



# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
26 March 2021

Original: English

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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Inland Transport Committee

#### Working Party on Transport Statistics

##### Seventy-second session

Geneva, 9–11 June 2021

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

#### Development of a global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals

## The Economic Commission for Europe nexus approach

### Note by the secretariat

#### *Summary*

This document describes the nexus approach of cross-divisional approaches to policy challenges, and describes future activities that the Working Party on Transport Statistics may undertake, in the scope of the nexus approach and in line with the Inland Transport Committee strategy to 2030.

## I. Background

1. Since 2019, the Economic Commission for Europe has employed a nexus approach to its outputs, which encourages cross-sectoral solutions to policy challenges related to the Sustainable Development Goals. This has led to the formation of four teams covering high impact areas. The four nexuses are:

- (a) sustainable use of natural resources;
- (b) sustainable and smart cities for all ages;
- (c) sustainable mobility and smart connectivity; and
- (d) measuring and monitoring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

2. This cross-cutting work is helping to drive progress towards nine core Sustainable Development Goals where UNECE has particular strengths, namely Goals 3 (good health and well-being), 6 (clean water and sanitation), 7 (affordable and clean energy), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), 11 (sustainable cities and communities), 12 (responsible consumption and production), 13 (climate action) and 15 (life on land). Goals 17 (partnerships for the goals) and 5 (gender equality) underpin all ECE activities.

## II. Nexus on measuring and monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals

3. The Inland Transport Committee (ITC) is involved in all four nexuses. While transport statistics is certainly relevant to each nexus, the secretariat of the Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6) is most involved in the Nexus on Measuring and Monitoring Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Since 2019, a team of ten staff, representing all ECE subprogrammes, have met on a regular basis in order to share subprogramme information and identify areas where cooperation would be of benefit. This has resulted in a publication released on the challenges of measuring and monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals in the ECE region.<sup>1</sup>

4. This publication, based on a survey where 51 of 56 ECE member States participated, identifies challenges faced in the ECE region on the coordination necessary for adequately assessing Sustainable Development Goal progress, as well as a number of recommendations for member States to consider. The examples in the publication cover both strictly statistical issues, such as the structure of the official statistics system of a country and Sustainable Development Goal data flows, as well as less data-driven monitoring activities. For example, the ECE Environmental Performance Review process has since 2017 explicitly provided guidance to countries in designing policies and measures to achieve the 2030 agenda.

## III. Alignment between the nexus approach and the ITC strategy to 2030

5. As mentioned in the draft updated Terms of Reference for WP.6 (ECE/TRANS/WP.6/2021/3), part of WP.6 implementing the ITC strategy to 2030 (ECE/TRANS/288/Add.2) is exploring the links between transport statistics and different domains, such as trade, energy, environment, climate change, gender, health etc. These kinds of links allow the measurement of the impact of transport on these domains, and vice versa. These activities lend themselves naturally to the approach of the nexus. A few examples of cooperation between the WP.6 secretariat and other ECE subprogrammes include:

(a) The presentation of ECE transport statistics to the ECE Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment and the Joint Task Force on Environment Statistics and Indicators, in order to help refine the transport-related Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators.<sup>2</sup>

(b) Transport statistics' input to the report of the Statistics division<sup>3</sup> on the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular the provision of road safety data for indicator 3.6.1 and passenger and freight volumes for indicator 9.1.2.

(c) Involvement and engagement in the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (known as THE PEP), which brings together the World Health Organisation Europe office, and the Environment and Sustainable Transport Divisions of ECE.

(d) Data provision and methodological guidance to the Housing and Land management subprogramme's work on smart and sustainable cities.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Due to be released at the ECE Commission session on 19 April 2021.

<sup>2</sup> <https://unece.org/guidelines-application-environmental-indicators>.

<sup>3</sup> The 2021 version: <https://unece.org/statistics/publications/unece-region-track-2030>. The 2020 version: [https://unece.org/DAM/stats/publications/2020/SDG\\_report\\_for\\_web.pdf](https://unece.org/DAM/stats/publications/2020/SDG_report_for_web.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> <https://unece.org/housing/sustainable-smart-cities>.

#### **IV. Possible future collaboration**

6. Given the importance of implementation of the ITC strategy as well as the holistic approach required for realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals, the secretariat will continue to explore links between transport statistics and other domains, both within the ECE secretariat and elsewhere. As concrete ideas for future work for the Working Party to consider, the links between transport and energy, as well as transport and sustainable cities, would be two areas to consider. Specifically, the generation of energy efficiency indicators relating to transport, as well as the environmental impacts of transport in cities, would be two areas where work could concentrate. This could involve other entities both within and without the United Nations system.

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