



Economic Commission for Europe
Inland Transport Committee
Working Party on Transport Statistics
Seventy-third session

Geneva (hybrid format), 15–17 June 2022

**Report of the Working Party on Transport Statistics
 on its seventy-third session**
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I. Attendance

Document: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/183

1. The Working Party on Transport Statistics held its seventy-third session from 15 to 17 June 2022 in Geneva. Due to travel restrictions the meeting was conducted in a hybrid/online format. The session was chaired by Mr. Robert Larmour (Canada) due to the absence of Mr Michael Scrim of Canada who was elected chair in 2020.
2. The Working Party was attended by the following countries for some or all of the sessions: Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Uzbekistan. Islamic Republic of Iran and Tunisia participated at the invitation of the Secretariat.
3. The European Commission (DG MOVE, Eurostat, and European Union Agency for Railways (ERA)) was represented.
4. The following United Nations specialized agencies were present: International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and World Health Organization (WHO).
5. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations were present: International Road Federation, International Transport Forum (ITF).
6. The following non-governmental organization was represented: Invenium Data Insights, OEBS railways, Positium, Flowminder Foundation, Wuppertal University and European Data Journalism Network (EDJNet).

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

Document: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/182

7. The Working Party adopted the provisional agenda, as amended.

III. Election of officers (agenda item 2)

8. The Working Party elected Mr John Wilkins of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as Chair for the sessions in 2023 and 2024. Ms Marly Odekerken-Smeets of the Netherlands and Ms Nele Van Der Wielen of Ireland were elected as vice-Chairs for 2023 and 2024.

IV. Big data for transport statistics (agenda item 3)

Documents: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2022/3

9. Invenium Data Insights and OEBS (Austrian Railways) presented their work on using anonymised floating phone data from A1 Telekom Austria to improve rail passenger statistics. Their analysis with a probabilistic model based on Machine Learning Algorithms informs policy decisions and impacts of COVID-19 on mobility and is used by various sectors, including business, tourism, transport, among others.
10. During discussions delegates asked about anonymisation of the data and challenges faced regarding privacy issues. Invenium Data Insights and OEBS answered that they have several regulations in place for data privacy, and people are informed in advance about the data collection and its usage. They confirmed that they do not analyse any individual activities but only aggregate results to inform about transportation matters. Another question was on harmonisation of methodologies. Currently, there is no harmonisation across countries, but it was noted that cooperation among public sectors, private sectors, and international organisations would be useful to share methodologies.

11. Wuppertal University (Germany) updated delegates on their work on new ways to construct origin-destination matrices for the whole of Germany, using floating car data (FCD) from the German Automobile Club, following up on their presentation last year. This work is conducted in cooperation with the German Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure. They introduced two methods for calculating travel time matrices, namely trip-based and trajectory-based, and presented the advantages and disadvantages of these methods. Although challenges remain to map FCD points to road networks the pilot project has high potential to monitor accessibility of central places, validate network assignment models and calculate the effects of any future generalised speed limit.

12. Flowminder Foundation presented their work using Call Detail Record (CDR) data in low and middle-income countries and the potential of this for transport data. Using CDR data, their work provides near-real time estimates of population movements, commuting behaviours and changes in population density. They use additional data on demographics, phone use and mobility from field and phone surveys to address biases, ensuring privacy is respected. During discussions, there was a comment on how to scale up the project. Flowminder is currently working on this. They also combine mobile data with CDR data and other survey data.

13. The ITU described recent work as part of the UN Committee on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics (CEBD), including upcoming handbooks, one of which is on transport and commuting statistics. The production of this handbook is reliant on having sufficient country examples and input. The presentation encouraged interest from member States in collaborating on mobile phone in transport statistics, getting them involved with the production of the handbook if possible but at least gathering any use cases of mobile phone data in transport statistics production that they may have already, even if they relate to experimental statistics or works in progress.

14. After presentations by Invenium/OEBB, Wuppertal University, Flowminder Foundation and the ITU, the Working Party encouraged member States to involve themselves in the UN task team on mobile phone data, and in particular to provide any relevant examples of using mobile phone data for transport statistics production.

V. Travel Surveys (agenda item 4)

Documents: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2022/9

15. This agenda item was moderated by Mr John Wilkins of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Countries presented their innovation efforts in conducting their travel surveys, including updated data collection methods, changing questions due to increasing tele-working, new forms of mobility, and integration with big data sources, among others.

