

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION

Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies

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**Options for creating working groups, task forces and editorial boards to
facilitate the implementation of the work plan**

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

The mandate of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies (TOS-ICP) is to support the implementation of the programme of work of the UNECE Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration (CECI) in areas related to the promotion of the knowledge-based economy and innovation. The Team facilitates the exchange of experiences gained and lessons learned, as well as of good practices in these areas among ECE member States. In its work, the TOS-ICP responds to the needs of Governments, and takes into account the needs of the private sector, consumers, the academic and business communities, and the civil society.

In accordance with its Terms of Reference, the TOS-ICP engages in the following activities:

- (a) Organizing an international policy dialogue on knowledge-based economic development in the UNECE region with the aim of identifying international good practices

and policy recommendations on selected key issues within the mandate of the Team. As part of this policy dialogue, the Team will hold applied policy seminars as part of its annual sessions;

- (b) Preparing synopses of good practices and policy recommendations on selected key issues within the Team’s mandate for discussion and endorsement by CECI;
- (c) Broadly disseminating the above good practices and policy recommendations;
- (d) Subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, and on request from Governments, carrying out assessments of national innovation systems and policies (“Innovation Performance Reviews”) with the aim of providing peer-reviewed policy recommendations to improve national innovation performance;
- (e) Subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, and on request from Governments, providing advice on the implementation of policy reforms in areas within the mandate of the Team;
- (f) Subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, and in cooperation with Governments of countries with economies in transition, organizing technical assistance and capacity-building activities on issues within the mandate of Team. These activities will be organized on a national and a sub-regional basis.

The purpose of creating working groups, task forces and editorial boards would be to (i) leverage the expertise of the Team to further increase the number and quality of activities and outputs that can be delivered; (ii) further increase ownership by the Team of its work; and (iii) give more visibility and recognition to the Team members who contribute most actively to the work.

II. Options

1. Policy Dialogue

The main venues for the policy dialogue are the applied policy seminars held as part of the annual sessions of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies. On an ad hoc basis, the policy dialogue is also carried out at policy conferences organized outside of Geneva in cooperation with host governments.

The Team could envisage creating **organizing committees** for the applied policy seminars to be held at its annual sessions in 2015 and 2016, and for policy conferences organized outside of Geneva.

In the case of conferences outside Geneva, representatives of the host government would be invited to serve on the respective organizing committees.

The organizing committees' tasks could be to:

- i. Develop the structure of the respective seminar and conference programs, determining the number, titles and contents of the sessions;
- ii. Identify and recruit leading international experts as speakers and moderators;
- iii. Advise speakers and moderators on the content of their presentations, ensuring a strong and coherent programs;
- iv. Advertise the seminars and conferences and ensure wide participation.

2. Development of Good Practices

Good practices are developed based on the policy dialogues held at the annual sessions of the Team, and, where applicable, at the policy conferences organized outside Geneva in cooperation with host governments.

The Team could envisage creating an **editorial board for the development of good practices**. The board could invite members of the organizing committee of the policy dialogue from which the good practices are drawn to serve as co-editors.

The editorial board's tasks could be to:

- i. Provide guidance to the secretariat for drafting the good practices;
- ii. Organize an international peer review by electronic means of the first draft of the good practices;
- iii. Moderate this peer review;
- iv. Review the second draft before submission to the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration in order to ensure the results of the peer review are incorporated appropriately;
- v. Present the good practices at the annual sessions of the UNECE Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration for endorsement.

3. Policy Assessment and Advice

The main vehicle through which policy assessment and advice are provided is the series of national Innovation Performance Reviews. The assessments and advice offered in the reviews are based on the good practices developed by the Team, and the reviews follow a common structure.

The Team could envisage creating a **working group to strengthen the methodological basis for these reviews and to support the process of policy learning**. Participation by members who have participated actively in previous reviews, as authors and/ or peer reviewers, would be encouraged.

The working group's tasks could be to:

- i. Organize an international conference to take stock of the lessons learned from the Innovation Performance Reviews conducted so far, and to discuss how to move forward the programme of Innovation Performance Reviews as the Team embarks on a second cycle of reviews;
- ii. Produce a policy-oriented synopsis of these lessons;
- iii. Produce a handbook on the methodology for Innovation Performance Reviews, to be published by UNECE;
- iv. Provide guidance to the secretariat on methodological questions;
- v. Report on the results of its activities at the annual sessions of the UNECE Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration for endorsement.

4. Outreach Activities and Dissemination

It is difficult to overstate the importance for the Team to reach out to its stakeholder communities and to disseminate the result of its work in order to keep abreast of policy developments and emerging needs for the Team's services, and in order to mobilize political, financial and expert-level support for its activities. Among the vehicles for accomplishing these goals are the Newsletter on Knowledge-based Development, official UN publications with the proceedings of policy seminars, press releases. Social media have so far not been used to any significant extent.

The Team could envisage creating **one or several working groups to support outreach and dissemination**.

The tasks of these working groups could be to:

- i. edit the Newsletter on Knowledge-based Development ; this would include identifying suitable topics to be covered and recruiting authors to cover them ; reviewing submissions, providing feedback to authors, and approving final drafts ; one deliverable would be to increase the number of issues of the newsletter over time to monthly frequency;
- ii. edit the proceedings of policy seminars and conferences as official UN publications ; the tasks would be to recruit seminar and conference speakers as authors, to provide guidance on first drafts, and to review final drafts before publication;
- iii. create, animate and moderate a discussion group on LinkedIN and/or other professional networks on topics related to the Team's work;
- iv. report on their activities at the annual sessions of the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration.

III. Modalities

The members of the envisaged organizing committees, editorial boards, and/or working groups would be nominated by the bureau of the Team in consultation with the secretariat based on expressions of interest from Team members. The secretariat would be an ex-officio member of each committee, board or group. Each committee, board or group would elect a chair-person and at least one vice-chair person.

Members of organizing committees, editorial boards, and/or working groups would serve in their individual capacity and agree to be guided by the Terms of Reference of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies and by the Programme of Work of the UNECE Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration.

The committees, boards or groups would work under the overall guidance of the Bureau of the Team and would receive full organizational support from the secretariat.

Upon their inception, the envisaged organizing committees, editorial boards, and/or working groups would establish workflows with milestones and corresponding deadlines, taking into account UN internal rules and procedures that need to be followed for the submission and translation of documents and publications, and for the financing of travel and per diems of speakers and other contributors.

The envisaged committees, boards or groups would hold video or phone conferences at regular intervals to coordinate their work and to ensure that deadlines are met. The secretariat would prepare the minutes of these meetings and circulate them among the committee members and the members of the bureau of TOS-ICP.

The committees, boards or groups would be created initially for a period of two years. At the end of the two-year period, the Team would review their work and decide whether or not they should continue.

IV. Way forward

At its Seventh Annual Session, the Team is invited to consider the above proposals. Based on the recommendations from the Team, the Bureau and the secretariat will work together to create any recommended organizing committees, editorial boards and/or working groups.
