

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General  
24 August 2012

Original: English

**Economic Commission for Europe****World Health Organization  
Regional Office for Europe**High-level Meeting on Transport, Health  
and Environment**Steering Committee of the Transport, Health  
and Environment Pan-European Programme****Tenth session**

Geneva, 14 and 15 November 2012

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

**Preparation of the Fourth High-level Meeting on Transport,  
Health and Environment (April 2014)****Preparation of the Fourth High-level Meeting on Transport,  
Health and Environment****Concept note prepared by Transport, Health and Environment  
Pan-European Programme secretariat***Summary*

The Third High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment (Amsterdam, 22–23 January 2009) decided to convene a fourth high-level meeting no later than 2014, to review and report on progress achieved in the implementation of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) workplan, to renew or modify THE PEP priority goals and to plan future activities (ECE/AC.21/2009/2–EUR/09/5086385/2, annex I, para. 15).

The Bureau of THE PEP Steering Committee, at its seventeenth meeting (Copenhagen, 9–10 July 2012), accepted the offer of the Government of France to host the Fourth High-level Meeting in Paris and Marne-la-Vallée in April 2014 and invited THE PEP secretariat to prepare, and to present to the Steering Committee at its tenth session, a concept note and proposed calendar of preparatory meetings to be led by the Extended Bureau of THE PEP.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Bureau on its seventeenth meeting, informal document No. 3, para. 20 (forthcoming). The document will be made available on the THE PEP website (<http://www.unece.org/transport-health-environment-pep/about-us/the-pep-bureau.html>) shortly.

Preliminary discussions on the content and format for the Meeting produced a range of themes and events and will be further honed over the coming year in the preparatory meetings, which are open to all Member states and organizations participating in THE PEP Steering Committee. The present document presents some initial concepts and a proposed organizational structure for the Meeting for the consideration of THE PEP Steering Committee.

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## I. Introduction

1. At the Third High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment (Amsterdam, 22–23 January 2009), delegations from 36 United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO/EURO) member States reviewed progress made under the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) and its impact on the pan-European region, and underlined the importance of linking the three sectors to provide an optimal policy mix to enable citizens' access to transport choices for health, environment and prosperity. Ministers at the Third Meeting adopted the Amsterdam Declaration, including its four priority goals and three implementation mechanisms: THE PEP (staffette), National Transport, Health and Environment Action Plans (NTHEAP) and THE PEP Partnership. It was agreed to hold the next High-level Meeting in 2014, at the latest (ECE/AC.21/2009/2–EUR/09/5086385/2, annex I, para. 15).

2. At its ninth session (Geneva, 16–17 November 2011), THE PEP Steering Committee discussed preparations for the Fourth High-level Meeting and representatives of France proposed to host it. The event will be held in the context of several other transport-related events, including the Transport Research Arena (TRA), the International Transport Forum (ITF) and others, to facilitate interaction with the scientific and research community. The Steering Committee welcomed the proposal and agreed to discuss the overarching theme, the programme and the main documentation at the forthcoming meeting of its Bureau (ECE/AC.21/SC/2011/8–EUDHP1003944/7.1/SC9/8, paras. 25–27)

3. At the seventeenth meeting of the Bureau (Copenhagen, 9–10 July 2012), the representatives of France presented a preliminary concept for the Meeting and a slide show. The Bureau invited THE PEP secretariat to prepare and to present to the Steering Committee, at its tenth session on 15 November 2012, a concept note and proposed calendar of preparatory meetings to be led by the Extended Bureau of THE PEP, open to all member States of ECE and WHO/EURO and other focal points of THE PEP.

## II. Taking stock of major developments — addressing old and new challenges

4. The Fourth High-level Meeting will take place at a time of profound changes in the way the complex and interdependent relations among environment, social and economic development and health are understood. In particular, the notion that human activities should be prevented from causing unacceptable environmental change that could transgress interlinked planetary boundaries is resulting in a greater urge to take corrective measures. This is particularly crucial with respect to climate change, identified as one of the environmental systems whose boundaries might have already been exceeded.<sup>2</sup>

5. Within the renewed sustainability debate, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 Conference), held in June 2012, affirmed the central role of transport and mobility to sustainable development, as a means to improve social equity, health, the resilience of cities, urban-rural linkages and the productivity of rural areas.<sup>3</sup> It

