

**The UNECE Subprogramme on Transport
servicing
UNECE Inland Transport Committee and ECOSOC Committee of
Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally
Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals**

*Briefing note prepared by the Secretariat
based in comments by Bureau members and WP. chairs*

Objective of subprogramme:

The objective of the transport subprogramme is to facilitate the international movement of persons and goods by inland transport modes and improve competitiveness, safety, energy efficiency and security in the transport sector taking into account environmental protection to levels that reduce adverse environmental impact of transport activities and contribute effectively to sustainable development.

The UNECE Transport Division's work and its impact have a dual feature: they are both regional and global. It services global and regional bodies, that address global transport issues through their norms and standard setting and through the legal instruments that have a global geographical coverage (for example in road safety, vehicle regulations, or dangerous goods transport.). In some regulatory and legal areas it promotes regional solutions and also in capacity building activities it has a regional focus.

The Inland Transport Committee is the only UN body dealing with inland transportation in its full scope.

The UNECE Subprogramme on Transport

1. **Centre of UN transport conventions**, more specifically for inland transport, vehicle regulations and dangerous goods transport (57).
2. the **Inland Transport Committee** (ITC) and **its working parties**, as well as the **ECOSOC Committees** serviced by the UNECE Transport Division are **decision making bodies** that can have an **impact on the daily life of people**.
3. The nature of the work is **global, regional and sub-regional**.

Box 1.

Work areas covered by the subprogramme:

Work areas covered by the transport subprogramme comprise variety of activities that could be broadly grouped in the following areas:

- Transport Infrastructure Development
- Road Traffic Safety
- Vehicle Regulations
- Transport of Dangerous Goods

- Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (multi-sectoral)
- Transport Facilitation and Security
- Transport Economics
- Intelligent Transport Systems
- Climate Change and transport
- Gender and transport

Special programmes and projects are driven by particular needs of member countries and critical transport challenges requiring particular attention of member governments:

- Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL)
- Trans-European Rail (TER) and Trans-European Motorways (TEM) projects
- Transport, Health, Environment (THE PEP)
- UNDA Project on inland transport CO2 emissions and ForFITS
- Competitiveness and Transport project

In addition, staff of the Transport Division regularly provides capacity building services linked to the main activities and most often related to adoption and implementation of 56 international agreements and conventions governed by the intergovernmental bodies operating under the auspices of the Inland Transport Committee and of ECOSOC respectively.

Work methods:

The Transport Division services meetings and work of inter-governmental bodies that are a/ under the ECOSOC, b) under the UNECE and its Inland Transport Committee, c) directly governed by the governments through the Administrative Committee of the specific agreement.

Economic and Social Council's subsidiary bodies

The Transport Division has also been entrusted by the Secretary-General to provide secretariat services to the ECOSOC Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and its two Sub-Committees:

- Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods; and
- Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

UNECE Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies

The Inland Transport Committee (ITC) is the highest policy-making body of the UNECE in the field of transport - an activity of priority concern to all UNECE governments. Together with its subsidiary bodies, the ITC provides a pan-European intergovernmental forum, where UNECE member countries come together to exchange information on best practices and to forge tools for economic cooperation and negotiate and adopt international legal instruments on inland transport. These legal instruments are considered indispensable for developing efficient, harmonized and integrated, safe and sustainable pan-European transport systems.

To deal with transport issues, the ITC is assisted by a number of Subsidiary Bodies. Their work programmes and operating methods are regularly reviewed by the ITC. These bodies, to which the Transport Division also provides the secretariat, are listed in box 1.

