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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION**
Regional Office for Europe

HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH
THE PEP Steering Committee
(Third session, 11-12 April 2005)

**THE PEP AT THE FOURTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
ON ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH**

Budapest, 23-25 June 2004

Note from the secretariat

INTRODUCTION

1. The fourth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health “The future for our children” took place in Budapest on 23-25 June 2004¹.
2. The Conference was attended by some 1,000 participants, representing: Ministries of Health and Environment of the WHO European Region as well as of Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States of America; international organizations (UNICEF, UNECE, UNEP, WMO, European Commission, European Parliament, European Environment Agency, Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety, OECD, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe), and civil society organizations (European Eco-Forum, European Public Health Alliance, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, International Federation of Environmental Health, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, World Business Council for Sustainable Development, International Society of Doctors for the Environment, Healthy Planet Forum).

¹ <http://www.euro.who.int/budapest2004>

3. In line with the indications provided by THE PEP Steering Committee², efforts were made to: ensure the maximum visibility for THE PEP at the Conference; raise participants' awareness of the objectives and achievements of the process, renew high level political support for its implementation; and highlight the contributions made to the development of the Children's Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE).

1. DOCUMENTS RELEVANT TO THE PEP ADOPTED IN BUDAPEST

(a) Conference Declaration (paragraphs 5a and 5b)

4. The Budapest Conference Declaration³ acknowledges progress achieved to date and reaffirms commitments and support to THE PEP implementation. In particular:

“5a. We recall the commitments we made in the London Charter on Transport, Environment and Health and acknowledge the establishment of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan- European Programme (THE PEP), which was submitted to WSSD. We commend the significant progress that has already been achieved by THE PEP and recognize the relevance of these initiatives to successful implementation of the Children's Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE). We reaffirm the commitments we made to THE PEP, including the allocation of adequate resources for implementing the activities outlined in THE PEP workplan. We will continue our efforts to ensure adequate participation by newly independent states and south-eastern European countries; to strengthen, encourage and support more active involvement of the health sector in the process; and especially to integrate health arguments into the transport and environment agenda at national level.

5b. We invite THE PEP Steering Committee and its Bureau, together with intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, with the assistance of the WHO/United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Secretariat, to implement THE PEP plan of action by providing coordination, monitoring progress and undertaking appropriate actions to that effect, and we commit ourselves to supporting their endeavours.”

(b) Children's Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE)

5. Work carried out as part of THE PEP implementation has provided a direct input to the development of the CEHAPE⁴. In particular, THE PEP project “Transport Related Health Impacts and their Costs and Benefits with a Particular Focus on Children” has developed state-of-the-art reviews of the effects of air pollution, noise, physical activity and psychological and social factors on children's health, promoting the economic valuation of

² Summary Report of the Second Session of the Steering Committee for Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) (Geneva, 29-30 March 2004) ECE/AC.21/2004/14 EUR/5045236/14

³ Declaration of the fourth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health. Document EUR/04/5046267/6, (<http://www.euro.who.int/document/e83335.pdf>)

⁴ Children's Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe. Document EUR/04/5046267/7 (<http://www.euro.who.int/document/e83338.pdf>)

these costs, and identifying policy actions to help reduce the burden of transport-related health effects on children.

6. The outcomes of this work have been fed into the background material for the development of the CEHAPE and its four regional goals, which present the commitments to be taken by European member States to protect children's health in key priority areas. The following three of the regional goals are of relevance to THE PEP :

***Regional Priority Goal II.** We aim to prevent and substantially reduce health consequences from accidents and injuries and pursue a decrease in morbidity from lack of adequate physical activity, by promoting safe, secure and supportive human settlements for all children.*

***Regional Priority Goal III.** We aim to prevent and reduce respiratory disease due to outdoor and indoor air pollution, thereby contributing to a reduction in the frequency of asthmatic attacks, in order to ensure that children can live in an environment with clean air.*

***Regional Priority Goal IV.** We commit ourselves to reducing the risk of disease and disability arising from exposure to hazardous chemicals (such as heavy metals), physical agents (e.g. excessive noise) and biological agents and to hazardous working environments during pregnancy, childhood and adolescence.*

2. BACKGROUND DOCUMENT “FROM LONDON TO BUDAPEST: PROGRESS MADE ON TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH”⁵

7. A background document on progress achieved since the London Conference on transport, health and the environment was prepared by THE PEP secretariat in consultation with the Bureau and broadly disseminated at the Conference.

