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Item 3 (d) of the provisional agenda

Methodological development and harmonization of transport statistics

Methodology on road traffic accident statistics

Note by the secretariat

I. Mandate

1. The Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6), at its sixty-first session in June 2010, requested the secretariat to pursue its efforts to provide high-quality and up-to-date data and indicators on transport and road traffic safety (TRANS/WP.6/159, paragraph 47 (b)).
2. The Working Party may wish to exchange views on the international comparability of data on road traffic injuries and the underreporting/misreporting of these data.

II. International comparability of statistics on road traffic injuries

3. The Glossary for Transport Statistics gives a harmonized definition of person killed in road traffic accident as “any person killed immediately or dying within 30 days as a result of an injury accident, excluding suicides.

A killed person is excluded if the competent authority declares the cause of death to be suicide, i.e. a deliberate act to injure oneself resulting in death. For countries that do not apply the threshold of 30 days, conversion coefficients are estimated so that comparisons on the basis of the 30-day definition can be made”.¹

¹ www.unece.org/trans/main/wp6/pdfdocs/glossen4.pdf.

4. The definition of person injured is derived from the above definition. Person injured: “any person who as result of an injury accident was not killed immediately or not dying within 30 days, but sustained an injury, normally needing medical treatment, excluding attempted suicides”.²

5. The majority of UNECE member States are applying these definitions. However some member States are applying other definitions as shown in the table below. This situation implies the use of conversion coefficients to permit the international comparability of data on road traffic injuries.

<i>Country</i>	<i>Death defined in the country³</i>
Albania	On the scene
Armenia	No time frame
Azerbaijan	Within 7 days
Georgia	Within 20 days
Kazakhstan	Within 7 days
Kyrgyzstan	Within 1 day
Republic of Moldova	Within 1 year
Portugal	On the scene
Russian Federation	Within 7 days
Slovakia	Within 24 hours
Turkey	On the scene
Turkmenistan	Within 7 days
Uzbekistan	On the scene

Source: WHO (2009). European Status Report on Road Safety.⁴

6. The European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) defined methodology for standardized 30-day road crash fatality adjustment factors:

	<i>30-day total</i>	<i>Adjustment factor</i>
Scene/ 1 day	77 %	1.30
3 days	87 %	1.15
6 days	92 %	1.09
7 days	93 %	1.08
30 days	100 %	1.00
365 days	103 %	0.97

Source: Jacobs G, Aeron-Thomas A, Astrop A. *Estimating global road fatalities*. Crowthorne, Transport Research Laboratory, 2000 (TRL Report 445).⁵

² www.unece.org/trans/main/wp6/pdfdocs/glossen4.pdf.

³ Longest time frame applied in the country.

⁴ www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/43314/E92789.pdf.

⁵ www.transport-links.org/transport_links/filearea/publications/1_329_TRL445.pdf.

7. The World Health Organization (WHO) used two methods for adjusting the number of killed in its WHO Global Survey:

- the ECMT standardized 30-day road crash fatality to adjust all reported country data; and
- a model using negative binomial regression.⁶

III. Underreporting/misreporting of statistics on road traffic injuries

8. The Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6), at its fifty-third session in November 2002, “noted that there may be underreporting of the actual number of injured persons in road traffic accidents depending on the source of information. The usual source is the police data, but if one takes data on injuries (serious and/or slight) and fatalities from insurance companies and hospitals, the number of the involved persons is much larger (TRANS/WP.6/143, para. 30)”.

9. The International Traffic Safety Data and Analysis Group (IRTAD) addressed the issue of underreporting in several publications.⁷ IRTAD circulated in July 2006 its second survey on underreporting and provided a set of recommendations to improve the data reporting mechanism, based on the results of the questionnaire.⁸ In its Annual Report 2010, IRTAD noted that “most countries responded that the reporting rate was unknown. In many cases, this means that the issue of underreporting is identified but cannot be quantified”.⁹

⁶ *Global status report on road safety*. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2009:231–234

⁷ IRTAD (1994). *Underreporting of road traffic accidents reported by the police at the international level*.

IRTAD Special report, OECD, Paris.

IRTAD (2003). *The availability of hospitalised Road User Data in OECD Member countries* –

IRTAD special report, OECD, Paris.

⁸ www.internationaltransportforum.org/irtad/pdf/repNDL2007.pdf.

⁹ www.dgt.es/was6/portal/contenidos/documentos/seguridad_vial/estudios_informes/10IrtadReport.pdf.