**UNECE ITC Working Parties and Expert Groups serviced by the Transport
Division of UNECE**

- (SC.1) Working Party on Road Transport;
 - (SC.1/XX) Expert Group on AETR (to be established);
- (SC.2) Working Party on Rail Transport;
 - (SC.2/GEURL) Group of Experts on unified railway law;
- (SC.3) Working Party on Inland Water Transport;
 - (SC.3/WP.3) Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety requirements in Inland Navigation;
- (WP.1) Working Party on Road Traffic Safety;
- (WP.5) Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics;
 - (WP.5/GE.2) Group of Experts on Euro-Asian Transport Links, reporting to WP.5;
 - (WP.5/GE.3) Group of Experts on Climate change impacts and adaptation for international transport networks, reporting to WP.5 (newly established for 2 years);
- (WP.6) Working Party on Transport Statistics;
- (WP.11) Working Party on the Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs;
- (WP.15) Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods;
 - and its joint meetings with
 - OTIF: RID/ADR/ADN joint Meeting (WP.15/AC.1);
 - CCNR: ADN Safety Committee (WP.15 AC.2);
- (WP.24) Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics;
- (WP.29) World Forum for the Harmonization of Vehicles Regulations;
 - (GRPE) Working Party on Pollution and Energy, subsidiary body of the World Forum;
 - (GRSG) Working Party on General Safety Provisions, subsidiary body of the World Forum;
 - (GRRF) Working Party on Brakes and Running Gear, subsidiary body of the World Forum;
 - (GRE) Working Party on Lighting and Light Signalling, subsidiary body of the World Forum;
 - (GRB) Working Party on Noise, subsidiary body of the World Forum;
 - (GRSP) Working Party on Passive Safety, subsidiary body of the World Forum;
- (WP.30) Working Party on Customs Questions Affecting Transport;

Box 2.

Some of these bodies are "unique" at European level (e.g. WP.15) and even at global level (e.g. WP.29). The WP.29 is assisted in its work by six specialized Working Parties covering specific regulatory areas of vehicles. Additionally, joint meetings with other intergovernmental organizations are regularly held in a number of areas, such as the Joint RID/ADR/ADN Meeting. The Subsidiary Bodies of the ITC meet regularly, the periodicity varying from one to three times a year. In total, the Division ensures the servicing of about 200 meeting days per year.

The work program of the ITC, which also reflects the great variety of transport issues, is reviewed and updated regularly. It has also been reformulated in order to clearly determine the kind of activities to be undertaken, the subjects to be addressed, the general objectives of each program element and the time period during which activities have to be undertaken.

Administrative or Executive Committees of ECE legal instruments on transport

The Transport Division also services the Administrative Committees of a number of UN legal instruments. Historically, most UN legal instruments in the field of transport have been developed by the UNECE Member Countries and have taken off for a global application. These Committees are bodies composed of the Parties to the respective legal instrument and, as such, are not subsidiary bodies of the ITC. In several areas the Parties comprise both UNECE Member States and countries from all over the world. This is particularly true for the vehicle regulations where the globalisation of the automotive industry required one global regime for technical regulations both for safety and environmental improvement and for fair trade conditions. Their existence is, however, foreseen in the relevant legal instruments, in which the Secretary-General is asked to convene and to provide secretariat to those Committees. The Division services the following Administrative Committees:

- Administrative Committee of the amended 1958 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Technical Prescriptions for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be fitted and/or be used on Wheeled Vehicles and the Conditions for Reciprocal Recognition of Approvals granted on the Basis of these Prescriptions (WP.29/AC.1);
- Administrative Committee of the 1997 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions for Periodical Technical Inspections of Wheeled Vehicles and the Reciprocal Recognition of Such Inspection (WP.29/AC.4);
- Executive Committee of the 1998 Agreement concerning the Establishing of Global Technical Regulations for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be fitted and/or be used on Wheeled Vehicles (WP.29/AC.3);
- Administrative Committee for the coordination of work of the World Forum WP.29 (AC.2)¹;
- TIR Administrative Committee (WP.30/AC.2) and (TIRExB) TIR Executive Board;
- Administrative Committee for the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (WP.30/AC.3);
- Administrative Committee Convention on Customs Treatment of Pool Containers Used in International Transport (WP.30/AC.4);
- Administrative Committee of the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ECE/ADN)

Main partners

Main stakeholders and partners are the UNECE Member States and the Contracting Parties to the legal instruments. However, complex and most common challenges in transport sector such as economic efficiency, environmental pollution, accessibility, need to be addressed through interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral work, jointly with all stakeholders: governments,

¹ It needs to be noted that the Administrative Committee for the coordination of work of the World Forum WP.29 (AC.2); is not a Committee foreseen by the Agreements. AC.2 is a kind of Bureau and is foreseen by the ToR of the WP.29.

international governmental and non-governmental organizations, civil society, academia and businesses. In pursuing mandates and objectives of the Committee, Transport Division is fostering such approach through collaboration with variety of stakeholders and across relevant sectors. This collaboration also ensures that overlap and duplication of work is avoided and that the resulting value-added is maximized.