8. The document highlights state-of-art knowledge about the effects of transport on health and the environment, briefly assesses the achievements and lessons learnt through the implementation of the London Charter, describes the development of THE PEP and presents its key priorities and progress achieved in implementing its programme of work. Finally it describes the links between THE PEP and the CEHAPE and discusses opportunities and challenges for the further implementation of THE PEP.

3. MINISTERIAL ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION ON THE PEP

9. A ministerial round table discussion took place during the plenary session of the Conference, on 23 June. It was chaired by Professor Thomas Bjorn Zeltner, Director Federal Office of Public Health, Switzerland and attended by Mr. Zaal Lomtadze, Vice Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection, Georgia; Mr. Olavi Tammemae, Deputy Minister of Environment, Estonia; Dr. Michael Vit, Deputy Minister of Health, Czech Republic.

⁵ Document EUR/04/5046267/BD/3 (<http://www.euro.who.int/document/eehc/ebakdoc03.pdf>)

10. The discussion was preceded by a brief presentation on the development of the transport, health and environment process from London to Budapest, focusing in particular on the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP), its objectives, priority areas of work and challenges and opportunities for its future implementation. The presentation was delivered by Ms. Francesca Racioppi, on behalf of the WHO UNECE secretariat of THE PEP.

11. Mr. Franklin Apfel facilitated the discussion, inviting the panellists to reflect on different aspects of transport, health and environment, focusing in particular on:

- Opportunities for and challenges to inter-sectoral collaboration
- Relevance of action at the sub-national level
- Use of information and communication strategies
- Allocation of resources to attain transport sustainable for health and the environment.

12. Following the panel discussion, statements were made by delegations of the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom to address these points.

13. A brief summary of the panel discussion and the interventions have been annexed to this report (annex 1).

4. SIDE EVENT “TRANSPORT-RELATED HEALTH EFFECTS WITH A PARTICULAR FOCUS ON CHILDREN – BRIEFING FOR STAKEHOLDERS”

14. The side event took place on 23 June and was co-chaired by Mr. Werner Wutscher, Secretary General of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, Austria, and Mr. Pieter van Geel, State Secretary, Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, the Netherlands. Simultaneous interpretation into/from Russian was provided.

15. Dr. Jaroslav Volf from the Czech National Institute of Public Health, the current Chairman of THE PEP Steering Committee, framed the presentation of the study results in the context of THE PEP implementation. Ms. Brigit Staatsen, from the Dutch National Institute of Public Health and Environment and Mr. Robert Thaler, from the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management presented the main findings and key messages of the study, on behalf of the project team.

16. This multilateral project, undertaken by Austria, France, Malta, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland, aimed at promoting progress in the valuation of the costs of transport-related health effects, including those resulting from air pollution, noise, psychosocial impacts, physical activity through walking and cycling, climate change and road accidents. In particular, the implementation of the project focused on reviewing the state-of-art knowledge with respect to transport-related health effects on children and provided a direct input to the development of the Children’s Environment and Health Action Plan

17. The findings of the report and its key messages and proposed policy directions are contained in a synthesis report including an executive summary, which is available also as a separate brochure. In addition, issue specific reports on the health effects of air pollution, noise, physical activity, psychological and social effects in relation to transport and on the economic dimension of these effects were launched at the side event.⁶

18. Follow-up actions to this project shall focus on further developing methods for the assessment of costs and effects of transport on health, and further elucidate the relevance and applicability of the findings for the development of transport policies. In addition, efforts will be made to enlarge the geographical coverage of these activities to all the UNECE and WHO/Europe member States, including by setting up a Task Force for the implementation of the follow-up activities.