16. Netherlands presented the Dutch National Travel Survey, ODIN. It is a daily survey that continues throughout the year. It is conducted through Computer Aided Web Interviewing (CAWI). The annual sample includes more than 45,000 respondents, who are at least 6 years old or older. The questionnaire has a logical structure and redundant questions are excluded when register data is available. The results of ODIN are also available in English. During discussions, delegates asked about sampling methods and if they faced any challenges to reach out to specific groups of people via the online survey. Netherlands answered that they break down respondents to several groups, based on their socio-demographic characteristics, such as sex, location, and age, and collect answers from each group to ensure robust sampling. They contact respondents by a letter first, and then send them links for the survey.

17. Latvia presented their analysis on mobility of the Latvian population in 2021. Latvia conducted the travel survey in 2017 and 2021. The questionnaire in 2021 improved the existing questionnaire from 2017, by including new modes of transport (i.e. electric cars), usage of sustainable mobility (i.e. vehicle sharing, ride sharing), impacts of COVID-19 on mobility habits, and new methodology for distance calculation. Their work shows that the use of public transport decreased in 2021, potentially due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The

complete survey sample was about 11,000 persons, sampling all residents of Latvia aged between 15 and 84. Data collection was done via CAWI and Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) was not conducted due to COVID-19 restrictions, that limit face-to-face interactions.

18. Slovenia presented their passenger mobility statistics, that is based on passenger mobility survey conducted in 2021, following the first survey conducted in 2017. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, they used CAWI and CATI to collect data. The sample included 38,000 persons aged between 15 and 84 years old. During discussions, there were questions on data dissemination methods and the privacy of the personal data. Slovenia answered that they follow Eurostat guidelines for data dissemination, and that they will publish the data as time series data as most variables are comparable between 2017 and 2021, except for a few new variables that were added for 2021. In regard to the privacy of the data, Slovenia answered that they do not know the exact address of the respondents. They only know the street name and all samples are collected anonymously, so they don't face any issues or push back from respondents with regards to privacy.

19. Sweden presented their work based on the Swedish National Travel Survey. The survey includes 5 modes of travel for trips, that are by foot, bicycle, public transport, car and others. Since 2019, Sweden started to collect data via postal and online questionnaire, moving on from telephone interviews and visit interviews. The survey response rate has decreased steadily since 1995, and currently is around 30%. Sweden noted that they are also working with mobile network data with other authorities, as it looks promising. They are using big data to complement traditional travel survey data, rather than to replace it. The challenges remain to deliver sufficient accuracy and transparency of big data, while protecting personal privacy.

20. Finland presented the Finnish National Travel Survey and how it provides an overall picture of Finnish passenger mobility. The first nationwide travel survey was collected in 1974, and the survey has been conducted on a regular basis, every five or six years since then. The latest survey was conducted in 2021, and it covers every day of the year, collecting information on the mode of travel (i.e. by foot, bicycle, cars, public transport) and the purpose of travel (i.e. shopping, work, leisure time, outdoor activities). The analysis of 2021 survey will be ready in early 2023. The survey results are used to improve mobility and traffic safety and reduce the environmental impacts of transport. The survey data is available for diverse transport related research projects. The survey in 2021 was conducted through web questionnaire and phone interviews. The sample includes about 25,000 persons that are above 5 years old.

21. The Working Party welcomed this agenda item decided to continue exploring ways to improve harmonisation and best practice sharing on travel surveys at the international level.

VI. The transport-related Sustainable Development Goals (agenda item 5)

Documents: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2022/1

22. The Working Party heard an update from the UNECE statistics division on their Sustainable Development Goal monitoring activities. In particular this included the presentation of their latest report on assessing whether the ECE region is on track to meet the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, indicator by indicator. The secretariat also described the recent publication, *How Many Targets Will Be Achieved in the UNECE Region?*, which assesses progress for each SDG target.

23. The WHO updated delegates on their worldwide estimates for road traffic fatalities, in advance of their global road safety report that is due in 2023. They noted that there are discrepancies between official data and WHO estimates, that can be caused by data availability, differing definitions, and underreporting. WHO is making progress in collecting data, liaising with the focal points from national statistics divisions in countries, in advance of their next report. WHO has also examined the impact of COVID-19. Their analysis shows that at the beginning of the pandemic, there was a decrease in total accidents, but fatal

accidents increased. They expect that the impacts of COVID-19 will not be sustainable and the numbers will have gone back to pre-covid rates with the lifting of relevant restrictions. During the discussions, a delegate from Ireland noted that road fatalities had also increased in Ireland in 2020, compared to 2019.