In carrying out its diverse activities and the work programme in transport, the Division most frequently cooperates and coordinates work with²:

- The European Union (EU)
- UN Regional Commissions (ESCAP, ESCWA, ECLAC, and ECA)
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
- Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)
- International Transport Forum (ITF)
- International Maritime Organization (IMO)
- United Nations Road Safety Collaboration (UNRSC)
- World Health Organization Europe (WHO/Europe)

With the following organisations cooperation and collaboration is based on Memorandum of Understanding:

- Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO)
- TRACECA
- International Union of Railways (UIC)

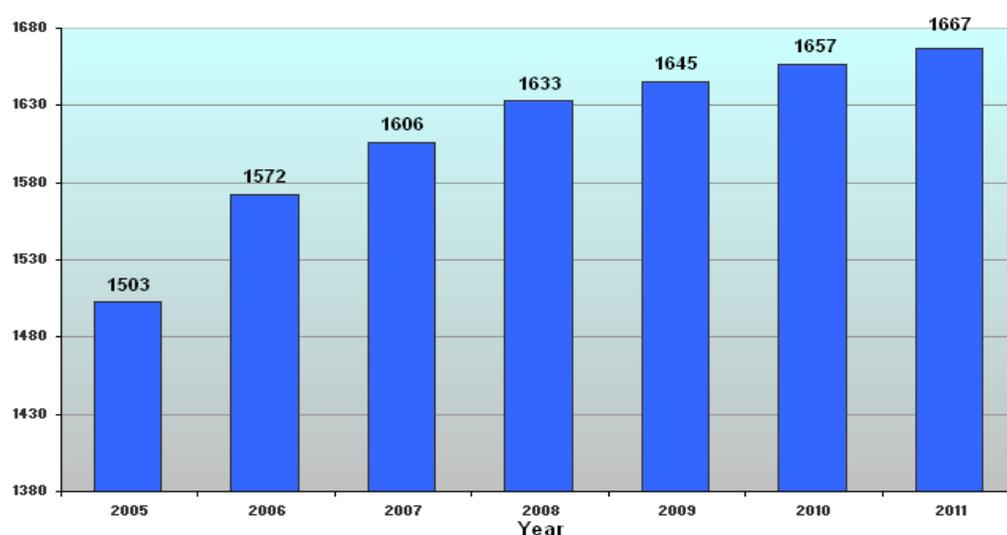
Results achieved:

- 1) Number of Contracting Parties to UNECE legal instruments on transport continuously grows and, more importantly, their global relevance is confirmed by the growing number of non-ECE countries adhering to them;
- 2) Consolidated resolutions on road signs and signals, on traffic signs and signals
- 3) United Nations Development Account project on Road Safety completed global report published;
- 4) Decade of Action (2011-2020) for Road Safety in the UNECE region launched in the region (Belgrade) and globally (New York);

² Cooperation with the following partners varies in level and intensity, at the minimum level it represents regular exchange of information and participation in meetings: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development UNCTAD; United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR); International Labour Organization (ILO); Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO); International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR), Danube Commission (DC), Inland Navigation Europe (INE), International Sava River Basin Commission, Intergovernmental Organization for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF), Compressed Gas Association (CGA); Council on Safe Transportation of Hazardous Articles (COSTHA); Dangerous Goods Advisory Council (DGAC); European Cosmetic, Toiletry and Perfumery Association (COLIPA); European Industrial Gases Association (EIGA); European Metal Packaging (EMPAC); Federation of European Aerosol Associations (FEA); Fuel Cell and Hydrogen Energy Association (FCHEA); International Air Transport Association (IATA); International Association for Soaps, Detergents and Maintenance Products (AISE); International Association for the Promotion and Management of Portable Rechargeable Batteries (RECHARGE); International Confederation of Drum Manufacturers (ICDM); International Confederation of Intermediate Bulk Container Associations (ICIBCA); International Confederation of Plastics Packaging Manufacturers (ICPP); International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA); International Dangerous Goods and Containers Association (IDGCA); International Federation of Airline Pilots' Associations (IFALPA); International Fibre Drum Institute (IFDI); International Paint and Printing Ink Council (IPPIC); KiloFarad International (KFI); Portable Rechargeable Battery Association (PRBA); Responsible Packaging Management Association of Southern Africa (RPMASA); World Nuclear Transport Institute (WNTI); Organization for Co-operation between Railways (OSJD), Centre for Transportation Studies for the Western Mediterranean (CETMO), European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC), European Intermodal Association (EIA), International Rail Transport Committee (CIT), International Road Transport Union (IRU), International Road Federation (IRF) European Association for Forwarding, Transport, Logistic and Customs Services (CLECAT), European Barge Union (EBU), European River-Sea-Transport Union (ERSTU), International Bureau of Containers (IBC), International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations (FIATA), International Association the Rhine Ships Register (IVR), International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA); International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA), European Association of Automotive Suppliers (CLEPA), Association for Emission Control by Catalyst (AECC), Consumers, International (CI), the Foundation for the Automobile and Society (FIA Foundation), International Motor Vehicle Inspection Committee (CITA), European Tyre and Rim Technical Organization (ETRTO), The World Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank (EIB), etc.

