



**Economic and Social  
Council**

Distr.  
LIMITED

ECE/EX/2006/L.2  
11 May 2006

Original: ENGLISH

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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Fourth meeting  
Geneva, 14 July 2006

**PROPOSED GUIDELINES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTIONING  
OF WORKING PARTIES WITHIN THE UNECE**

Note by the secretariat

These guidelines are submitted for formal approval by the Executive Committee.

**1. Status and Characteristics**

A Working Party is an intergovernmental body which is subsidiary to a Sectoral Committee. It has the following characteristics:

- (a) It is established by the Executive Committee upon the recommendation of a Sectoral Committee;
- (b) It is authorized by the Sectoral Committee to address a major cluster of recurrent activities within a given subprogramme under the responsibility of the Sectoral Committee;
- (c) It is a standing body whose mandate and extension should be reviewed every 5 years;
- (d) Its meetings are held with full interpretation and translation, unless the members of the Working Party decide otherwise.

## **2. Membership and Officers**

Working Parties are open for participation by all UNECE member States. Non-UNECE member States can participate as observers or, if agreed by the parent Sectoral Committee, as full members. In addition, relevant international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can also be invited as observers, in compliance with the UN rules and practices in this respect.

A Working Party elects its officers: a Chairperson and an agreed number of Vice-Chairpersons; and establishes the term of its officers.

## **3. Methods of Work**

- (a) Each Working Party prepares its terms of reference which must be adopted by its parent Sectoral Committee.
- (b) At its annual or biennial session, each Working Party develops activities in accordance with its programme of work, reviews the achievements and problems met since its last meeting, plans future activities and reviews the work and status of the teams of specialists under it, in accordance with the Guidelines for the establishment and functioning of such teams. With regard to the planning of future activities, all new activities, unless they are resourced by extrabudgetary funds, must be carried out within the currently allocated regular budget resources and, therefore, should be matched by a reduction or discontinuation of one or more activities;
- (c) Each Working Party reports to the annual/biennial session of its parent body;
- (d) The first five-year cycle referred to under 1(c) above will begin as of 2007. On the basis of a comprehensive review prepared by the Working Party, the parent Sectoral Committee should assess and decide on any necessary adjustments to the mandate and status of the Working Party. The conclusions of the assessment should be brought to the attention of the Executive Committee.

## **4. The Secretariat**

The UNECE secretariat services the meetings of the Working Party, providing logistical support and preparing documentation, including draft reports.

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