

COOPERATION WITH THE CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Prepared by the Secretariat

1. The Work Plan on ECE Reform, in paragraph 28, stipulates that Sectoral Committees will jointly prepare and submit proposals to the Executive Committee on issues and activities of common interest. To this end, the Committee on Inland Transport and the Conference of European Statisticians agreed to propose a review of ECE data work in transport statistics to be carried out by three to four external experts during 2007 and 2008.

2. According to the terms of reference, the review should assess in detail the UNECE data work in transport statistics, including the user needs, the quality and coverage of the statistics, the availability of metadata (documentation) and the extent to which transport statistics comply with the Principles Governing International Statistical Activities endorsed by the UN statistical Commission. The review should also assess whether the tools applied by the UNECE Statistical Division for data work (SQL database and PC-AXIS dissemination platform) should be applied for the regular data work in the Transport Division, as this would facilitate online publication of transport statistics in a more user-friendly format.

3. During its session of 6-8 June 2007, the Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6) discussed the terms of reference of the review of UNECE data work in Transport Statistics and welcomed the proposal from the Bureau for this review.

4. The Working Party invited the secretariat to investigate the possibility of using the PC-AXIS platform for online dissemination of transport statistics. In addition, the secretariat is to continue the publication of annual bulletins on the web in excel. The Working Party could not, however, suggest volunteers to undertake a review of the work on transport statistics.

5. After thorough investigations, in close cooperation with the Statistical Division, the secretariat concluded that online access to a database of transport statistics on the PC-Axis platform would increase the visibility and accessibility of transport statistics. At the same time, PC-Axis also provides increased functionality and user-friendliness, and offers extensive possibilities for providing metadata, i.e. documentation of data sources, data coverage, statistical methods etc. to the users.

6. Thus, starting from mid-September 2007 an increasing part of the UNECE Transport Statistics have been disseminated online using the PC-Axis software. Data for the following subject areas have been published so far:

- Road Traffic Accidents;
- Road Vehicle Fleet;

- Railway Traffic;
- Railway Vehicles;
- Inland Waterway Traffic;
- Inland Waterway Vessels;
- Oil Pipeline Transport;
- Transport Infrastructure;
- Employment.

7. The user can retrieve data according to variables, geographical (country) coverage and time periods. Data can be shown and downloaded in various types of table formats; for example in Excel tables ready to be used. The data are available online, free of charge, on www.unece.org/stats/data.

8. The Transport Division participates in the meetings of the Database Coordination Group together with the Statistical Division. The group meets regularly to coordinate database development and dissemination issues, and to facilitate the implementation of common quality and presentation standards.

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