



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

ECE/AC.21/2004/11
EUR/04/5045236/11
22 January 2004

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Regional Office for Europe

HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

THE PEP Steering Committee

(Second session, 29 and 30 March 2004,
agenda item 4.C (a))

**INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND MECHANISMS FOR
INTEGRATED POLICY AND DECISION MAKING**

Project proposal by the UNECE and WHO/Europe secretariats

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present document has been prepared by the UNECE and WHO/Europe secretariats for consideration by THE PEP Steering Committee at its second session (29-30 March 2004).

2. It presents a project proposal to provide practical guidance on promoting policy integration between the transport, environment and health sectors, focusing principally on the institutional and administrative mechanisms for policy integration within central and local governments. The proposed activity is considered to respond in particular to the needs of UNECE and WHO/Europe member countries in the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) as well as in South-Eastern Europe¹.

¹ The "EECCA" countries include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. "South Eastern Europe" includes Albania,

3. The need for practical guidance was expressed by participants from the EECCA countries at the workshop on “Sustainable and Healthy Urban Transport and Planning” that was organized under the framework of THE PEP in Nicosia, Cyprus on 16-18 November 2003. In THE PEP Work Plan, the proposed activity is among the priorities for further action².

II. BACKGROUND TO POLICY INTEGRATION

A. Promoting policy integration at the international and regional levels

4. In the past decade, the importance of policy integration has become widely recognized at the global and regional levels. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development concluded in 1992 that environmental protection should constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it. Agenda 21, adopted at the Conference, identified transport as one of the key sectors where action towards sustainable development is to be undertaken both at the national and international levels. At the UNECE Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment held in 1997, Ministers decided explicitly to “work towards a close integration of environment, health and transport policies at the local, national and international level”³. Two years later, in 1999, Ministers at the London Conference on Environment and Health emphasized the urgent need for “multisectoral integration of environment and health requirements and involvement of health authorities in decision-making on transport, land-use and infrastructure policies”⁴.

5. International environmental agreements and instruments also promote integration of environmental issues to sectoral policies, notably in the fields of climate change and biodiversity⁵. The Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) adopted in 2003⁶, includes a provision on the assessment of the strategic policy decisions in all sectors. The decisions are evaluated regarding their potential environmental and health consequences, with health authorities being

Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro.

² ECE/AC.21/2002/9 –EUR/02/5040828/9, Activity I.4: “Development of institutional mechanisms for integration of the environment and health concerns into transport policies, with participation of health and environment sector representatives in the decision making process at different levels”.

³ Vienna Declaration and the Programme of Joint Action (POJA).

⁴ London Charter on Transport, Environment and Health and the Charter Plan of Action.

⁵ The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and Convention on Biological Diversity.

⁶ The SEA Protocol to the UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo, 1991) was adopted on 21 May 2003 during the Ministerial 'Environment for Europe' Conference (Kiev, Ukraine). It is open for signature and ratification to all United Nations member States.

involved throughout the SEA procedure. This provides practical means to facilitate the integration of health and environmental aspects as part of planning in other sectors.

6. At the EU level, integration of environmental issues in other policy areas has been on the agenda since the early 1980s and has gained importance with the successive amendments made to the EC Treaty, notably with the Amsterdam Treaty signed in 1997⁷. The following year, at the 1998 European Council in Cardiff, the heads of Government of the EU called for specific strategies for the integration of environmental concerns into three areas of policy, starting with the transport, energy and agriculture sectors. In terms of transport policy documents, the need for policy integration has been strongly advocated, e.g. by the European Transport White Paper of 2001.

7. In spite of the consensus on the importance of policy integration, relatively little information is available on how it can be achieved in practice. The European Commission has funded a certain number of research projects, e.g. to develop strategic approaches and methodologies in urban planning that promote more sustainable urban transport and development, which have addressed decision-making processes as well as institutional and behavioural barriers⁸. At the pan-European level, the ECMT and OECD carried out between 1998-2001 a project "Implementing sustainable urban travel policies" involving (a) a series of thematic workshops, including on "Overcoming institutional barriers to implementing sustainable urban travel policies"⁹; (b) a survey of cities; and (c) a series of national policy reviews on urban travel¹⁰. Drawing on the findings of the project, recommendations were presented for endorsement at the ECMT Ministerial Council in Lisbon, in May 2001. Follow-up work is currently being undertaken within the framework of the ECMT to test, disseminate and promote the recommendations¹¹.

8. The second High-level meeting on Transport, Environment and Health, held in July 2002, considered on the basis of the intergovernmental preparatory work that "integrating environment and health concerns in the decision making on transport, both at the national and local levels" remains one of the main challenges for achieving sustainable and healthy transport¹², and should constitute a priority area where further action should be pursued jointly by the UNECE and WHO/Europe under the framework of THE PEP.

⁷ Article 6 of the Amsterdam Treaty stipulates that integration of environmental concerns into the policies of other sectors is one of the main means of achieving sustainable development.

