);

(i) Jordan: workshop on PPPs in the ports sector jointly organised by the ECE with ESCWA and the Islamic Development Bank for public officials from Greece, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon and Syria (Amman, 23-24 November 2019);

(j) Chile: workshop on the role of People-first PPPs in efficient, resilient, and sustainable infrastructure jointly organised by the ECE with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (Santiago, 10 December 2019);

(k) Chile: seminar on resilient People-first PPP infrastructure for the SDGs jointly organised by the ECE with ECLAC and the Chilean Chamber of Construction (Santiago, 11 December 2019);

(l) Tajikistan: workshop to present the study prepared by the ECE on the regulatory impact of the new PPP law in Tajikistan, jointly organised by ECE with the State Enterprise PPP Centre in Dushanbe (17 December 2019);

(m) Tajikistan: roundtable seminar on “Strengthening PPP institutional capacity and promoting the People-first PPP approach for the SDGs”, jointly organised by the ECE with the State Enterprise PPP Centre in Dushanbe, Tajikistan (18 December 2019);

(n) Ukraine: webinar on “Aligning PPP Legislation in Ukraine with the SDGs”, jointly organised by the ECE with the Ministry for Development of Economy, Trade and Agriculture (Online, 30 March 2021); and

(o) Ukraine: training webinar on “How to Design PPP Projects Aligned with the SDGs: the People-first Approach to PPPs”, jointly organised by the ECE with the Ministry for Development of Economy, Trade and Agriculture (Online, 25 May 2021).

### **III. Major activities planned for 2021 and beyond**

#### **Innovation and Competitiveness**

33. The thirteenth session of the ToS-ICP Policies will be held in November 2021, including a substantive session on the circular economy following up on the recommendations emerging from the session on that topic during the 2017 meeting.

34. The task force developing high-level policy principles on innovation for sustainable development will continue to meet regularly, presenting and discussing progress at subsequent sessions of ToS-ICP and CICPPP.

35. The I4SD review of Moldova and Uzbekistan will be finalised, published, and launched by February 2021. The review process for Armenia will continue and finish in late 2022.

36. The national capacity building process following up on the I4SD review of Georgia, including a policy handbook and study tour on innovation-enhancing procurement, a topic of relevance to the circular economy transition, will be finalized in 2021. A similar process for Moldova will be initiated.

37. The next edition of the IPO will be developed through the network of national focal points and experts and finish in 2022. A methodological guide with clear processes for repeating the process in other sub-regions will be developed and agreed.

38. The next session of the SPECA Working Group on Innovation and Technology for Sustainable Development will be chaired by Kyrgyzstan in October 2021, in virtual format.

39. The handbook on “Business incubators for sustainable development in the SPECA sub-region” as well as a new handbook on “Supporting innovative high-growth enterprises in the SPECA sub-region” will be developed and launched in Q1 2022. Drawing on the handbook, the series of online trainings for the SPECA stakeholders will be held in Q1 2022.

40. To support work under the SPECA innovation strategy, a publication on new approaches to innovation policy for the SPECA region, bringing together several on-going studies and national reviews, will be developed and discussed in a meeting in Q1 2022 with stakeholders and experts.

41. A new podcast series, “Innovation Matters”, will be launched. The series will contain regularly published episodes with in-depth discussions with leading experts on topics related to innovation and competitiveness, such as the platform economy, innovation



in transition economies, the innovation paradox, policy co-ordination, the fourth industrial revolution and the role of innovation in the circular economy transition.

42. To expand and build on these activities and further meet a range of requests for reviews and implementation support in line with the mandate of ToS-ICP, ECE has launched a comprehensive effort to secure sufficient extrabudgetary funding. ECE underscores the importance of support from Geneva delegations and member States in these efforts.

### **Public-Private Partnerships**

43. The fifth session of the Working Party on PPPs will be held in Geneva in a hybrid model on 29-30 November 2021. The session will further advance the work on developing international PPP standards, guidelines, and recommendations on People-first PPPs in support of the SDGs, in particular, by deciding on the Evaluation Methodology and the Model Law. The Working Party is also expected to adopt new Rules of Procedures.

44. The sixth edition of the UNECE International PPP Forum will be organised in May 2022.

45. International standards on PPPs in health policy, in water and sanitation and in urban rail will be finalized during 2022. The Guidelines on promoting People-first PPP Waste-to-Energy Projects for the Circular Economy will be further developed in 2021 and are expected to be finalised in 2022.

46. National and sub-regional policy advisory and capacity-building activities will be held in 2021 and 2022 as part of extrabudgetary projects in:

(a) Ukraine, to strengthen the capacity of public officials to develop and implement People-first PPP projects in line with the SDGs;

(b) Belarus and Kyrgyzstan, to promote effective partnerships between the public and the private sectors through People-first PPPs for the SDGs; and

(c) Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Ukraine, to design and implement People-first PPPs for the SDGs.

47. Support will be provided to Governments in self-assessing their PPP projects using the Evaluation Methodology.

48. The campaign to reach 500 people-first PPP case studies will continue to be promoted, and additional case studies will be collected and presented at the sixth International PPP Forum in May 2022.