- 5) United Nations Development Account project on inland transport CO₂ emissions and ForFITS launched;
- 6) The implementation of the AETR has further improved, as well as the introduction of the digital tachograph has been scaled up to Pan-European level;
- 7) Additional Protocol to the convention on the contract for the international carriage of goods by road (CMR) concerning the electronic consignment has entered into force;
- 8) Adoption of a guideline for market fuel quality.
- 9) Implementation of the ECOSOC recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS), worldwide³;
- 10) Completion of the 2nd White Paper on Inland Water Transport;
- 11) Publication on “Transport for sustainable development in the UNECE region” etc.

Total number of Contracting Parties to UNECE legal instruments on transport



Relevance and value added:

The work of the Inland Transport Committee is unique in many respects. Politically, the Committee is the unique platform where **all** UNECE member Governments, as well as Contracting Parties to agreements and conventions from within and beyond the region have opportunity to discuss and shape international transport legislation. The unique legislative role of the Committee is best reflected through the fact that certain norms, standards and regulations adopted in its subsidiary bodies and administrative committees are being transposed not only in the EU legislation but also in relevant national legislation of many Contracting Parties (Russian Federation, Japan, etc.).

More than 80 per cent of the core work of Transport Division is related to servicing

- ECOSOC Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and its two Sub-Committees;
- the Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies;

³ Detailed information about the status of implementation of the ECOSOC recommendations may be found on the UNECE website at: http://live.unece.org/trans/danger/publi/ghs/implementation_e.html and on the report on the work of the Committee of Experts to the ECOSOC (document E/2011/91)

- and the administrative committees of the different legal instruments.

The work of these above bodies is centred on activities mandated by member Governments and Contracting Parties.

The remaining part - around 20 percent of the core work - of the Transport Division is also indirectly related to mandated activities in the form of monitoring the implementation, capacity building and analytical work.

Therefore, one could conclude that relevance and value added of its work is the reflection of and entirely shaped by interest and objectives of its member Governments wishing to further develop sustainable transport system.

To illustrate this:

- 1) UNECE Vehicle regulations and regulations on transport of dangerous goods - automatically transposed into EU law;
- 2) European Agreement concerning the Work of Crews of Vehicles engaged in International Road Transport (AETR) – harmonized rules for driving time of professional drivers at Pan-European level;
- 3) Inland navigation – unifying role and integrating work of fragmented institutions (river commissions);
- 4) Global outreach – Contracting Parties of many agreements and conventions come from beyond the region: TIR Convention, International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, Road safety conventions, Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR), Road vehicles conventions, Agreements on transport of dangerous goods, etc. – UN legal instruments in inland transport has become global public goods, as a result UNECE has been filling the gap for a global body on matters relevant to inland transport;
- 5) ITC Working Parties offer framework for exchange of best practices and experience in all inland transport modes
- 6) ECOSOC recommendations on the classification and labelling of chemicals (GHS) already transposed (or in the process of being transposed) into legal or recommendatory instruments at national/regional level worldwide (e.g.: European Union, New Zealand, China, Brazil, Korea, Japan, Singapore, Canada, United States of America, Australia, Uruguay); those concerning transport of dangerous goods are made of mandatory application through all international conventions governing transport of dangerous goods by each of the five modes of transport, and are applied nationally in most countries of the world;
- 7) THE PEP programme brings together key players from transport, health and environment sector on equal footing. THE PEP pools capacities and skills from Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia and North America, translating national policy into local action. It offers a unique platform for countries to share information and know-how and benefit from experience. By integrating transport, health and environment policies, THE PEP contributes to a greener economy, safeguarding health and the environment.
- 8) The infrastructure projects (TEM, TER, EATL) facilitate multi-country transport infrastructure planning, as well as the flow of traffic through soft measures – like border/crossing facilitation: Master Plan reviews and analytical works have been underway and are soon to be published;
- 9) The Border Crossing facilitation activities include inter alia the today exclusively available multi-lateral legal instrument on harmonised border controls (Harmonisation Convention), the customs transit facilitation tool the TIR etc.

