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Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Rail Transport

Seventy-seventh session

Geneva, 15–17 November 2023

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the Provisional Agenda

Annotated Provisional Agenda for the Seventy-seventh session*, **

to be held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Salle VII
starting at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, 15 November 2023

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the Provisional Agenda.
2. Workshop: “The Future of International Rail Passenger Transport”.
3. Towards Unified Railway Law in the Pan-European Region and Euro-Asian Transport Corridors.
4. European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines.
5. The Revision Committee of the Model Rules for the Permanent Identification of Railway Rolling Stock.
6. International Railway Passenger Hubs.
7. Euro-Asian Rail Transport.
8. Trans-European Railway Project.
9. Railway Financing and Public-Private Partnerships.
10. Rail Security.

* For reasons of economy, delegates are requested to bring copies of all relevant documents to the session. Documentation will not be available in the conference room. Before the session, documents may be downloaded from the website <https://unece.org/info/Transport/Rail-Transport/events/381087>. On an exceptional basis, documents may also be obtained by email (sc.2@un.org).

** Delegates are requested to register online at the following address: <https://indico.un.org/event/1002283>. Upon arrival at the Palais des Nations, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate (14, Avenue de la Paix). In case of difficulty, please contact the secretariat by telephone (+41 22 917 2432) or by email (sc.2@un.org). For a map of the Palais des Nations and other useful information, see website: <https://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.html>.

11. Innovation in Rail Transport.
12. Productivity in Rail Transport.
13. Climate Change and Rail Transport.
14. Railway Reform and Review.
15. Facilitation of International Rail Transport in the Pan-European Region.
 - (a) Facilitation of Rail Border Crossings;
 - (b) Harmonization of Technical Specifications on Different Railway Systems.
16. Rail Statistics.
17. Improving Safety in Rail Transport.
18. Activities of the Inland Transport Committee and its Subsidiary Bodies.
19. Activities of the European Commission in Rail Transport.
20. Activities of International Organizations in Rail Transport.
21. Programme of Work for 2024–2025.
22. Other Business.
23. Election of officers.
24. Date and Venue of the Next Session.
25. Adoption of Decisions.

II. Annotations

1. Adoption of the Provisional Agenda

The first item to be considered is the adoption of the draft agenda.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/242

2. Workshop: “The Future of International Rail Passenger Transport”

The Working Party may wish to consider the workshop on “The Future of International Rail Passenger Transport”. International journeys by rail are still limited when compared to other modes of transport. Yet there is a strong demand for international travel and the need to meet the goals of the Sustainable Development Agenda within member States. This means railway journeys across borders for business and leisure needs to be at the centre of future transport development. This workshop aims to consider the challenges that are stifling this potential growth and how to further stimulate passenger transport by rail through discussions and the sharing of good practices within member States and at the multinational level.

3. Towards Unified Railway Law in the Pan-European Region and on Euro-Asian Transport Corridors

The Working Party may wish to recall that at its seventy-sixth session, it decided to proceed with the finalisation of the Convention on the contract for international carriage of goods by rail. The draft text of the Convention was circulated to member States in February 2023 and a Special session of SC.2 was held 10-12 July 2023 to discuss the draft. The Working Party may wish to discuss the outcomes of Special session of 10-12 July 2023 including the text of the draft Convention.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2023/2

4. European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines

The Working Party may wish to be informed by the secretariat about its activities to increase the number of contracting parties to the European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC). Detailed information on the AGC, including the up-to-date and consolidated text of the agreement (ECE/TRANS/63/Rev.4),¹ a map of the AGC network, an inventory of compliance with AGC standards, information on the background, benefits and accession requirements for AGC (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2020/2) and the relevant Depositary Notifications are available on the website of the Working Party.

The Working Party may also wish to be informed about the notification of changes to the AGC agreed at previous session of the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2022/12) and notified to the depositary in New York as well as potential new amendments.

The Working Party will be updated on the joint AGC-AGTC online tool on technical parameters for operation on the E-Rail network.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/63/Rev.4, C.N.61.2023.TREATIES-XI.C.3

5. The Revision Committee of the Model Rules for the Permanent Identification of Railway Rolling Stock

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at the eighty-fifth session of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC), member States adopted the Model Rules on the Permanent Identification of Railway Rolling Stock (henceforth Model Rules) as the sixtieth legal instrument of ITC and established the Revision Committee to the Model Rules. The Working Party may wish to be updated about the results of the first session of the Revision Committee to the Model Rules. In particular, the Working Party may wish to consider document ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2023/3 containing an amendment proposal to the Model Rules.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2023/3

6. International Railway Passenger Hubs

The Working Party may recall that 2023 marks the end of the mandate of the Group of Experts on International Railway Passenger Hubs. The Working Party may wish to discuss the outcomes of the work of the Group (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2023/4), the draft amendment proposal for the AGC to implement the conclusions of the Group (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2023/5), and the terms of reference for a new Group of Experts to replace the current one on passenger information (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2023/6).

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2023/4, ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2023/5, ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2023/6

7. Euro-Asian Rail Transport

The Working Party may wish to recall that at its seventy-third session in 2019 a workshop was held on: “Making rail freight more competitive and the coordinated development of the rail network with a focus on how to work together at the government and sectoral levels on

¹ www.unece.org/trans/main/sc2/sc2_AGC_text.html.

EATL”. Following the seventy-third session, a summary publication was prepared by the secretariat and is available on the Working Party’s webpage.

The Working Party may wish to be informed about and discuss new developments on Euro-Asian rail transport corridors, including work on corridor development and coordination.

Following the decision of the Working Party at its seventy-second session, the Working Party may wish to be informed about developments in the Eurasian Rail Alliance Index.