## **IV. Any proposed change to the subsidiary structure of the Committee**

49. There are no changes proposed to the subsidiary structure of the Committee. The organizational structure of the CICPPP is shown in the annex to this report.

50. At its fourteenth session, the CICPPP adopted the Programmes of Work of the Economic Cooperation and Integration (ECI) Subprogramme for 2020 and 2021, as contained in documents ECE/CECI/2021/INF.6 and ECE/CECI/2021/9 respectively. The CICPPP also renewed the mandate of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies for an additional two years until 2022, as contained in document ECE/CECI/2021/2, Annex II. The CICPPP recommended the above decisions to the Executive Committee for approval.

## **V. Follow-up to the 2021 session of the Economic Commission for Europe**

51. Both workstreams covered by CICPPP, innovation and PPPs can be powerful drivers for circularity. CICPPP is giving effect to the Commission's decision through its respective two subsidiary bodies.

52. ToS-ICP has launched several activities on innovation for the circular economy aimed at mainstreaming circularity considerations into its work. Already as early as 2017, the ToS ICP had adopted good practices and policy recommendations for innovation for sustainable consumption and production (ECE/CECI/2018/3). Subsequently, in 2020, it developed good practices on the platform economy (ECE/CECI/2021/4) and on innovation-enhancing procurement for sustainable development (ECE/CECI/2021/5). At its forthcoming session this year, the Team will take stock of progress in the region and recommend further action to go circular. Where relevant, circular economy also is being integrated in I4SD reviews. For example, UNECE is currently working on a UNDA project with Georgia and other member States on promoting innovation-enhancing procurement, which can be a driver of innovation for the circular economy.

53. Also the Working Party on PPPs has looked at issues related to circularity. At its fourth session, in December 2020, the Guidelines on promoting People-first PPP Waste-to-Energy Projects for the Circular Economy (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2020/5) were recognised by the Working Party as a good basis for further development. At its fifth session in November 2021, the Working Party will hold a policy discussion to explore the extent to which the People-first PPP approach in support of the SDGs can contribute to the circular economy agenda in a holistic matter, that is, by increasing the circularity in infrastructure and by implementing infrastructure for the circular economy and beyond towards a sustainable economy. The discussion will also consider specific projects that deal with certain aspects of the circular economy agenda, in particular, the potential of waste-to-energy projects for residual non-recyclable materials

## **VI. Inter-sectoral activities: new activities and/or progress in existing inter-sectoral activities**

54. The ECE organised the 2020 and 2021 Regional Fora on Sustainable Development and the sixty-ninth session of the Economic Commission for Europe. ToS-ICP and the Working Party on PPPs contributed to roundtables and side events organized on these occasions. In particular, ToS-ICP also contributed to a roundtable on innovation for the circular economy at the 2019 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

55. ToS-ICP and the Working Party also made substantive contributions to the nexus areas on Smart Sustainable Cities, on Smart Connectivity, and on Monitoring and Measuring Progress Towards the SDGs, and in particular to a flagship publication on People-Smart Sustainable Cities.

## **VII. Technical cooperation activities**

56. Capacity-building and policy advisory activities were carried out and are planned as described in sections II and III above.

## VIII. Cooperation with other organizations

57. Participation in activities under theme 3 of UNCTAD P166 on capacity building on investment, technology, innovation, and enterprise development will continue for any events involving ECE member States after the initial event held with strong ECE involvement in Skopje in September 2021.

58. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) will contribute to a sub-regional capacity-building seminar on innovation policy. The established cooperation on innovation and competitiveness policies with ESCAP in the framework of SPECA will continue, including on the implementation of the Action Plan of the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development.

59. In the context of the Innovation Policy Outlook and the I4SD reviews, ECE plans to further engage a range of partners systematically. The Joint Research Commission (JRC) of the European Commission has been involved in the pilot IPO and in the Moldova I4SD review and will be a partner in the 2022 update. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) is and will be a strong partner for growing work on engaging diaspora for innovation, as has been the case in a dedicated chapter of the Moldova I4SD review and recent policy dialogue on the topic held in connection with the informal consultations in 2020. The secretariat will act as a peer reviewer for the “SME Policy Outlook” of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). OECD will in turn serve as a peer reviewer for the IPO of the ECE, including the update planned for 2022. Local European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) office will be consulted on draft IPO and I4SDRs findings. The World Bank and International Finance Corporation (IFC) will serve as important resources during country missions and fact-finding meetings. Synergies with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) will be further explored, namely how its Global Innovation Index data can inform the IPO, and vice-versa.

60. In cooperation with the other four Regional Commissions, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and UNCTAD, the ECE participates in a large capacity building project to promote effective partnerships between the public and private sector in countries (the ECE work focuses on Belarus and Kyrgyzstan).

61. Similarly, in cooperation with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the UN Resident Coordinator in Ukraine, the ECE participated in a comprehensive capacity building project to strengthen the capacity of public officials in Ukraine to develop and implement People-first PPPs in support of the SDGs.

62. In cooperation with the secretariat of the Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS), the ECE promotes international legal PPP best practices in the CIS region.

## Annex

### **The organizational structure of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships**