5. EXHIBITION STAND WITH ON-LINE DEMONSTRATIONS OF THE PEP CLEARING HOUSE

19. An exhibition stand was set up in the Conference area to feature THE PEP as well as a number of other activities carried out by the WHO/UNECE in partnership. At the stand, online demonstrations of THE PEP Clearing House were provided throughout the Conference. The demonstration site of the Clearing House was developed in line with the decisions taken by THE PEP Steering Committee to illustrate its concept, potential contents, facilities and services, focusing on the overarching theme of Urban Areas, but with a more specific focus on (a) cycling and walking, (b) safety aspects, with emphasis on children's issues, and (c) congestion.

20. In addition, a brochure presenting the Clearing House was developed and made available to the Conference participants⁷.

6. OTHER RELEVANT EVENTS: WORKSHOP "STATIONED FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT", ORGANIZED BY THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER FOR CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

21. A workshop was organized by the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) on 21-22 June in Szentendre, back to back with the Budapest Conference to discuss the impacts of transport on environment and health as well as possible ways to minimize these impacts, with a focus on the EU New Member States and Candidate Countries. The workshop focused, in particular, on promotion of integrated transport policy and decision-making, notably by means of strategic environmental assessments as well as on promotion of sustainable public transport and traffic management. The workshop was attended by representatives of local and central Governments and the academic community from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania, as well as of the following organizations: UNECE, UITP and Hungarian NGO Clean Air Action Group.

⁶ The reports can be downloaded from http://www.thepep.org/en/workplan/health/health_implementation.htm and <http://herry.at/the-pep/results.htm>

⁷ THE PEP Clearing House brochure can be downloaded from www.thepep.org

22. A presentation on THE PEP was given by Ms. Tea Aulavuo on behalf of the WHO UNECE secretariat of THE PEP.

23. On the basis of the discussions held, the workshop participants drafted a number of key messages for distribution at the Budapest Conference (the Key Messages are annexed to the present document, annex 2).

Annex 1

**SUMMARY OF THE MINISTERIAL ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION
AT THE FOURTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
ON ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH**

Wednesday, 23 June 2004

The round table was attended by Professor Thomas Bjorn Zeltner, Director, Federal Office of Public Health, Switzerland, who co-chaired the session; Mr. Zaal Lomtadze, Vice Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection, Georgia; Mr. Olavi Tammemae, Deputy Minister of Environment, Estonia; Dr. Michael Vit, Deputy Minister of Health, Czech Republic.

The discussion was introduced by a brief presentation on the transport health and environment process from London to Budapest, focusing in particular on the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP), its objectives, priority areas of work and challenges and opportunities for its future implementation. This presentation was delivered by Ms. Francesca Racioppi, on behalf of the joint WHO UNECE secretariat of THE PEP.

Mr. Franklin Apfel facilitated the discussion, inviting panellists to reflect on different aspects of transport, health and environment. The main points emerged during the discussions include the following:

Opportunities for and challenges to inter-sectoral collaboration

- Consensus among the transport, health and environment sectors on the necessity to act as well as on the actions to be taken facilitating the collaboration between them. In the field of road traffic safety, for instance, regulation of issues such as speed, drunken driving and risk taking behaviour by young drivers as well as the enforcement of the road safety regulations are areas where collaboration between the relevant authorities, is particularly necessary and relatively easy to establish.
- Existence of a regulatory framework facilitates the mobilization of resources for the implementation activities.
- There is a need to raise awareness of the benefits of more sustainable and healthier transport as well as to improve the perception by the public of the magnitude of the problems at stake. As an illustration of the difference in public reaction to the news, the Czech Vice Minister of Health referred to the news on an outbreak of a meningococcal infection which had alarmed the public much more than the far greater health problem posed by road traffic injuries. Furthermore, as the attitudes of people are shaped very early in life, the role of education and awareness raising activities among children and young people is particularly crucial.

As part of the existing policy instruments to facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration and placing of the health and environmental considerations higher on the transport agenda, the relevance of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment was particularly emphasized.

