



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
19 August 2015

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration

Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies

Eighth session

Geneva, 12–13 October 2015

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda and election of officers

Annotated provisional agenda for the seventh session^{1, 2}

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m. on 12 October 2015

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda and Election of Officers
2. Substantive segment: The Innovation Adoption Gap – Strategies and Policy Options for Accelerating the Adoption and Diffusion of Innovations for Sustainable Development
3. Business Segment: Review of the work of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies
4. Inter-sessional implementation plan for 2015 and 2016
5. Other business
6. Adoption of the Report of the session

¹ Delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations should register online at <https://www2.unece.org/uncdb/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=WFof>. Prior to the session, delegates (with the exception of delegates from the Geneva-based Missions) are requested to present themselves with a valid identification card/passport at the Pass and Identification Unit of the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, Avenue de la Paix 8-14 for the issuance of an identification badge. Additional information for delegates, including a map of the premises, is available on the UNECE website at <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.html>.

² This document is submitted on the above date due to a delay in the consultations with the Bureau of the UNECE Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies regarding the topic of the substantive segment of the session.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda and election of officers

Documentation: ECE/CECI/ICP/2015/1

1. The Team will adopt its agenda.
2. The objectives of the eighth session are to:
 - (a) Discuss and address topical, substantive issues related to the programme of work of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies (TOS-ICP);
 - (b) Review the outputs and activities carried out since the seventh session; review the implementation plan for the remainder of 2015; and make proposals for 2016.
3. The Team may elect officers to its bureau as required and in accordance with the Guidelines on Procedures and Practices for ECE Bodies (E/ECE/1468, Annex III para.V.8. p. 18). The term of office of any newly elected officers will begin at the end of this session.

2. Substantive segment: The Innovation Adoption Gap – Strategies and Policy Options for Accelerating the Adoption and Diffusion of Innovation for Sustainable Development

4. Following a decision by the Bureau of the Team, the substantive segment will be an Applied Policy Seminar on “The Innovation Adoption Gap – Strategies and Policy Options for Accelerating the Adoption and Diffusion of Innovations”. The Seminar will provide a platform for international knowledge-sharing and policy-learning in this area.
5. In September 2015, the General Assembly of the United Nations will adopt the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. Inclusive and sustainable economic growth figures prominently in the discussion on the post-2015 development agenda. Innovation can make an important contribution towards advancing this agenda, as it drives increases in productivity, economies in the use of scarce resources and changes from unsustainable to sustainable in production and consumption patterns.
6. When discussing innovation policy, the focus is frequently on how to encourage additional innovation. It is often tacitly assumed that once a new product, service or production process has been introduced to the market, the work is done, and the society-wide benefits of the innovation will materialise, such as higher productivity or lower pollution levels.
7. At the same time there is growing evidence that aggregate performance is usually far from what would be possible with the current state of the art in technology, simply because the latest technologies are implemented only by a minority of firms and households. As one example, there are estimates that, even without any further innovations, at least a third of heating energy could be saved in Switzerland – and the corresponding emissions could be avoided – if existing buildings were retrofitted using energy-saving technologies that are available and commercially viable today. Obviously, the scope for and impact of these improvements would be even more significant in countries further away from the technology frontier.
8. Clearly, adopting the current state of the art technology entails costs, and therefore a gradual adoption is justified. However, there is a sense that the pace of adoption may be too slow in certain areas, including areas that are critical to sustainable development.

9. It follows that tremendous progress in terms of productivity and sustainability could be made even without additional innovation, if the latest technologies were to be adopted more widely and more quickly.

10. There are many policy initiatives at the national level designed to increase the pace of technology adoption in selected areas in the UNECE region. Among them are standards, regulations, awareness raising campaigns, subsidies, and tax incentives. Sharing the experience of different countries with these policy initiatives will provide an opportunity for learning about ways in which the impact of socially, environmentally or economically desirable innovation can be increased by accelerating its adoption and diffusion where warranted.

11. This applied policy seminar will lay the groundwork for developing good practices and policy recommendations for addressing gaps in the adoption of innovations. The conclusions may also serve as a contribution to the implementation of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals at the regional level given that the adoption and diffusion of innovations can provide an important part of the solution to many of the challenges in sustainable development. Issues for discussion include:

(a) How large are innovation adoption gaps in different sectors and different countries?

(b) What would be the optimal rate of adoption of innovations in different sectors and fields? What determines the optimal rate? What determines the adoption gap? What explains differences in adoption gaps in different sectors and different countries?

(c) How effective are policies such as subsidies, taxes, standards, regulations, and awareness raising campaigns in reducing innovation adoption gaps, and how can their effectiveness be increased?

(d) How to internalise the social costs and benefits of adopting innovations that support economic, environmental and social sustainability?

(e) How to create markets for innovations that support sustainability?

(f) How to ensure policy consistency, i.e. how to avoid that support for “legacy” technologies or industries compromises the broad-based adoption of innovations?

(g) How to address policy uncertainty, i.e. how to ensure that investors have confidence in the stability of the regulatory framework?

