

**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE**

**WELTGESUNDHEITSORGANISATION
REGIONALBÜRO FÜR EUROPA**

**ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA SANTÉ
BUREAU RÉGIONAL DE L'EUROPE**

**ВСЕМИРНАЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ
ЗДРАВООХРАНЕНИЯ
ЕВРОПЕЙСКОЕ РЕГИОНАЛЬНОЕ БЮРО**



**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR
EUROPE**

**COMMISSION ÉCONOMIQUE DES
NATIONS UNIES POUR L'EUROPE**

**ЕВРОПЕЙСКАЯ
ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКАЯ КОМИССИЯ**

**TRANSPORT HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT PAN-EUROPEAN PROGRAMME
THE PEP**

**37th Meeting of the Bureau of the Steering Committee
of the Transport, Health and Environment
Pan-European Programme (THE PEP)**

29 June 2020, Online meeting

**ENGLISH ONLY
10 July 2020**

REPORT OF THE MEETING

I. INTRODUCTION AND PARTICIPATION

1. The thirty-seventh meeting of the Bureau of the Steering Committee of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) was convened online, because of the persisting travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. The Bureau meeting was attended by its members from the following member States: Austria, France, Georgia, Netherlands, North Macedonia, and Switzerland.
3. The Bureau members from Norway and the Russian Federation, who are the Vice-Chairs of the Steering Committee, had informed the secretariat previously that they would not be able to join. Representatives of the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) of the Netherlands also attended, at the invitation of the Chair.
4. THE PEP Secretariat was represented by Mr. Nicholas Bonvoisin, Ms. Virginia Fusé and Ms. Amy Choi (UNECE Environment Division), Mr. Francesco Dionori (UNECE Sustainable Transport Division), and Ms. Francesca Racioppi, Mr. Massimo Cozzone and Ms. Nino Sharashidze (WHO/Europe).
5. Mr. Robert Thaler (Austria), Chair of the Bureau, opened and chaired the meeting.
6. The Bureau adopted the provisional agenda as proposed by the Secretariat.

II. PREPARATIONS FOR THE EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

7. The Chair observed that the COVID-19 pandemic posed a burden on many countries. With travel restrictions and limitations of large gatherings still in place, he confirmed his country's proposal to postpone the High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment to 2021.
8. The Bureau agreed to propose to the Steering Committee to postpone the High-level Meeting to 2021. As discussed at THE PEP extraordinary meeting on 22 April 2020, the Bureau decided to convene the eighteenth session of the Steering Committee in Geneva during the dates originally planned for the High-level Meeting and special session of the Steering Committee (25-27 November 2020).
9. The Bureau requested the secretariat to organize the eighteenth session of the Steering Committee, in particular, interpretation in the three UNECE official languages during the session and translation in the three languages of the following official documents:
 - a. Annotated provisional agenda for the eighteenth session of the Steering Committee;
 - b. Report of the eighteenth session of the Steering Committee;

- c. Draft declaration of the Fifth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment;
 - d. Draft programme of work for 2020-2021;
 - e. Status of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme Trust Fund;
 - f. Draft pan-European master plan for cycling promotion;
 - g. Draft workplan for 2021-2026;
 - h. Brochure on facts and figures on the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP);
 - i. Mobility during and after an epidemic in the short to medium term;
 - j. Mobility during and after an epidemic in the medium to long term.
10. Bureau members decided to indicate in the agenda a slot for a seminar or symposium on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and the role of THE PEP in the long-term, as a guide to member States for future investments.
 11. The secretariat also presented three possible scenarios for the Steering Committee meeting in November, depending on the evolution of the pandemic:
 - a. Scenario one: no travel restrictions. The meeting would take place in person, with delegates travelling to Geneva;
 - b. Scenario two: limited travel restrictions. The meeting would take place in a hybrid form, with some delegates attending in person and others participating by electronic means;
 - c. Scenario three: travel restrictions. The meeting would take place in a virtual format only.
 12. Scenarios two and three might raise questions as to whether the meeting could be considered a full session of the Steering Committee. Only when the Steering Committee meets in a full session, can official decisions be taken. For a meeting to be considered a full session, interpretation in the three UNECE official languages must be provided. Systems for online interpretation were being tested by the United Nations administration in Geneva. Should they function, interpretation might be granted for a two-hour period in the morning and two-hour period in the afternoon. This would be different from the three-hour periods in use for in-person meetings and might affect the participation of those living in time zones far from Geneva.
 13. The Bureau thanked the secretariat for the presentation and considered the following:
 - a. The draft agenda for the Steering Committee might need to be adapted to reflect the possible scenarios;
 - b. A silence procedure for the adoption of decisions might need to be introduced, to address instances in which online interpretation would not function;
 - c. For decisions to be taken by silence procedure, official documents should be shared with focal points and members of the permanent missions in Geneva at least two weeks before the Steering Committee meets.
 14. While no changes to the draft agenda were to be done before the submission date, unless the situation would be clearer, member States were to keep the different scenarios in mind while preparing their delegations for the Steering Committee meeting.
 15. The secretariat presented the draft programme of work for 2020-2021 and provided an oral overview of the status of the trust fund. The Bureau was to provide comments on the draft agenda and draft programme of work by 10 July 2020.

III. THE FIFTH HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON TRANSPORT, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

16. The Chair, on behalf of the host country of the Fifth High-level Meeting, announced that no dates in 2021 had yet been identified for the holding of the meeting. Negotiations with the United Nations Office in Vienna had been made more difficult by the halving of the capacity of meeting rooms due to restrictions imposed because of the pandemic. The host country was exploring other possible venues for the meeting. Other options explored were to convene the High-level Meeting remotely in 2021 or face-to-face in 2022.

17. The Bureau requested the secretariat to inform the focal points for THE PEP and permanent missions to the United Nations in Geneva of the postponement of the Fifth High-level Meeting until 2021.
18. The Bureau heard short updates on activities carried out by Partnerships, task forces and other work linked to the outcome of the High-level Meeting and on the preparation of official documents for the High-level Meeting. The following were highlighted:
 - a. Task force on Green and Healthy Sustainable Transport Principles: after the report of the secretariat, the Bureau decided that contributions to complete the work on the principles would be in-kind only;
 - b. THE PEP facts and figures brochure: representatives of RIVM presented the work undertaken and the outline of the brochure. The Bureau appreciated the outline and agreed to provide a feedback on it by 10 July. The Bureau also highlighted that data need to provide a pan-European perspective and, if data or geographic coverage would be missing, case studies should be used;
 - c. Draft pan-European master plan for cycling promotion: representatives of the Partnership informed the Bureau that Czechia had taken the lead on including aspects related to the COVID-19 pandemic in the draft. A meeting of the Partnership was to take place virtually on 14 September 2020.
 - d. Draft declaration and draft workplan for 2021-2026: the discussion on both documents, including on a possible legal framework for THE PEP, was moved to the Preparatory meeting (30 June) because of a lack of time.
19. The secretariat informed the Bureau that following discussions at the extraordinary meeting on 22 April, WHO side of the Secretariat initiated the development of the Guidance on Supporting healthy urban transport and mobility during the easing of COVID-19 measures. The work was being undertaken in collaboration with WHO Headquarters and Regional Offices. The Secretariat thanked THE PEP Bureau for providing comments and assured the Bureau that the relevant acknowledgement would be reflected in the Guidance.

II. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

20. The Chair summarized the discussions and decisions of the meeting and closed the meeting. He reminded Bureau members about the preparatory meeting due to take place virtually the following day, 30 June 2020.