Relevance of action at the sub-national level

- Increasing consistency in the relationships between the transport, health and environment sectors at the national and sub-national (e.g. regional and local) level should be sought, as sub-national transport policy developments may evolve along different patterns than national orientations in the absence of an effective co-ordination between different levels of the administration. International cooperation can play a role in supporting these efforts of co-ordination: at the Pan-European level, THE PEP provides a framework for bringing the three sectors together and for promoting close cooperation between them.
- The special role of local planning in promoting more sustainable transport was stressed, as it is at this level that decisions concerning investments in infrastructures for cycling and walking are taken and implemented. For example, in Estonia opportunities for developing cycling infrastructures are being sought as part of rehabilitation programmes of existing road infrastructure at the local level.

Use of information and communication strategies

- Effective inter-sectoral collaboration is also dependent on the availability of reliable information and data. For example, in Georgia car ownership is increasing very rapidly and although, at the present time, the reported mortality from road traffic injury is still low compared to other countries, caution is needed in interpreting these data, which may merely reflect a low level of motorization rather than the existence of effective road safety policies. The availability of reliable information and the capacity to interpret it correctly is, therefore, of great importance in identifying emerging issues and guiding the policy response, especially under rapidly changing conditions.
- There is a need to improve communication and exchange of information between the health and other relevant sectors, as well as to develop more effective communication strategies targeting specific population groups, such as young people and decision makers. For example, it was reported that in Switzerland, while there is widespread understanding and support for promoting more physical activity through walking and cycling in the middle levels of the administration, more needs to be done to ensure that this is picked up also by high ranking officers and top decision makers, resulting in stronger support and political leadership.

Resources to attain sustainable and healthier transport

- An issue of major concern is represented by the lack of adequate resources to support sustainable development. This stems, to a large extent, from the difficulty of reconciling the long-term vision and commitment that sustainable development requires with the time horizon of politics, which are often driven by short-term policies and the need to achieve rapid successes. To help in overcoming this issue, there is a need for new and stronger partnerships and alliances.

The discussion among the panellists was further enriched by contributions from the floor made by representatives of the following member States:

Finland informed about their National Action Plan on Healthy Transport, which integrates the objectives set out in the London Charter on Transport, Environment and Health and highlighted the positive health potential of increasing physical activity through walking and cycling as part of commuting trips. To this extent, they informed also about the National Walking strategy. Support was also expressed for the aims of THE PEP, in particular its promotion of inter-sectoral collaboration and integration of health and environmental aspects into transport policies.

Italy highlighted the importance of actions taking place at the local level, such as the initiative of “sustainable cities for children” supported by the Italian Ministry of Environment. The development of a national environmental health action plan, which will set the strategic orientations for the next ten years and the development of tools for rapid assessment of environmental health risks were also reported.

United Kingdom stressed the challenge posed by increasing levels of cycling and walking, highlighting the difficulty that the country encountered in achieving its national targets for cycling. A stronger focus on health arguments and consideration of the health gains to be achieved through cycling and walking could be part of a stronger strategy to increase the modal shift in favor of physically active means of transport.

Germany informed about the implementation of the London Charter objectives as part of the German “Action Programme Health and Environment”, which places a special emphasis on children and adolescents. The presentation at a side event of the results of a regional project on “Transport, Environment and Health” carried out in the context of the Environmental health action programme of North Rhine-Westphalia was also announced. The project produced estimates of the health effects of technological improvements and traffic management policies on the population of North Rhine-Westphalia. Germany expressed also the interest in collaborating and exchanging information and experiences with the WHO and the European Commission.

Czech Republic highlighted the importance of collaboration between different sectors, reporting as an example the involvement of the health sector in the development of the national environmental policy and quoting the NEHAP and Health for All policies as examples of useful policy frameworks that facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration.

In summing-up the conclusions of the session, **Professor Zeltner** remarked the importance of inter-sectoral collaboration and highlighted the significant progress which is increasingly being achieved in this direction. While there is still room for further progress in this area, it appears that there is a strong need to start addressing emerging issues, in particular those related to children’s health in relation to transport, and to providing more opportunities for physical activity through cycling and walking.