24. The secretariat presented UNECE work on the transport-related Sustainable Development Goals. They introduced the UNECE flagship publication, *Measuring and Monitoring Progress Toward the Sustainable Development Goals*, and how future meetings can explore relationships between transport and other domains in line with the *Inland Transport Committee Strategy to 2030*. Another UNECE publication on road safety, *Statistics of Road Traffic Accidents in Europe and North America*, was shown. The Secretariat also presented a data story on road safety, which allows more effective dissemination of transport data to policy makers and the public. During the presentation, additional regional specific indicators that are appropriate to measure sustainable inland transport in the ECE region, based on indicators having an existing data availability and a clear interpretation were also discussed.

25. Mr François Cuenot, the secretary of the UNECE Working Party on Pollution and Energy (GRPE), presented his work on estimating live CO₂ emissions and considering data collection on electric vehicle charging infrastructure. The work aims to understand the environmental impact of electric vehicles in the upstream phase, where electricity is produced, to estimate real-time emissions of electric vehicles. It also explores the mitigation potential of electric vehicles by recharging them during low carbon intensity hours. During the discussions, the importance of developing reporting and monitoring mechanisms to be able to allocate electricity use to end-use sectors was noted. The United Kingdom and Denmark commented that they are starting to calculate the electricity consumption from households for charging electric vehicles and showed interest in further communications on this.

26. The Working Party took note of activities of different international organisations and the secretariat on the transport-related SDGs. There was agreement with the secretariat's approach to considering UNECE-specific transport SDG indicators. Countries are encouraged to send examples of any SDG-relevant indicators and share any work in using data to monitor electric vehicles. The Working Party took note of the information and recommendations presented in the nexus report on *Measuring and Monitoring Progress Towards the Sustainable Development Goals*, and encouraged its members to review and possibly apply the recommendations of the report nationally.

VII. Statistical activities and challenges faced by member States (agenda item 6)

27. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland presented their approach to developing faster transport indicators and forward-looking statistics. The Department for Transport developed its standard data collections, while also exploring other sources to provide effective insight that met user needs – all whilst maintaining statistical integrity. They used a wide range of methods, including their existing automatic traffic counters and new data from a company providing ticket machines to local buses across the country. Their work includes daily tracking of mobility by mode (including cycling and walking) during the COVID-19 pandemic (which won a UK civil service award), using social media data to monitor disruption, and the challenges of predicting travel patterns post-pandemic. They also discussed their actions to work with other Ministries to access administrative and operational data in partnership with industry to build a common evidence base. During the discussions, Ireland and Austria commented that they also have had high demand for real-time data since the pandemic.

VIII. Data collection, methodological development and harmonization of transport statistics (agenda item 7)

A. Tram and metro statistics

Documents: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2022/5

28. The secretariat presented an update on the collection of tram and metro statistics, their value for tracking public transport post-covid-19, and described efforts made to modernise the collection of these data.

B. Common questionnaire

Documents: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2022/2; ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2022/10

29. The European Commission (Eurostat) presented technical aspects of the new system for collecting common questionnaire data and discussed the availability of data collected. Member States shared their experiences and challenges in using the new excel-based collection system.

30. The Secretariat presented the data quality aspects and the activities to increase the response rate of the common questionnaire over the last twelve months. In addition, the Secretariat discussed the plan and proposals to conduct a further streamlining of the common questionnaire this year. Areas to consider for streamlining mentioned include load capacity of road goods vehicles and the road vehicle-km chapter. Member States were encouraged to provide concrete streamlining proposals by mid-July 2022.

C. Vehicle statistics

Documents: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2022/6

31. The secretariat introduced a discussion around certain aspects of vehicle statistics, including emissions from electric vehicles depending on the time that they are charged (and the policy implications this), the number and capacity of vehicle charging stations, as well as statistics on the trade in used vehicles.

IX. Traffic censuses and geospatial statistics (agenda item 8)

A. 2020 E-Road traffic censuses

Documents: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2022/12

32. The secretariat presented the status of the 2020 E-Road census, noting that several countries had delayed the collection of these data due to the COVID-19 pandemic creating non-typical traffic conditions as well as making collection of the data more difficult).

33. The Working Party encouraged members to share their views on updates to the census for the 2025 round, particularly on how to modernise the exercise. The Working Party asked the secretariat to continue work on visualising traffic in a geospatial format.

