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Working Party on Rail Transport

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Item 21 of the provisional agenda

Programme of work for 2024–2025

Draft programme of work and biennial evaluation for 2024–2025

Note by the secretariat

I. Mandate

1. In accordance with the decision of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) to review its programme of work every two years (ECE/TRANS/200, para. 120), the Working Party will be invited to review and adopt its programme of work for 2022–2023, as well as the relevant parameters for its biennial evaluation.
2. Although the UN system no longer functions on a biennial budget and given that an alternative approach has not been developed and mandated at ITC level it is suggested that, as already identified in document ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2019/1 and ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2021/3, the programme of work continue on a biennial basis to allow member States the ability to monitor the activities of the working party.

II. Draft programme of work for 2024–2025

A. Introduction

3. The present document sets out the draft programme of work for 2024–2025 of the subprogramme on “Rail Transport” of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC). The Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) is invited to consider this programme for adoption at its current session. The Working Party and ITC will have the opportunity to adjust its programme of work during the course of the biennium, to be reflected in a separate document.
4. The draft programme of work applies a results-based approach. It comprises, for each cluster of activities, an expected accomplishment and a list of outputs/activities proposed to be carried out in 2024–2025. The delivery of these outputs/activities is expected to contribute to achieving the expected results.
5. The grouping of programme activities into clusters is the same as that used in the past by the ITC for the biennial evaluation of its subprogramme performance. This draft

programme of work has been prepared to be fully in line with the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of SC.2 (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2022/1 and ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2022/2) and, therefore, with those of ITC.

6. The following clusters of activities make up the transport subprogramme of UNECE:

Cluster No. Subprogramme: 02 Transport

1	Overall coordination (Inland Transport Committee and Bureau)
2	Transport trends and economics (including Euro–Asian transport links)
3	Harmonization of vehicle regulations, climate change and intelligent transport systems (ITS)
4	Rail transport and Trans–European railway (TER) Project
5	Inland waterway transport
6	Intermodal transport and logistics
7	Customs questions affecting transport
8	Transport, Health and Environment pan–European programme (THE PEP)
9	Transport of dangerous goods (UNECE)
10	Transport of dangerous goods (ECOSOC)
11	Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) (ECOSOC)
12	Transport of perishable foodstuffs
13	Transport statistics
14	Road transport and Trans–European north–south motorway (TEM) project
15	Road traffic safety

7. For easy of reference, new outputs/activities are indicated in “bold text” while text that has been removed is in “strikethrough text”.

8. The outputs/activities have been listed under the cluster of activities to which they belong according to the following main categories: (a) meetings and related parliamentary documentation; (b) publications and other information material; and (c) technical cooperation, including, seminars, workshops, training sessions, advisory services and online tools.

9. The relevant indicators of achievement, together with baseline and target data, against which performance will be measured, are presented below.

10. The present document is based on the programme of work agreed at the seventy–fifth session of the Working Party on Rail Transport (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2021/3) and continues to implement the ITC Strategy and so should be read with the document setting out how the ITC strategy continues to be implemented in relation to the work on railways (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2019/2).

B. Objective and strategy

11. The objective of the UNECE subprogramme on transport is to facilitate the international movement of persons and goods by inland transport modes and improve safety, environmental protection, energy efficiency and security in the transport sector to levels that contribute effectively to sustainable transport. The rail sector activities in this sub programme are fundamental to achieving this and assisting member States in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by providing and managing a legal and regulatory

framework able to facilitate the development of the railways and encourage modal shift to the railways.

12. The responsibility for this subprogramme is vested in the Sustainable Transport Division. Within the Division, the Transport Networks and Logistics Section is responsible for railway activities and as such provides secretariat services to SC.2.

C. Outputs/activities to be delivered in the 2024–2025 biennium

13. Outputs/activities to be delivered in the 2024–2025 biennium are as follows:

Subprogramme: 02 Transport

Cluster 4: Rail transport

<i>Description of cluster (optional)</i>	<i>Expected accomplishments from this cluster</i>
1. Monitoring, reviewing and updating of the European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC).	
2. Monitoring, reviewing and updating of the Model Rules on the Permanent Identification of Railway Rolling Stock.	
23. Consideration of measures to promote efficiency and sustainability of rail transport as part of a sustainable transport system, including bottlenecks in rail transport services at the pan-European level and facilitating technological progression of the sector.	
34. Report and consider utilization of results of the Trans-European Railway (TER) project and its activities and strengthen cooperation between the TER project and the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2).	Better understanding of rail transport operations and policies in the region, including infrastructure and its financing, border crossing, interoperability, security and safety, high speed trains, climate change as well as rail productivity and rail reform issues, and
45. Survey passenger and goods traffic on the AGC network in order to provide support for transport planning.	Monitoring and updating of relevant legal instruments, introduction of new legal instruments where relevant , as well as enhanced cooperation of ECE countries in addressing them.
56. Participation in, and monitoring of, different rail projects as well as in the development of initiatives on new conventions and regional cooperation and along Euro-Asian transport corridors.	Increased capacity of ECE countries participating in the TER projects.
67. Facilitate international rail transport in the pan-European region through improved border crossing procedures and harmonization of technical specifications of different railway systems and their operations at borders.	
78. Review general trends in rail transport developments and rail transport policy, analyze specific rail transport economic issues, collect, compile and disseminate rail transport statistics in cooperation with the Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6) and prepare reports, reviews, publications and annual workshops on topical themes in rail transport development and best practices.	
Main actions by the Sustainable Transport Division:	
(a) Act as secretariat to the Working Party on Rail Transport, its groups of experts and to the Revisions Committee to the Model Rules on the Permanent Identification of Railway Rolling Stock.	
(b) Renew and Maintain the updated online monitoring tool on the application of the AGC and AGTC infrastructure standards.	
(c) Provide support and analysis for technical cooperation and capacity-building in rail transport supporting the implementation of the rail related legal agreements.	

