



Economic and Social Council

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Economic Commission for Europe

Seventieth session

Geneva, 18 and 19 April 2023

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening and adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the seventieth session

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m.
on Tuesday, 18 April 2023*

The session provides a forum for the consideration of issues of importance for the economic integration and cooperation among the countries of the region, and an opportunity to review the progress of the Commission's activities. The session also enables the Governments of member States to examine the secretariat's report on the activities of the Executive Committee (EXCOM) of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the work accomplished during the two preceding years. Furthermore, Governments are invited to consider decisions to guide the Commission's work for the future. The following annotations to the provisional agenda provide background information on each of the proposed items and suggestions regarding their consideration at the session.

* In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, the secretariat will explore options to organize the meeting, or segments thereof, in a hybrid format to facilitate in-room and remote participation, as needed.



I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda.

A. High-level segment

Digital and green transformations for sustainable development in the region of the Economic Commission for Europe

2. High-level dialogue.
3. Roundtable: Digital and green: the twin transformations to advance sustainable development.
4. Consideration of the high-level statement.

B. General segment

5. Report on activities on the high-level theme of the sixty-ninth session: “Promoting circular economy and sustainable use of natural resources in the region of the Economic Commission for Europe.”
6. Report on activities of the Executive Committee.
7. Other issues calling for decision by the Commission.
8. Election of officers.
9. Other business.
10. Adoption of the report of the session.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda

Documentation: E/ECE/1502

1. The Commission will adopt its agenda.

A. High-level segment

Digital and green transformations for sustainable development in the region of the Economic Commission for Europe

Documentation: E/ECE/1504, E/ECE/1505

2. The high-level segment of the 2023 Commission will be held under the overall theme “Digital and green transformations for sustainable development in the region of the Economic Commission for Europe.”

3. A green transformation is urgently needed to address pressing challenges, including sustainable energy transition and deployment of low carbon solutions, to fight climate change, biodiversity losses, and reduction of environmental pressures. Digital technologies are opening up new possibilities for economic development, policy implementation and the management of public services, as well as offer the potential for an improved management of natural resources and facilitate the shift towards a circular economy by filling information gaps, increasing efficiency and making possible new forms of economic activity, including changes in production and consumption patterns. Nevertheless, specific attention is also needed because these technologies can be energy and resource intensive.

4. The high-level segment will seek to explore related questions, including:
 - How can the digital and green transformations be advanced in a way that supports more inclusive, prosperous, circular and sustainable economies? What are the key drivers and impediments in moving in this direction? What is the role of international cooperation in enhancing these positive impacts? How can required resources be mustered?
 - How should regulations and other normative work adapt and evolve to the new context defined by the digital transformation? How can they contribute to harness the potential of digitalization to advance the green transformation? What are the implications for ECE work?
 - How can partnerships be developed to advance digital and green transformations? What are the new types of partnerships that digitalization is making possible?

2. High-level dialogue

5. Harnessing the potential of digitalization to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda has become a major policy concern across the region, with multiple ramifications across different domains. In this context, the high-level dialogue will focus on policy initiatives to foster the digital transformation and maximize its beneficial impacts for sustainable development and initiatives aimed at accelerating the green transformation and a shift to a circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources, the role of international cooperation in accelerating progress, and the contributions that ECE can make in related areas.

6. Heads of delegation are also invited to consider action taken by governments and other stakeholders to promote the adoption of digital technologies to address environmental challenges, enhance inclusion and increase prosperity for all.

3. Roundtable: Digital and green: the twin transformations to advance sustainable development

7. The session will provide an opportunity for member States to exchange views and consider different aspects of the high-level theme, including with key stakeholders, such as youth, academia, private sector, international financial institutions, multilateral development partners and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. Delegations and invited guests may wish to highlight relevant national and regional experiences and best practices and share their vision for digital and green transformations for sustainable development.

4. Consideration of the high-level statement

Documentation: E/ECE/1506

8. Member States will consider the high-level statement on key issues before the seventieth Commission session.

B. General segment

5. Report on activities on the high-level theme of the sixty-ninth session: “Promoting circular economy and sustainable use of natural resources in the region of the Economic Commission for Europe”

Documentation: E/ECE/1507

9. The sixty-ninth session of the Commission, in decision B (69), para 18, “requested the secretariat to present a progress report on the work of the Commission on the promotion of a circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources for consideration at its seventieth session.” This report is provided in document E/ECE/1507.

10. Member States will consider the report. They may also wish to consider if the Executive Committee should designate a cross-cutting theme for the high-level segment of future Commission sessions at the end of a given Commission year to facilitate closer collaboration across the secretariat, the subsidiary intergovernmental architecture and the broad expert community of the Commission and make their collective expertise available to the Commission in time for its deliberations.

6. Report on activities of the Executive Committee

Documentation: E/ECE/1508

11. Following the review of the ECE reform, EXCOM was established in 2006 to act as the governing body of ECE during the intersessional period of the Commission. Document E/ECE/1508 contains a report of the activities of EXCOM since the last Commission session. The special procedures adopted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure business continuity will be taken into account. The Commission may wish to provide views and comments on the functioning of EXCOM.

7. Other issues calling for decision by the Commission

Documentation: E/ECE/1509, E/ECE/1510

12. The Commission will be invited to approve any other decision as necessary. Among the draft decisions before the Commission is the proposed extension of the mandate of the Regional Forum for Sustainable Development. In this regard and further to decision B (68), the Commission may also consider an evaluation of the added value of the Regional Forum, as contained in document E/ECE/1510.

8. Election of officers

13. Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission states: "The Commission shall, at each biennial session, elect a country from among its members to hold the chair for the period of the biennium. The representative of the elected country will be the Chairperson. The Commission will also, at the same meeting, elect two countries whose representatives will become the Vice-Chairpersons for the period of the biennium. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission will also serve as the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Executive Committee for the period of the biennium." Accordingly, under this item, elections for the Chair and Vice-Chairs will be held.

9. Other business**10. Adoption of the report of the session**

Documentation: E/ECE/1503

14. The Commission will consider the report of the seventieth session.