8. Trans-European Railway Project

The Working Party will be informed by the project manager of the Trans-European Railway (TER) project about the activities of 2023: the concrete results, the plan for subsequent years and the efforts to increase the number of participating countries.

The Working Party may wish to review the results and consider how to further support and contribute to the TER project.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/WP.5/2023/3

9. Railway Financing and Public-Private Partnerships

The Working Party may wish to be informed about developments in railway financing and public-private partnerships in railways.

10. Rail Security

The Working Party may wish to be informed about developments in rail security, including updates on the Rail Security Observatory and the ongoing collaboration with the International Union of Railways (UIC) on security matters.

11. Innovation in Rail Transport

In line with the ECE road map for promoting the use of Intelligent Transport Systems that contains 20 global actions for 2012–2020 (“Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) for sustainable mobility”, 2012), the Working Party continues work in this area.

The Working Party may wish to recall that it agreed to the creation of a rail innovation observatory aimed at sharing with member States best practice innovations that could further help develop the competitiveness of the railways. The aim is to assist in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and work towards the achievement of the technology pillar of the ITC strategy. The Working Party may wish to be updated on the creation of the observatory.

12. Productivity in Rail Transport

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its last session, it requested that the secretariat prepare an updated analysis of productivity following the same approach as in 2021. The Working Party may wish to discuss the results of the analysis for 2023 based on desktop information available at UIC and ECE and included in ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2023/7.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2023/7

13. Climate Change and Rail Transport

The Working Party will be updated on the work of the Group of Experts on Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for Transport Networks and Nodes, on climate change mitigation and the For Future Inland Transport Systems tool and on green logistics, eco-scoring and related matters.

The Working Party will also be updated on the development of an ITC Strategy on Climate Change and the input that the Working Party may wish to provide in support of it.

14. Railway Reform and Review

The Working Party may wish to be informed about the developments on railway reform and developments in the sector, building on the workshop held at the seventy-first session of the Working Party.

15. Facilitation of International Rail Transport in the Pan-European Region

(a) Facilitation of Rail Border Crossings

The Working Party may wish to be informed about developments in annex 9 to the Harmonization Convention on facilitating rail border crossings in the pan-European region. The Working Party may also wish to return to the discussion at the seventy-sixth session of SC.2 on the results of the questionnaire on annex 9 of the Harmonization Convention.

Member States may also wish to share best practices in implementing the Harmonization Convention at the session.

(b) Harmonization of Technical Specifications on Different Railway Systems

The Working Party may wish to be informed by the Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSJD) and/or the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) about improvements in the 1,435 mm and the 1,520 mm broad gauge railway systems, and about the results of the work of the OSJD/ERA Working Group on Interoperability.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2022/10

16. Rail Statistics

The Working Party may wish to be informed about the ongoing work in rail statistics and its relevance to the Working Party, in particular, about the work of the Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6).

17. Improving Safety in Rail Transport

The Working Party may wish to recall that at its seventy-second session, it had decided to widen the scope to safety at level crossings to cover all relevant areas of rail safety. The Working Party may wish to be informed about developments in this area.

In line with discussions at the seventy-third session of SC.2, the Working Party may also wish to discuss developments related to the Code of Practice on the Packing of Cargo Transport Units administered by the Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics.

18. Activities of the Inland Transport Committee and its Subsidiary Bodies

The Working Party will be informed about activities of ITC, its Bureau, subsidiary bodies and other United Nations organizations on matters of interest to the Working Party. In particular, the Working Party will be informed about the request of the Chair of ITC to Working Parties on: the alignment of the Terms of Reference (ToR) and Rules of Procedure (RoP) of SC.2 with the revised ToR and RoP of ITC; and to participate in the review of the mandate of SC.2. Document ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2023/8 sets out the suggested contribution from SC.2 on these points for adoption by the Working Party.

The Working Party will also be informed about the progress and take-up of the Inland Transport and Trade Connectivity eLearning Platform – LearnITC.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2023/8

19. Activities of the European Commission in Rail Transport

In line with standard practice, the Working Party may wish to be informed about recent activities and plans for the future work of the European Commission (DG Move) in rail transport.

20. Activities of International Organizations in Rail Transport

The Working Party may wish to be informed about recent activities and plans for the future work of other international organizations and stakeholders in the field of rail transport.

21. Programme of Work for 2024–2025

The Working Party may wish to recall that at its seventy-third session it approved the document on the implementation of the ITC strategy (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2019/2). At its seventy-fourth session the Working Party then adopted its new terms of reference adjusting its approach to reflect the implementation of the ITC strategy (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2020/1). This document was then subsequently approved by the ITC. Based on these documents, the secretariat has prepared a draft programme of work for the period 2024–2025 (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2023/9) which the Working Party may wish to consider.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2019/2, ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2020/1, ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2023/9

22. Other business

The Working Party may wish to discuss other business.

23. Election of officers

The Working Party may wish to elect a Chair and possibly Vice-Chair(s) for its sessions in 2024 and 2025.

24. Date and Venue of the Next Session

The next session of the Working Party is tentatively scheduled to be held from 13 to 15 November 2024 in Geneva.

25. Adoption of Decisions

In accordance with the decision of the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/190, paragraph 6) and established practice, the Chair will briefly summarize the decisions at the end of the session. Following the session, the secretary, in cooperation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, will draft a report on the outcome of the session for transmission to ITC.

III. Tentative Timetable

Wednesday, 15 November	10 a.m.-1 p.m.	Items 1 and 2
	3-6 p.m.	Item 2 continued
Thursday, 16 November	10 a.m.-1 p.m.	Items 3-6
	3-6 p.m.	Items 7-12
Friday, 17 November	10 a.m.-1 p.m.	Items 13-19
	3-6 p.m.	Items 20-25