3. Business segment: Review of the work of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies since the seventh session

12. TOS-ICP members will be briefed on key outcomes and highlights of the work carried out since the seventh session, including:

(a) Policy Document: “Good practices and policy recommendations on “Smart Specialization Strategies” (ECE/CECI/2015/4)

(b) Policy Document: “Innovation in the public sector” (ECE/CECI/2015/5);

(c) Policy Document: “Good Practices and Policy Recommendations on Aligning Entrepreneurship and Innovation Policies” (ECE/CECI/2015/6);

(d) Presentation and launch of the Innovation Performance Review of Armenia in Yerevan;

(e) Innovation Performance Review of Tajikistan (ECE/CECI/24);

- (f) Guidebook on “Innovation in the Public Sector” (ECE/CECI/22);
 - (g) Seminar “International technology transfer: Policies and practices”, Astana, Kazakhstan, and Workshop to provide policy advice on Kazakhstan’s Strategy for International Cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovations, Astana, Kazakhstan, 29 October 2014;
 - (h) High-level Seminar on “Public – Private Partnership in Innovation Activities”, Minsk, Belarus, 4 Dec. 2014;
 - (i) Seminar on “Smart Specialization and Regional Innovation Strategies”, at the 10th Kazan Venture Fair, Kazan, Russian Federation, 23-24 April 2015.
13. Members of the Team will be invited to take stock of past activities and to discuss effective means for the dissemination of the Team’s outputs.

4. Inter-sessional implementation plan for 2015 and 2016

Documentation: Inter-sessional Implementation Plan 2015-2016 (ECE/CECI/2015/10); Programme of work of the Economic Cooperation and Integration subprogramme for 2016-2017 ECE/CECI/2015/2, Annex);

14. The secretariat will inform the Team of the main outcomes of the eighth session of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships held on 3 - 4 September 2015.

Implementation Plans for the remainder of 2015

15. The secretariat will inform the Team of the implementation plan for work in the remainder of 2015 in accordance with the Inter-sessional Implementation Plan 2015-2016 of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships (ECE/CECI/2015/10). This includes:

- (a) An international conference on 10-11 November in Minsk, Belarus, 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;
- (b) An international conference on Innovation and Sustainable Development, to be organized jointly with the Government of Israel in Jerusalem on 15-17 December;
- (c) The launch of the Innovation Performance Review of Tajikistan in Dushanbe;
- (d) Finalisation of a publication on “Smart Specialisation Strategies”;
- (e) Subject to availability of extrabudgetary funding, capacity building and policy advisory activities in requesting countries.

Implementation Plans for 2016

16. The Team will discuss proposals for work to be undertaken in 2016 in accordance with the Programme of work of the Economic Cooperation and Integration subprogramme for 2016-2017 ECE/CECI/2015/2, Annex).. Proposals include:

- (a) A parliamentary document for the 2016 session of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships on “Strategies and Policy Options for Accelerating the Adoption and Diffusion of Innovation for Sustainable Development”;
- (b) A publication based on the policy discussions to be organized at the annual session of TOS-ICP in 2015;

(c) Subject to availability of extrabudgetary funding, an Innovation Performance Review of a requesting country;

(d) Capacity-building activities and policy advisory workshops to support the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Innovation Performance Reviews subject to demand from the respective member States and subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources;

(e) Sub-regional capacity-building and knowledge sharing conferences and workshops on policies for promoting knowledge-based development, subject to demand from member States and the availability of extra-budgetary funding. Participants are encouraged to bring to the session any expressions of interest by UNECE Member States or other stakeholders for delivering or hosting capacity-building activities in areas related to the work of the Team;

(f) Any additional proposals received from Team members before or at the session.

17. Participants are encouraged to express any intentions by UNECE member States and other stakeholders to provide extra-budgetary support (such as funds or in-kind contributions, including the organization of seminars, twinning schemes or networking initiatives) to the above activities.

18. The Team is invited to consider and agree on the implementation plans for its work in the remainder of 2015 and in 2016. The decision will be subject to the UNECE Executive Committee's approval of the programme of work of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships.

5. Other business

19. The Team will decide on the date for its ninth session. The secretariat proposes 20-21 October 2016.

6. Adoption of the Report of the session

20. The Report will be adopted at the end of the session.

Annex

Provisional timetable

<i>Time</i>	<i>Agenda Item</i>
Monday, 12 October 2015	
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Item 1. Adoption of the agenda and election of officers Item 2. Substantive segment: The Innovation Adoption Gap – Strategies and Policy Options for Accelerating the Adoption and Diffusion of Innovations
3 p.m. – 6 p.m.	Item 2. Substantive segment: The Innovation Adoption Gap – Strategies and Policy Options for Accelerating the Adoption and Diffusion of Innovations (<i>continued</i>)
Tuesday, 13 October 2015	
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Item 2. Substantive segment: The Innovation Adoption Gap – Strategies and Policy Options for Accelerating the Adoption and Diffusion of Innovations(<i>continued</i>)
3 p.m. – 6 p.m.	Item 3. Business Segment: Review of the work of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies Item 4. Inter-sessional implementation plan for 2015 and 2016 Item 5. Other business Item 6. Adoption of the Report of the session