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<sup>2</sup> Johan Rockström, “A safe operating space for humanity”, *Nature*, vol. 461 (24 September 2009). Available from <http://www.environment.arizona.edu/files/env/profiles/liverman/rockstrom-etc-liverman-2009-nature.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> *The Future we want* (A/66/L.56, annex, paras. 132–133). Available from <http://www.uncsd2012.org/>.

also recognized the need to promote an integrated approach to policymaking at the national, regional and local levels for transport services and systems to promote sustainable development. In Rio, it was also recognized that health is a precondition for and an indicator of all three dimensions of sustainable development. A commitment was taken to strengthen multi-sectoral national policies for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, recognizing that reducing, inter alia, air, water and chemical pollution leads to positive effects on health.

6. Against this backdrop, many important developments have taken place in transport, which provide an encouraging stepping stone for the work that remains to be done to effectively tackle the environment and health challenges caused by transport activities, particularly in the urban environment and in the eastern part of the pan-European region.

7. An unprecedented number of cities have embraced successful policies to reshape their space in directions that improve the quality of the urban environment and support a modal shift towards cycling and walking in combination with public transport. The investments of cities such as Paris and Barcelona in cycling infrastructure and city bikes, the introduction of congestion charges in London, Stockholm and other cities and interventions made in New York to “pedestrianize” highly congested areas and turn them into parks are inspiring examples of positive change that can be brought about, over a relatively short period of time, given the political will of a few devoted policymakers.

8. Technological developments have resulted in electric mobility becoming more affordable and widespread. Many corporate car fleets and car-sharing schemes across the pan-European region rely on electric and/or hybrid vehicles and the introduction of electric bicycles has made it possible to use cycling not only for health and leisure, but as a viable means of transport.

9. Active mobility has become an important part of tourism, with several countries investing in infrastructure and services for cyclists. Initiatives such as rental bike systems, Greenways (reuse of abandoned railways as cycling and hiking paths) and the European Cycle Route Network, EuroVelo, have been found to be cost-effective investments.<sup>4</sup> In the case of EuroVelo, a 2009 study estimated that there were 2,795 billion cycle tourism trips in Europe (the 27 States of the European Union plus Switzerland and Norway) with a value in excess of €54 billion per annum. The study estimated that, if completed, the EuroVelo network could account for 45.2 million cycle tourism trips, generating almost €5 billion in direct revenue.<sup>5</sup>

10. Advances in epidemiology enable the quantification of health benefits of cycling and walking. This knowledge is used, within the framework of THE PEP, to develop user-friendly tools that support urban and transport planners in estimating the economic value of interventions that result in increased cycling and walking.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> R. Palau et al., “An Analysis of Greenways from an Economic Perspective”, *Tourism Planning and Development*, vol. 9, issue 1 (September 2012). Available from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21568316.2012.653477>.

<sup>5</sup> Institute of Transport and Tourism (University of Central Lancashire, United Kingdom) and Centre for Sustainable Transport and Tourism (Breda University, the Netherlands), *The European Cycle Route Network, EuroVelo: Challenges and Opportunities for Sustainable Tourism, 2009* (Brussels, European Parliament Directorate General for Internal Policies, 2009). Available from <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/studies.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Sonja Kahlmeier et al., *Health economic assessment tools (HEAT) for walking and for cycling. Methodology and user guide* (Copenhagen, WHO/EURO, 2011). Available from <http://www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-do/health-topics/environment-and-health/Transport-and-health/activities/promotion-of-safe-walking-and-cycling-in-urban-areas/quantifying-the-positive->

11. In spite of these positive developments, a number of challenges remain, as the growing transport demand negates many of the benefits of technological development, produces congestion and pollution — which in some cities of the pan-European region has peaked to record levels — and consumes land for parking and infrastructure. These multiple pressures affect the quality of urban life and impact health, ecosystems and biodiversity. The transport sector remains a key source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and achieving the European Commission’s target of a 60 per cent reduction in GHGs from transport by 2050 remains a formidable objective.<sup>7</sup> Urban air pollution continues to pose a risk to the health of citizens of the region, reducing the life expectancy by an estimated nine months. New evidence indicates that at least 1 million healthy life years are lost every year in Europe as a result of noise from road traffic alone.<sup>8</sup> Whereas mortality rates from road traffic injuries declined overall in the region, large gaps remain between and within countries, with the eastern part particularly affected. Road crashes still result annually in 120,000 deaths, 2.4 million injuries and a great economic burden, and remain the leading cause of death among persons aged 5 to 29 years old.<sup>9</sup>

