

Review of ECE Data Work in Transport Statistics
Terms of reference
DRAFT

1. Background

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 have 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. The purpose of the review

The purpose of the review is to analyze and assess the present situation with respect to the statistical data work carried out under the Inland Transport Committee, and propose recommendations for action to the Inland Transport Committee and other competent ECE bodies in order to improve the work in the area of transport statistics.

An outline of the review with more details is provided below in section 5 Outline of the Review.

3. Time plan

The review should be carried out and a report including the assessment of the data work and the recommendation for improvements be submitted to the Bureau of the Inland Transport Committee and to the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians not later than one year after the adoption of the Terms of Reference.

The report and a jointly agreed plan of action to follow-up on the recommendations should subsequently be submitted to EXCOM for final endorsement.

4. Organization of work

The review should be carried out by three to four external experts with experience and in-depth knowledge in the fields of transport statistics and in the processing and dissemination of official statistics. It would be desirable to have one member of the Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6), and one member of another ITC subsidiary body, plus one or two persons identified by the Conference of European Statisticians from National Statistical Offices.

One person from the Transport and another from the Statistical Divisions of ECE would be designated to support the review team during this process.

The group of experts decides how to organize the work. Among its members the group appoints a chairman. The group may find it useful to divide the work according to the subject areas covered by the review. However, the group shall provide only one joint Report.

The assessment is expected to require around 3 working weeks of the involved experts. The experts may decide to visit the ECE in Geneva.

To initiate the work and discuss further details and organisational and practical matters it is suggested that a teleconference be held with participation of the experts and the involved staff of the Transport and the Statistical Divisions.

5. Outline of the review

Within the Terms of Reference given, the experts will be free in their work, especially concerning their assessments and recommendations. They have access to all documents that are relevant in this context, including internal documents, and may require any additional information and presentation of tools.

The review should address the following issues:

1. What are the statistics that the Inland Transport Committee and its various subsidiary bodies as well as their respective individual members would require on a regular basis for their various tasks of regulatory development, implementation, monitoring, technical assistance, transport trends and policy analysis? What are the necessary human, technical and financial resources to respond to such demands?
2. To what extent does the present set of statistics collected and published by the ECE Transport Division under the guidance of the Working Party of Transport Statistics (WP.6) meet these requirements?
3. To what extent does this set of transport statistics provide value added for external users compared to the statistics made available by other international organizations? How do they compare with respect to country coverage, timeliness, documentation and user-friendliness of access? What will be the impact of the discontinuation of the ECMT Working Group on Transport Statistics on the work of the WP.6?
4. To what extent is the data work of the Transport Division in line with the Principles Governing International Statistical Activities that were recently endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission?

If a continuing need for regular statistical work in transport is confirmed, the expert team should assess whether the tools applied by the Statistical Division for data work (SQL database and PC-AXIS dissemination platform) should be applied for the regular data work in the Transport Division.

-- -- -- -- --