B. 2020 E-Rail traffic censuses

34. The secretariat reminded delegates to provide 2020 E-Rail census information by the deadline of 30 June 2022. In particular, delegates are requested to provide data on rail line traffic in a geospatial format where possible, in addition to the data requested by Eurostat (only relevant for countries who submit data to Eurostat). Given the exceptional nature of traffic in 2020 due to COVID-19, the secretariat will request that data for 2019 are provided as well to make a more meaningful historical comparison.

C. Other geospatial applications in transport statistics

Documents: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2022/11

35. The secretariat has worked for some time in using additional data sources in addition to the traffic censuses, notably Eurostat origin-destination information, to investigate further potential in geospatial transport statistics. This was discussed in relation to monitoring intermodal transport and potentially identifying modal shifting opportunities. Member States with their own datasets on measuring intermodal transport were invited to share them.

36. Mr Giorgio Comai of OBC Transeuropa and the European Data journalism Network presented their work using existing data sources to make comparisons between rail and aviation corridors. Their work finds the busiest European air routes that can be travelled by train. The presentation included key steps of the data processing, main data issues faced, and possible solutions. During the discussions, the main factors that affect people's decision on transport modes, such as accessibility to the airport or train station, were discussed.

X. Dissemination of transport statistics by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (agenda item 9)

37. The secretariat presented data stories, the interactive new transport statistics Infocards dashboard, and recent publications. Working Party welcomed the secretariat's approach to disseminating transport data through the use of data stories.

XI. Programme of Work 2022–2024 and biennial evaluation 2020–2021 (agenda item 10)

Documents: ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2022/4

38. The Working Party adopted its proposed Programme of Work for 2022–2024.

XII. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Inland Transport Committee and its Subsidiary Bodies (agenda item 11)

39. The Working Party noted the summary of proceedings at the 84th session of the Inland Transport Committee. It asked the secretariat to prepare a document on the Working Party's plans to align the Working Party's Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure with those of the Committee.

XIII. Statistical activities of international organizations of interest to the Working Party (agenda item 12)

40. The Working Party took note of information provided by DG MOVE, EUROSTAT, ITF and ERA.

A. European Commission (DG MOVE)

41. The representative of DG MOVE informed the Working Party about recent developments in European union transport policy, such as the European Green Deal and the Sustainable and Smart mobility Strategy. Delivering the European Green Deal Package (from July 2021) aims to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels. The second package of proposals (from December 2021) aims at improving efficiency and sustainability.

42. The presentation also outlined uses of statistics for policy measures and monitoring, such as impact assessments, evaluations, economic analyses and monitoring frameworks for SDGs and resilience, among others.

B. European Commission (Eurostat)

43. The Working Party was informed about the current activities of the European Commission (Eurostat). The representative presented a brief overview of their publications on transport statistics “European Union Transport in figures” and “Transport in the European Union: Current Trends and Issues” and discussed European Green Deal and other transport specific policies for environment. They presented transport statistics in the context of the pandemic. The presentation also covered European Union legal acts for collecting statistics on transport, the latest statistical development in 2022 and Eurostat’s support for new transport statistics.

C. International Transport Forum

44. The representative of the ITF informed the Working Party about their transport data collection and dissemination. He also introduced transport performance indicators that are calculated based on existing data. The next ITF statistics meeting has been postponed and will take place on 19-20 September 2022 in Paris. At this meeting data streaming of common questionnaire, data collection on emerging mobility patterns, and transport satellite account guidelines will be discussed.

D. European Union Agency for Railways

45. The representative of ERA informed the Working Party about their current activities on the monitoring of the railway system. This includes their statutory reporting, which assess the achievement of Common Safety Targets (CST) for EU Member States based on Common Safety Indicators (CSIs), ex-post evaluations, and data and information analysis. The presentation showed for example that significant accident and resulting casualties have decreased steadily since 2010, with 2020 being the safest year ever. However, the overall cost of railway accident remains high while large differences in safety level still exist between EU Member States.

XIV. Other business (agenda item 13)

A. Date of next session

46. The Working Party was informed that the next session is provisionally planned for 15 to 17 May 2023 at the Palais des Nations (Geneva).

B. Information on upcoming meetings on transport statistics

47. The Working Party was informed about dates and locations of upcoming meetings on transport statistics in 2022 and 2023.

XV. Summary of decisions (agenda item 14)

48. The main decisions were summarized and agreed, as amended, at the end of the session. The Chair, in cooperation with the secretariat, prepared this report.