### III. Sustainable transport policies: a key to clean, green and healthy urban livelihoods

12. *Transport policies are instrumental in making cities centres of culture and vitality.* As the keynote speakers at the Third High-level Meeting pointed out in Amsterdam in 2009, cities are centres of culture, ingenuity and innovation. Citizens work to thrive and survive, despite the hardships of economic crisis and the challenges of a changing climate. Transport policies in the city of the future must adapt to the changing times, including new ways of working (telecommuting, working out of coffeehouses, social networking and Internet-based enterprises) that support the unleashing of entrepreneurial talent as a repercussion of soaring unemployment rates and weak economic growth.

13. *Evolving concepts: green economy, natural capital and the limits of gross domestic product (GDP).* The economic landscape and the urban environment has continued to evolve since the Third High-level Meeting. The Fourth High-level Meeting will need to take into account emerging trends, such as awareness of the need for a green economy, economic indicators that reflect natural (or environmental) capital and the limitations of GDP as a measurement of the well-being of citizens. A holistic approach has gradually taken root, one that reflects the profound interdependence between the natural and physical/built environments and that underlines the nexus among transport, health and

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health-effects-of-cycling-and-walking/health-economic-assessment-tool-heat-for-cycling-and-walking.

<sup>7</sup> European Environment Agency (EEA), *Laying the foundations for greener transport — TERM 2011: transport indicators tracking progress towards environmental targets in Europe*, EEA Report No. 7/2011 (Copenhagen and Luxembourg, 2011). Available from <http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/foundations-for-greener-transport>.

<sup>8</sup> WHO/EURO, *Burden of disease from environmental noise: quantification of healthy life years lost in Europe* (Copenhagen, 2011). Available from <http://www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-publish/abstracts/burden-of-disease-from-environmental-noise.-quantification-of-healthy-life-years-lost-in-europe>.

<sup>9</sup> WHO/EURO, *European status report on road safety: Towards safer roads and healthier transport choices* (Copenhagen, 2009). Available from <http://www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-publish/abstracts/european-status-report-on-road-safety.-towards-safer-roads-and-healthier-transport-choices>.

environment. Today, the links between the three sectors are not as far-fetched as they seemed at the inception of THE PEP in 2002.

14. *The merits of an integrated policy approach.* While a fully integrated policy approach remains an elusive goal for most of the Governments in the pan-European region, several member States have forged these crucial links by merging ministries to encompass one or more of these related sectors, such as France, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, among others.

15. *Demographic trends as pressures and opportunities.* Cities of the future must adapt themselves as well to new influxes and demographic change, e.g., the increase in the aging population in many countries of the pan-European region and the continued trend towards South-North immigration in search of economic opportunity, political freedom and human rights. While these changes put pressure on urban environments to absorb new entrants and vulnerable populations, urban influxes also provide a resource of new labour, new skills and new cultures. Elderly people are healthier than ever and live longer, providing a potential for economic gain, rather than loss, as countries learn to cultivate this untapped resource of post-retirement aged professionals who can contribute to economic activity beyond their normal working years. Populations living with disabilities are expected to increase, partly in connection with the demographic change, and partly as a result of diseases and injuries. Urban transport policies will need to be more responsive to the changing needs for mobility and access of these different population groups and develop services and modify infrastructure to overcome growing inequalities.

16. *Adapting and preparing cities for climate change.* And, finally, cities of the future in the pan-European region will need to adapt to the expected increase in extreme weather events brought about by global warming, such as storms, cyclones, heat waves and the resulting natural disasters, including floods, drought, sea-level rise and glacial melt. Institutions, organizations and communities will need to build capacity for reducing vulnerability and risk, develop early warning systems, strengthen community capacity and social resilience, particularly among the most vulnerable, improve construction practices and establish preparedness to respond to inevitable climate impacts. The resilience of vital transport infrastructure to extreme weather events will have to be part and parcel of the adaptation strategies of all member States.