<i>Description of cluster (optional)</i>	<i>Expected accomplishments from this cluster</i>
(d) Represent UNECE in meetings of inter-and non-governmental organizations that are relevant to railways.	

Other activities within the cluster

~~The Group of Experts towards Unified Railway Law will~~ Continue working towards achieving Unified Railway Law. ~~The Group of Experts on the Permanent Identification of Railway Rolling Stock will continue its work on defining appropriate permanent identification for rolling stock.~~ **Continue providing secretariat services to the Group of Experts on International Railway Passenger Hubs and its potential successors will continue with the aim of** working towards improving accessibility to the railways through its work on passenger stations.

Outputs/activities

(a) Meetings and related parliamentary documentation

4.1 Working Party on Rail Transport (~~seventy-sixth session in 2022 and seventy-seventh session in 2023~~ **seventy-eighth session in 2024 and seventy-ninth session in 2025**) (12 meetings). **Potential additional meetings may be called by the Chair of SC.2 to meet the needs of member States in relation to new legal agreements.**

Documentation:

Agenda and reports of the annual sessions (4); other documents (14) on mandated issues, including the draft programme of work and biennial evaluation (in the format prescribed by any updated ITC decision), public private partnerships and railways financing, high speed railways, rail security (including cybersecurity), ~~and~~ safety, border crossings facilitation, rail review, rail productivity indicators, railways reform, unified railway law, administration and updating of the AGC Agreement, railway statistics; other related documents on newly mandated issues. **Potential additional agendas, reports and other documents may be needed in the event that the Chair of SC.2 calls additional meetings of SC.2.**

4.2 ~~Scheduled sessions of the Group of Experts towards Unified Railway Law.~~

Documentation:

~~Agendas of the sessions (6), Reports of the sessions (6); documents related to draft legal provisions of the unified railway law (12), documents related to the appropriate management of the unified railway law (6), other mandated documents relevant to the unified railway law (6).~~

4.32 Scheduled sessions of the ~~Group of Experts on~~ **Revisions Committee** to the Permanent Identification of Railway Rolling Stock.

Documentation:

Agendas of the sessions (42), Reports of the sessions (42); documents related to development of provisions on the Permanent Identification of Railway Rolling Stock (~~426~~).

4.43 Scheduled sessions of the Group of Experts on the International Railway Passenger Hubs **and its potential successor.**

Documentation:

Agendas of the sessions (4), Reports of the sessions (4); documents related to development of provisions for International Railway Passenger Hubs (12).

(b) Publications and other information material and online tools

4.54 Update of the online monitoring tool on the application of the AGC and AGTC infrastructure standards.

~~4.6 — Preparation of publications for the ECE region, including contemporary issues for rail including climate change, infrastructure and statistics.~~

4.75 Update and monitoring of the International Observatory on Rail Security.

4.6 Update and monitoring of the International Observatory on Rail Innovation.

4.87 Development of rail productivity indicators.

4.98 Development of other mandated tools as required by the Working Party.

Non-recurrent publications:

~~4.109~~ **Preparation of publications for the ECE region, including contemporary issues for rail including climate change, infrastructure and statistics** as required by the Working Party.

(c) *Technical cooperation*

~~4.110~~ Workshop on contemporary rail issues (2).

~~4.121~~ Seminars on TER (2).

~~4.13 — Field project on TER (1).~~

III. Biennial evaluation

14. On the basis of decisions taken at its fifty-seventh session in October 2013 (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/220, paras. 88–89), the activities of the Working Party are measured, as part of the biennial evaluation, against one expected accomplishment, three indicators of achievement and corresponding actual performance measures.

15. The Working Party may wish to review the 2022–2023 parameters (expected accomplishments, indicators of achievement, actual performance measures) as provided below with a view to either maintaining them or establishing new ones for the biennium 2024–2025.

Biennial Assessment

Review of performance measures for 2022–2023 and establishment of targets for 2024–2025

Cluster	Expected Accomplishments	Indicators of Achievement	Actual Performance Measures	
4. Rail Transport	Better understanding of rail transport operations and policies in the region, including infrastructure, border crossing, interoperability issues, and monitoring and updating of relevant legal instruments, as well as enhanced cooperation of ECE countries in addressing them.	(a) Number of countries, IGOs and NGOs participating in the two annual meetings of the Working Party on Rail Transport		
		Performance measures:		
		Baseline: 2012–2013	30	
		Target: 2014–2015	40	55
		Target: 2016–2017	40	78
		Target: 2018–2019	40	67
		Target: 2020–2021	50	72
		Target: 2022–2023	50	121 ¹
		(b) Number of amendments to the AGC Agreement, as well		

¹ Value for 2022.

*Biennial Assessment**Review of performance measures for 2022-2023 and establishment of targets for 2024-2025*

as updated and amended lines in
its annex I which the Working
Party has put in effect

Baseline: 2012–2013	1	1
Target: 2014–2015	1	2
Target: 2016–2017	1	1
Target: 2018–2019	1	1
Target: 2020–2021	1	1
Target: 2022-2023	1	2

(c) Number of thematic
workshops/ seminars/themes
organized and number of
participants

Baseline: 2012–2013	1	1
Target: 2014–2015	2	2
Target: 2016–2017	2	2
Target: 2018–2019	2	3
Target: 2020–2021	2	2
Target: 2022-2023	2	2

IV. Next steps

16. The Working Party may wish to consider this document as a basis for its activities for 2024 and 2025.