⁸ <http://www.lutr.net> and <http://www.cordis.lu/transport/src/dante.htm>.

⁹ <http://www1.oecd.org./cem/UrbTrav/Workshops/InstBarriers/index.htm>.

¹⁰ For more information see: <http://www1.oecd.org./cem/UrbTrav/>.

¹¹ To this end, a first workshop was organized in Washington DC on 5-7 November 2003, and is expected to be followed by a workshop in Moscow in autumn 2004 as well as later on in Asia, Northern/Western Europe or North Africa (CEMT/CS/URB(2001)8/REV2).

¹² Synthesis Report, ECE/AC.21/2001/1-EUR/00/5026094/1; Declaration ECE/AC.21/2002/8-EUR/02/5040828/8.

9. The overarching framework covering transport, health and the environment sectors was deemed particularly favourable for bringing together the relevant expertise from all the sectors for promoting integration. It has been pointed out, furthermore, that in the existing regional and international policy documents there has been relatively little focus on integrating health aspects into the decision-making processes on transport alongside the environmental ones. Finally, the institutional and organizational issues seem to have been less focused on, as opposed to policy options, instruments and assessment methods for integration¹³.

B. The challenge of policy integration

10. Policy integration is a challenging task to put into practice due to the often-conflicting interests between the different fields of policies, and impediments of political, organizational, economical and financial nature.

11. Integration implies going beyond the mere co-ordination of policies and involves joint work among the sectors, with attempts to create synergies between policies, sharing goals for their formulation and responsibility for their implementation. It applies both across the different sectors (horizontally) as well as across the different levels of government (vertically).

12. The supportive conditions for policy integration include a strategic policy and/or legislative framework to ensure that individual policies are coherent and consistent with national goals and priorities. Decisions on transport and planning should also undergo integrated assessments on their environmental and health impacts, and involve participation of the public and other stakeholders. Political commitment, availability of sufficient funds and institutional and professional capacity are further success criteria for implementation of cross-sectoral activities.

13. From the institutional point of view, coping with cross-sectoral issues within central and local governments presupposes also adequate organizational support and adapted institutional structures. Traditionally, governmental structures tend to be compartmentalized, characterized by autonomous policy developments for specific domains and a hierarchy of relations, which is likely to limit the flow of information between ministries and hinder co-ordinated action.

14. In some countries, relatively more efforts have been made over the years in terms of institutional and administrative developments, to overcome the vertical structures of policy making and to ensure the horizontal consistency among the different policy fields. Countries have opted for a

¹³ “The integration of land use planning, transport and environment in European policy and research”, Harry Geerlings and Dominic Stead, *Transport Policy*, 10 (2003).

variety of different integrative solutions, depending inter alia on the governmental system in place (centralized, federal, formerly centrally planned, etc.). In recent years, countries in Central and Eastern Europe acceding to the EU have undertaken profound administrative restructuring and institutional reforms to comply with the *acquis communautaire*, including with fairly new requirements for policy integration.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

15. The main objective of the proposed activity is to develop practical guidance to the central and local governments of the UNECE and WHO/Europe member countries on insitutional and administrative mechanisms to promote integrated policy- and decision-making in the fields of transport, environment and health. The main target group of the proposed activity are the countries in EECCA and South-Eastern Europe.

16. The activity would involve gathering relevant experiences, good practices and lessons learned by the member countries of UNECE and WHO/Europe, and producing critical analyses focusing in particular on issues such as:

- (a) Central overview and coordination capacity; e.g. involving reporting requirements to the Prime Minister, or other responsibilities of the highest political levels on overseeing and co-ordinating the consistency among policies;
- (b) Vertical relation between central government level and sub-national and local levels (e.g. in terms of policy direction coherence, local autonomies and prerogatives, etc);
- (c) Role and involvement of the ministries other than the Ministry of Transport in decision-making processes on transport (institutionalized or ad hoc, obligatory or voluntary);
- (d) Public participation, involvement of NGOs, interest groups and other stakeholders in decision-making processes at the national and local levels;
- (e) Use of integrated assessment tools (e.g. EIA, SEA, HIA) and monitoring mechanisms, including indicators, both at the national and local levels;
- (f) Mechanisms in use to promote interaction and dialogue between transport, environment and Health Ministries; (interministerial working groups, movement of staff between sectors, secondments);
- (g) Mechanisms in use to promote interaction and dialogue between transport, environment and health departments at the local level (inter-department working groups, movement of staff between sectors, secondments);
- (h) Sharing of responsibilities, accountability and budgets between ministries and between central and local government levels;

- (i) Availability of education and training to develop cross-disciplinary skills both as part of professional skills acquisition (e.g. universities) and as part of continued education during career development (e.g. training on the job);
- (j) Mechanisms for anticipating, detecting and reconciling conflicting priorities and sorting out inconsistencies and conflicts between policy sectors and different levels of government;
- (k) Appraisal systems for inter-sectoral projects (e.g. enabling to reward contributions to joint achievements).