17. *THE PEP process can help Governments and communities adapt to environmental change.* As noted in the concept note for THE PEP 2012 Symposium, climate change impacts human health,<sup>10</sup> for example, through changes to the distribution of vectors of infectious diseases and to agriculture and food security, resulting in malnutrition and the potential for displacement and migration. Flooding can lead to an increase in water-borne diseases and drought can lead to an increase in respiratory tract, eye and skin infections. Extreme weather can result in injuries (e.g., drowning and road traffic injuries), impede access to vital infrastructure, such as health facilities and emergency transport vehicles — presenting health risks in particular to vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, disabled, youth and the poor — and can result in damage to housing and public buildings. Member States at all levels of government (local, regional and national) need to prepare for climate change by enhancing the resilience of essential infrastructures, including transport (e.g., by using flood and drought-proof materials and designs in transport infrastructure and

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<sup>10</sup> Bettina Menne et al. (eds.), *Protecting health in Europe from Climate Change* (Copenhagen, WHO/EURO, 2008). Available from <http://www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-do/health-topics/environment-and-health/Climate-change/publications/pre-2009/protecting-health-in-europe-from-climate-change-2008>.

considering flood hazards in transport planning and zoning) and by putting systems of governance in place to respond to the changing landscape of the urban environment.

18. *Cities as centres of health, well-being and models of economic development.* The concept of sustainable urban livelihoods encompasses not only economic and financial prosperity, but also means that cities can, through environment and health-friendly policies, be centres of well-being, conducive to both physical and psychological health. Urban livelihoods can be improved through living an active and vibrant life, even amid the oft-mentioned isolation of the urban environment. Social and transport networks connect people and ideas. The city is a political unit, a natural and environmental geo-space and an economic engine. It is at once an agglomeration of physical and structural entities and a collection of populations and personalities that drive its spirit and energy. The links between transport, health and environment are not limited to yesterday's problems, such as congestion, pollution and road traffic accidents, but present a model of cross-sector cooperation and mutually influencing policy choices that will drive our economies and urban environments into the future, for more productive, healthier, sustainable, vibrant cities as centres of individual and collective well-being.

#### **IV. Towards the Fourth High-level Meeting — initial thinking**

19. The above synthesis of the most recent developments and trends indicates that the four priority goals set in Amsterdam and the implementation mechanisms adopted by the Third High-level Meeting remain valid and offer a good framework for intersectoral action.

20. There will, however, be a need for the Fourth Meeting to renew the commitment of member States to work towards more effective, integrated policymaking on transport, environment and health. , THE PEP can provide, even more than before, a multilateral platform to facilitate and support national action through the exchange of knowledge and experiences, the production of tools and services that support environment and health-friendly transport policies and the promotion of research in areas of emerging interest, particularly related to opportunities for a green economy through transport policies and to the improved understanding of the effects of transport on health and the environment. THE PEP can become a model for intersectoral work, and its experiences could be made available to other sectors and regions.

#### **V. Organization of the Fourth High-level Meeting**

##### **A. Proposed format of the Meeting**

21. Following preliminary discussions of THE PEP Bureau at its seventeenth session, the Fourth High-level Meeting is planned to be held as an associated event of TRA 2014,<sup>11</sup> alongside several other transport events, such as the ITF Seminar Task Force, an Intelligent Transport Systems seminar and the Transport Research Board event on Women's Issues in Transportation.

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<sup>11</sup> TRA is a regular and periodic conference to exchange knowledge, drive innovation, foster dissemination and enhance implementation. TRA 2014 will aim at reaching all modes of surface transportation, in particular railway, inland waterways and maritime transport and logistics (passengers and freight). More information is available from <http://www.zapaday.com/event/366459/2/Transport+Research+Arena.html>.

22. Dates for the events are expected to be either 15–17 April or 22–25 April 2014. The Meeting will be held in two locations: the technical part of the programme will be held in Marne la Vallée at Paris Cité Descartes University campus, in order to facilitate interactions with the transport research and scientific community; the high-level (ministerial) parts will take place at the French Ministry of Health in the centre of Paris.

## **B. Overarching theme**

23. The Bureau discussed several options for the overarching theme of the Meeting, such as:

- (a) “Green mobility for a clean, healthy urban life”;
- (b) “Continuing THE Link: Transport Choices for Green and Healthy Mobility”;
- (c) “Human mobility: transport, environment and health in our changing world”.

