



Economic Commission for Europe**Inland Transport Committee****Working Party on Transport Statistics****Seventieth session**

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Item 4 (c) of the provisional agenda

**Development of a global indicator framework for
the Sustainable Development Goals:****Ensuring modal split data are comparable****The Comparability of Road Data for Modal Split
Calculations****Note by the secretariat****I. Background**

1. Sustainable Development Goal indicator 9.1.2 measures “Passenger and freight volumes, by mode of transport”. The Inter Agency Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals, IAEG-SDGs, has classified this indicator as Tier 1, meaning that data are widely available and internationally agreed methodology exist. The joint custodian agencies for this indicator are the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Transport Forum, with United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, United Nations Environment Programme and the Universal Postal Union as partner agencies.

2. Despite its Tier 1 classification, the indicator’s methodological guidance for countries or partner agencies could be improved. In order to increase the awareness of these issues, this document describes some of the challenges in comparability between the different modes of goods transport, with a particular focus on road goods transport, and possible future solutions to consider.

II. Coverage

3. The table below describes in simple terms what tonne-km data cover for different modes, in terms of geography, for certain data compilers.

<i>Type of transport (data compiler)</i>	<i>Tonne-km coverage</i>
Aviation (ICAO)	All air movements by airlines registered in the State (as defined by their Air Operator Certificate).
Rail (Eurostat regulation) ¹	All rail movements ² on national territory, covering train operators of all nationalities, including journeys transiting the country.
Road (Eurostat regulation) ³	All road movements ⁴ by goods road transport vehicles registered in the reporting territory, regardless of where the transport was performed.
Inland Waterways (Eurostat regulation) ⁵	All inland waterway movements ⁶ on national territory, covering vessels of all nationalities, including journeys transiting the country.

4. The table shows that there is differing coverage when it comes to different transport modes. On the inland transport side, coverage of rail and inland water goods transport includes all journeys within national borders regardless of the country of registration (the *territorial principle*). Conversely for road goods transport, movements of exclusively nationally registered goods vehicles are included – this also covers transport on the territory of other countries, including cabotage entirely in third countries (the *residency principle*). This is due in part to the way data are collected, as road goods transport tonne-km typically come from surveys of the haulage companies and thus cover all registered goods vehicles' movements, even those in other countries. A similar situation exists for aviation data collected by ICAO.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32003R0091&from=EN>.

² The rail regulation states that Member States may “exclude railway undertakings which operate entirely or mainly within industrial and similar installations, including harbours; and those which mainly provide local tourist services, such as preserved historical steam railways.

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32012R0070&from=EN>.

⁴ The road regulation “excludes the carriage of goods by road by means of (a) goods road transport vehicles whose authorized weight or dimensions exceed the limits normally permitted and (b) agricultural vehicles, military vehicles and vehicles belonging to central or local public administrations. Goods road transport vehicles whose load capacity or maximum permissible weight is lower than a certain limit can be excluded. The limit may not exceed a load capacity of 3.5 tonnes or maximum permissible weight of 6 tonnes in the case of single motor vehicles.”

⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32006R1365&from=EN>.

⁶ The inland waterway Regulation “shall not apply to: (a) the carriage of goods by vessels of less than 50 deadweight tonnes; (b) vessels used principally for the carriage of passengers; (c) vessels used for ferrying purposes; (d) vessels used solely for non-commercial purposes by port administrations and public authorities; (e) vessels used solely for bunkering or storage; (f) vessels not used for the carriage of goods such as fishery vessels, dredgers, floating workshops, houseboats and pleasure craft.”