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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Combined Transport
(Thirty-eighth session, 7-9 October 2002,
agenda item 10)

PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2003 TO 2007

Review of the scope of activities of the Working Party

Note by the secretariat

1. During recent years, the discussions concerning sustainable and integrated freight transport have increased as a result of a volume increase in freight transport resulting in issues such as mobility limitation, congestion and environmental concerns. Both UNECE member States and intergovernmental bodies such as the UNECE, the ECMT and the European Commission have considered the issue.
2. The UNECE Working Party on Combined Transport, according to its Programme of Work, focuses, in particular, on issues related to combined transport. Nevertheless, the Working Party has over time dealt with issues beyond pure combined transport. This seems to be inevitable as combined transport is part of the larger concept of intermodal transport and could be one of the primary tools for the intermodal concept in European transport to succeed.
3. As a consequence, the secretariat is of the view that it could be considered to reassess the focus of the Working Party with the possible aim of enlarging its scope in order to include issues beyond pure combined transport. Such issues could for instance be:

- (a) Intermodality. According to the “Terminology on Combined Transport”, published jointly by UNECE, EC and ECMT, intermodal transport is defined as “the movement of goods in one and the same loading unit or road vehicle, which uses successively two or more modes of transport without handling the goods themselves in changing modes”. The intermodal transport concept is also closely linked to the door-to-door transport concept.
- (b) Integrated transport/Linking transport modes. In the application of combined, multimodal or intermodal transport, it is essential that the transfer from one mode to the next is a seamless operation. Therefore, it is important to facilitate the links between the various transport modes.
- (c) Logistics. The definition of logistics, according to the “Terminology on Combined Transport”, published jointly by UNECE, EC and ECMT, is “the process of designing and managing the supply chain in the wider sense”. The chain can include all phases of supply, handling, delivery and distribution of materials and goods (so-called floor-to-floor).
- (d) Sustainable transport development. There is, so far, no politically agreed definition of sustainable transport on a global level. However, in general terms, a sustainable transport system must contribute to economic and social welfare without depleting natural resources, destroying the environment or harming human health.
- (e) Linking with other world regions. In supply chain management, the possibility of global sourcing plays a key role. As a consequence, it is of vital importance for the proper functioning of the supply that trade lines are not hampered by missing transport links.

The above list of issues is not exhaustive and should only be considered as a first proposal for discussion.

4. The Working Party may wish to consider this issue in further detail and comment on the desirability.

5. The Working Party may also wish to take note of the work programme for 2002 to 2007 of the Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (see annex). In its evaluation of the desirability of extending the scope of work of the Working Party, the Working Party may wish to take into consideration that it should be avoided to create an overlap of activities between the two Working Parties.

Annex

1. PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 02.1: TRANSPORT TRENDS AND ECONOMICS

Review of general trends with regard to transport development and transport policy and analysis of specific transport economic issues Priority: 1

Description: Review and exchange of information on general trends in the development of transport and of specific transport economic issues including transport development in the Mediterranean Region.

Work to be undertaken: The Committee and the Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (WP.5) will consider and carry out the following activities:

2. CONTINUING ACTIVITIES

- (a) Study of economic aspects of transport taking into account (i) the integration process going on within the ECE region, and (ii) the reform processes under way in transition countries by monitoring current changes in transport in order to identify, promote and spread positive examples for transport development.

Output expected: Report on transport development when needed. Priority: 2

- (b) Periodical review of new important policy developments relating to inland transport in UNECE member countries in order to make the medium- and long-term evolution of transport more transparent. The Working Party WP.5 will examine all decisions, general and specific, recently taken in member countries likely to have implications in the organization of transport and take into account the findings arrived at during international meetings focusing on salient issues of transport development.

Output expected: Reports on developments in inland transport of member countries (every five years; next report: 2002). Priority: 1

- (c) Consideration of the main European traffic lines in order to ensure accessibility of peripheral regions.

Output expected: Report on transport development in Pan-European Transport Areas (2002) Priority: 2

- (d) Consideration of the extension of the Pan-European transport corridors outside the EU and the countries associated with the EU.

Output expected: Report identifying and assessing important projects on Pan-European transport corridors Nos. 2, 3, 5 and 9(b) (2001); Report on progress made in the implementation of the Pan-European Transport Corridors. (2002) Priority: 1

- (e) Study of the interrelationship of the UNECE agreements (AGR, AGC, AGTC and its Protocol, AGN) and projects (TEM, TER) with the Pan-European transport network planning procedure with a view to:

- indicating the major international transport routes to be considered for improvement and modernization, establishing priorities and a timetable taking into account those parts of the networks where there are bottlenecks and missing links;
- assessing the cost of this infrastructure plan and making suggestions for financing it.

Output expected: Annual report on coherent European system of international transport infrastructure. (2002) Priority: 1

- (f) Development of Euro-Asian links including the preparation of an ESCAP/ECE joint programme of work on development of Asia-Europe land transport links as well as the analysis of results of international meetings on the problem.

Output expected: Report on Euro-Asian transport links. (2002) Priority: 1

- (g) Development of efficient management frameworks for transport infrastructure maintenance and operation, thus optimizing the need for new investments (linked to the development of the Quality-of-Service concept). Priority: 2

Output expected: Report on thresholds regarding the quality of transport services. (2002)

- (h) Improvement of existing transport planning methodologies, including environmental aspects and the relationship between transport and economic development. Priority: 2

- (i) Collection of data concerning investments in transport infrastructures and study of the effects upon such infrastructures of developments in modal split taking into account, in particular, external costs in order to highlight the interaction between infrastructure and modal development. Priority: 3

- (j) Activities for assistance to countries in transition regarding institutional adaptation of government administration and of transport enterprises to market economy including also support through the UNECE Trust Fund for Assistance to Countries in Transition (TFACT).^{1/}

Output expected : Annual report on assistance to countries with economies in transition. (2002)

Priority: 1

- (k) Strengthening of cooperation with the Mediterranean Study and Training Centres, the results of which will be submitted to the Committee, to enable all ECE countries to benefit from the activities carried out including the organization of workshops.

Output expected : Annual report on activities of the Study and Training Centres. (2002)

Priority: 2

- (l) Analysis of transport developments in the Mediterranean Basin and the Black Sea region and the promotion of international transport agreements to permit, in particular, Mediterranean countries to adhere to them.

Priority: 3

- (m) Information on the studies on the Europe/Africa Permanent Link through the Strait of Gibraltar.

Output expected : Bi-annual report on progress made in the analysis of the Europe/Africa Permanent Link through the Strait of Gibraltar (next report: 2003).

Priority: 3

3. ACTIVITIES OF A LIMITED DURATION

As follow-up to the Conference on Transport and the Environment: Development and implementation of programmes to establish attractive networks taking into account such aspects as intermodality, interoperability and environmentally sound vehicles.^{2/}

^{1/} A detailed list of subjects is circulated in document TRANS/1999/11.

^{2/} In addition to the above item, the Working Party wishes to be associated with activities on transport and environment concerning, in particular, development of methodologies for setting up databases, implementation of scientific programmes, assistance to countries in transition, development of environmental guidelines, external costs, analysis of questions related to the protection of sensitive areas (see also items I (c), (d), (g), (h); III (e); IV (c), (f) in the Programme of Joint Action).