24. Several other issues were highlighted as possible themes or titles of different segments of the Meeting, such as:

- (a) “What is THE PEP?”;
- (b) “The Challenge of the Green Economy”;
- (c) “Urban livelihoods and well-being”;
- (d) “Changing populations and mobility”;
- (e) “Transport and inequalities”;
- (f) “Reduction of urban transport emissions”;
- (g) “Non-mobile”, “smart” or “intelligent” mobility, i.e., no mobility, or allowing people, e.g., the elderly, vulnerable groups or working parents, to work from home, such as through telecommuting, etc.

25. The Bureau agreed that the theme should be supportive, or at least not conflicting with the theme of this year’s International Transport Forum: “Transport in a changing world”, encompassing both demographic changes and climate change. Some questions raised by the theme could include:

- (a) What kinds of environmentally friendly and healthy transport are best in our changing world?
- (b) How can transport systems best serve people and their environments’ evolving needs?
- (c) How can we reduce transport’s ecological footprint?
- (d) How can we best minimize transport’s negative impact on health?
- (e) How can we adapt transport (infrastructure, policy and governance) to prepare for the expected increase in extreme weather events and minimize negative impacts on urban environment and health?
- (f) How can we maximize possible returns from investments in sustainable transport options?

26. Possible ways of engaging the active participation of youth networks and art or film schools were explored as well as the use of social media.



## C. Preliminary programme

27. The Bureau and the representatives of France proposed a preliminary schedule, as follows:

### Day 1 (Wednesday)

*Venue: Marne-la-Vallée, all day*

**Morning and afternoon:** Exhibitions

**Afternoon:** Technical session of THE PEP as an associated event of TRA, meeting with researchers (e.g., on the WHO/EURO Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT), the Aphekom project, and others).<sup>12</sup>

### Day 2 (Thursday)

*Venue: Marne la Vallée (morning) and Ministry of Health, Paris (afternoon)*

**Morning:** Joint THE PEP/ITF seminar and results of implementation of the Amsterdam Declaration: e.g., Initiative by the Scientific and Technical Network of the Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy of France (CERTU) on signs and signals for active transport; launch of the NTHEAP manual; staffette compendium and others.

**Afternoon:** Final preparatory meeting of the Extended Bureau.

### Day 3 (Friday)

*Venue: Ministry of Health, Paris, all day*

**Morning:** Debate or round table with past THE PEP Chairs/youth network panel discussion/art exhibit and/or a film.

**Afternoon:** THE PEP Ministerial segment to adopt Paris Declaration, followed by a technical visit and/or social event.

## D. Expected outputs

### Main documentation

28. The Committee may wish to agree on the main documentation for the Meeting, including, inter alia, a manual on NTHEAP; a compendium of best practices from the staffette experiences 2009–2013; the final report on signs and signalling for active transport (CERTU/France); assessment of the policy response under THE PEP (i.e., implementation of the Amsterdam Goals at the national level) based on a questionnaire; and possibly a review of transport developments and their effects on health and the environment (2009–2013).

### Ministerial declaration

29. The Committee may wish to discuss steps for the preparation of a ministerial declaration to be adopted by the Meeting. The declaration should be concise and

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<sup>12</sup> See <http://heatwalkingcycling.org/> and [www.aphekom.org](http://www.aphekom.org).

concentrate on commitments for future activities. The Committee will discuss the main elements of the declaration. It may wish to entrust the extended Bureau (open to all member States), with the assistance of the secretariat, with the preparation of a draft declaration, to be submitted to the Committee for consideration at its eleventh session in November 2013.

## **E. Preparatory process**

30. The Steering Committee may wish to endorse the following proposed schedule for preparing the Fourth High-level Meeting and the (draft) Paris Declaration:

- 16 November 2012: Geneva, WHO (Bureau).
  - Spring 2013: (Extended Bureau, back to back with next staffette workshop).
  - July 2013: Copenhagen (Extended Bureau, with interpretation).
  - 29 November 2013: Geneva, Palais des Nations (Extended Bureau, with interpretation; draft declaration in the three languages).
  - 2013–2014: Possibly an extraordinary meeting in Paris to finalize the draft Paris Declaration.
  - April 2014: Paris.
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