
Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics

Thirty-seventh session

Geneva, 25–27 September 2024

Item 7 of the provisional agenda

Sustainable urban mobility, cycling and public transport

Presentation of the final report of the Group of Experts on Cycling Infrastructure Module and panel discussion on urban mobility and cycling

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. On Friday, 27 September 2024, from 10:00 to 13:00 CET, under agenda item 7, the Working Party will focus on the work cluster related to 'Sustainable Urban Mobility, Cycling, and Public Transport.' As part of this discussion, the final report of the ECE Group of Experts on the Cycling Infrastructure Module (WP.5/GE.5), presented in document ECE/TRANS/WP.5/2024/4, along with the "Guide on the Designation of Cycle Route Networks" (document ECE/TRANS/WP.5/2024/5), will be introduced by the GE.5 Chair (Austria) and Vice-Chair (Slovenia) for the Working Party's review and endorsement. The Guide is expected to be of particular interest, as it provides step-by-step guidance for countries on how to designate and implement national cycling route networks across all administrative levels.

2. Following the presentation and endorsement of the WP.5/GE.5 final report, a dedicated panel discussion on "Urban Mobility and Cycling" will take place. This discussion will apply key insights from the aforementioned Guide to the urban context, exploring the crucial role of cycling—alongside walking and public transport—in city mobility planning. A brief concept note and draft program for the panel discussion can be found in sections II-IV below.

II. Making the case for cycling as an essential mobility choice in urban centres

3. Cycling plays a crucial role in enhancing urban mobility and promoting environmental sustainability. As a highly efficient mode of transport, bicycles take up less road space and alleviate traffic congestion, making them ideal for short-distance trips in densely populated urban areas. Additionally, cycling produces zero emissions, significantly reducing air pollution and helping cities lower their carbon footprint, contributing to global climate goals.

4. For cycling to be fully effective however, cities must invest in safe and accessible infrastructure, including dedicated bike lanes, secure parking, and well-planned routes that connect urban centers with peripheral areas. This not only ensures safer streets for cyclists but also encourages more people to adopt cycling as a primary mode of transport, further reducing reliance on cars and easing urban congestion.

III. Objectives of the panel discussion

5. The panel will be expected to:
- Emphasize the need for countries to prioritize the development of cycle route networks that provide continuous and consistent cycling infrastructure, facilitating seamless connections between regions, urban centers, and their surrounding areas.
 - Highlight key steps for governments to follow in the creation and management of cycle route networks, as outlined in the "Guide on the Designation of Cycle Route Networks" prepared by the Group of Experts.
 - Advocate for a user-centered approach, where networks—at any level—are designed based on the different types of users, their specific needs and priorities, and the infrastructure required to support those needs.

IV. Draft programme

Panel discussion on urban mobility and cycling

10:45-10:50 – Welcoming remarks by WP.5 Chair
10:50–11:10 – Key-note statement on the importance of cycling in an urban context

Keynote: Representative of the University of Amsterdam/ Cycling Professor at Ghent University (Belgium)

11:10-12.10 – Panel discussion

Panellists:

- Representative(s) of the UNECE Sustainable Transport Division
- Representative of European Cyclists' Federation (ECF)
- Representative of the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology of Austria
- Representative of the Ministry of Infrastructure of Slovenia
- Other GE.5/WP.5 experts

Discussion, Q&A

12:10-12:15 – Conclusions by WP.5 Chair/ UNECE Secretariat

6. The full programme of the workshop with names of all speakers confirmed will be published on the WP.5 webpage ahead of the start of the annual session: <https://unece.org/info/events/event/392542.7>.

7. Following the panel discussion, the Working Party is expected to exchange views on the decision taken by the ECE Inland Transport Committee (ITC) during its 86th annual session, which invites WP.5 to collaborate with the Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) and the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) to assess the need for developing a new Convention on cycle route networks, based on the findings of the Group of Experts. For reference, see [ITC decision no. 50](#), which is also included in the recommendations of the GE.5 final report, ECE/TRANS/WP.5/2024/4, para. 170 (a)).

8. In this context, it is important to highlight that a key rationale for the work of GE.5, as outlined in its terms of reference, was to support the implementation of Recommendation 3, “Create a user-friendly cycling infrastructure”, from [THE PEP Pan-European Master Plan for Cycling Promotion](#), adopted in Vienna in 2021.

9. Considering the above, the Working Party is invited to provide guidance to the secretariat on how it wishes to follow-up on this ITC decision.