Annex 2

Workshop “Stationed for Sustainable Transport”

*Back-to-back meeting to the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health
Budapest, 23-25 June 2004*

Key Messages

Participants from the following EU New Member States and Candidate Countries: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, (see list of participants) met in Szentendre, Hungary, on 21-22 June 2004 to discuss the impact of transport on environment and health and possible ways to minimize it through sectoral integration in policy and decision making. The workshop was organized by the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) in the context of the promotion of public transport in the EU New Member States and Candidate Countries.

Key messages from the workshop will be presented through an intervention during the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, 23-25 June 2004, Budapest, Hungary.

Current mobility patterns and the predominance of private car use bring high environmental and health costs. For example, children are not being encouraged to be physically active and develop healthy mobility habits. Moreover, the main cause of death for young people is traffic accidents.

Safe conditions for walking, cycling and high use of public transport are pre-requisites for sustainable communities. They reduce the length and the number of trips, along with the costs of health care and environmental impacts.

The participants of the workshop represented transport, environment and health sectors, including local and central authorities, public transport authorities and companies, research institutes, independent experts, among others. They were accompanied by representatives of UNEP, UNECE, UITP, observers from Belgium, Germany and Georgia, the Hungarian NGO Clean Air Action Group, and media representatives from Bulgaria, Estonia and Romania.

They emphasized the importance of sectoral integration of transport, environment, health, social, cultural and economic issues in the policy-making and implementation of sustainable development (under the pillars of society, environment and economy).

The participants considered international initiatives regarding sustainable transport such as the UNECE-WHO/Europe Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP), European Conference of the Ministers of Transport (ECMT) guidance provided in this field and the UITP Charter on Sustainable Development.

They identified current problems concerning national and local policy making trends in the integration of environmental, health and transport policy areas while drafting national, regional and local development plans. They discussed best practices in reducing environment and health risks related to the transport flow in urban areas and in making transport more environmentally-friendly.

The participants discussed possible tools for the integration of environment and health concerns into transport policy making and implementation in order to reduce increasing air and noise pollution, congestion, urban sprawl, increasing energy use and their consequences for environment and health.

The participants were aware that the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Protocol to the UNECE (Espoo) Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in the Transboundary Context is the main benchmark for the development of national SEA systems in its signatory countries. It incorporates the requirements for public participation in plans and programmes as stipulated by the Article 7 of the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters.

SEA is a tool for practical integration of environmental and health concerns into the preparation of transport related plans and programmes on national, regional and local levels. It should be applied from the beginning of the planning process and provide input into the key stages of its elaboration. SEA applied in such manner leads to better acceptance by transport planners, decision makers and the public. SEA applied in this way is more cost efficient than in late or separate application in the planning process.

The following aspects of transport, environment and health integration should be taken into consideration in policy making and implementation:

- The importance of providing the society with a full choice of transport mode, with emphasis on sustainable modes of transport such as attractive, accessible and efficient public transport, safe cycling and walking, as well as their integration;
- The impact of decentralization of responsibilities in the public transport, privatization of public transport operations and their consequences for successful implementation of sustainable transport policy;
- The importance of appropriate joint funding and financing (from a variety of sources such as EU, international financial institutions, national and local) for public transport, conditions for safe cycling and walking to enable long-term policy implementation;
- The use of available information technology tools for efficient public transport and traffic management, better education, increased public awareness and communication to improve and promote sustainable transport development;

Therefore, the following four pillars of sustainable mobility have been identified:

- Integration of transport and land use planning processes with environment and health policies;
- Reducing car use in cities, particularly with the use of fiscal measures;
- Promotion of public transport, cycling and walking as an attractive and environmentally low impact mode;
- Motivating behavioural changes to achieve sustainable mobility, and healthier and safer living conditions for future generations.

Future areas of work in the field of transport, environment and health integration into policy making and implementation must include:

- Creation and support of interdisciplinary network of stakeholders dealing with sustainable transport:
 - (a) to facilitate the exchange of the knowledge on sustainable transport policy making trends;
 - (b) to serve as a forum for exchange of experience on the application of sectoral integration tools;
 - (c) to exchange experience on practical application of SEA in plans and programmes related to transport and land-use. This can complement other exchanges related to sectoral integration;
 - Local level capacity building in integration of different environmentally friendly transport modes and land-use planning.
-