17. The assessment of the relative merits and weaknesses of the various mechanisms, and their effectiveness in terms of time, resources and expertise should be given particular attention. Consideration should also be given to the transferability of the measures and institutional arrangements, in particular as regards the specific requirements of EECCA and South-East European countries.

18. Based on an analysis of the information gathered, recommendations would be drafted to provide a basis for the development of guidelines to support integrated decision-making.

IV. PROPOSED WORKPLAN AND OUTPUTS

19. The Steering Committee is invited to consider the following actions for providing practical guidance for central and local governments of the UNECE and WHO/Europe member countries, and in particular to the EECCA and the South-East European countries, on promoting policy integration between transport, environment and health sectors, with a focus on the institutional and administrative mechanisms to achieve this.

A. Collection of good practices and lessons learned

20. Background work will be carried out by a senior consultant to: (a) define the aspects to be taken into consideration in the analysis of current practices and models of institutional arrangements (cf. paragraphs 15 and 16); and (b) develop practical guidance for the reporting and analysis of relevant information.

21. THE PEP Focal Points and other representatives of the member States and relevant organizations will be invited to identify good practices and lessons learned at the national and local levels on institutional and administrative mechanisms for promoting policy integration, focusing notably on issues stated above (paragraphs 15 and 16), and to report them according to the guidance made available.

22. The relevant information may be submitted and distributed through THE PEP Clearing House by means of a form to be prepared for that purpose and made available at the following address: <http://www.the-pep.org>. The information provided can be organized and stored in a structured manner to make it easily accessible and retrievable with the aid of specific search mechanisms once the Clearing House is operational.

23. The information should be sent in English or in Russian. To the extent possible, the documentation could be translated and made available in both languages¹⁴. Editing of the original language should be taken care of by the provider of the information.

B. Preparation of a synthesis report and recommendations

24. The experiences of the member countries would also be analyzed and presented within a synthesis report. Interviews with selected key informants could be held to further clarify and integrate the information provided, as needed. The report should highlight the barriers, as well as the supportive conditions for policy integration from the point of view of institutional and administrative arrangements, taking into consideration the governmental system in place as well as the economic situation. Case-studies would be used to illustrate the analysis. The report should then attempt to analyze the merits of the various solutions and focus on the question of their transferability. On the basis of the analysis, the report should also include recommendations.

25. The draft report and recommendations should be submitted for discussion and endorsement by the Steering Committee at its third session, preliminarily scheduled to take place on 11-12 April 2005.

C. Preparation and adoption of draft guidelines

26. Based on the feedback of the Committee at its third session, the recommendations of the synthesis report would be further developed into draft guidelines by an advisory expert group to be appointed by the Steering Committee.

27. The draft guidelines would be submitted for feedback to the Bureau and for approval by the Steering Committee at its fourth session in Spring 2006. The guidelines could alternatively be adopted at the Third High-level Meeting on Transport, Environment and Health, which will be

¹⁴ For the proposed language policy and resource requirements for translation within the Clearing House, see document ECE/AC.21/2004/3-EUR/04/5045236/3, paras. 30-33 and 50.

convened no later than 2007 to assess the progress achieved in the implementation of THE PEP Work Plan¹⁵.

D. Capacity-building for implementation of the guidelines

28. The adoption of the guidelines should be followed up by the development of training and other capacity-building activities (e.g. twinning arrangements, expert advice, workshops) to facilitate their implementation.

V. ESTIMATED RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

29. The approximate costs for the implementation of the above steps of the project are estimated as follows:

- (a) For submission, classification and dissemination of the information on the Clearing House, see estimated costs involved in its implementation and pilot operation, as contained in the document ECE/AC.21/2004/3-EUR/04/504523/3, paragraph 50;
- (b) Providing guidance for the reporting and analysis of relevant information; preparation of the synthesis report including recommendations; and support in the development of guidelines by a senior consultant: ca US\$ 30,000;
- (c) Organization of one to two meetings of the advisory expert group to prepare the draft guidelines (with in-kind support provided by hosting organizations and travel costs of participants covered by the respective organizations or administrations), including support for ca 5 participants from EECCA Countries, at ca. US\$ 2,000 per participant (US\$ 2,000 x 5 x 2) Total US\$ 10,000 per meeting;
- (d) Appropriate training and other capacity-building activities for supporting the implementation of the proposed guidelines are to be defined at a later date.

VI. DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN BY THE STEERING COMMITTEE

30. The Steering Committee may wish to consider the project proposal for inclusion into its current programme of work. In particular, it is expected to decide upon actions to be undertaken for the implementation of the project.

¹⁵ Declaration adopted by the 2nd High-level Meeting, ECE/AC.21/2002/8-EUR/02/5040828/8, para. 10.

31. Delegations of the UNECE and WHO/Europe member States and of the relevant organizations are invited to consider in advance their possibilities for supporting the implementation of the project financially or in-kind.
