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Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

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Item 8 (a) of the provisional agenda

Programmatic Issues:

**Programme of Work for 2024 and Recommendations
on Key components of the Programme of Work for 2026**

Outline of key components of the programme of work of the transport subprogramme for 2026

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. This document presents an outline of key components (objective, strategy and deliverables) of the programme of work of the transport subprogramme (“the subprogramme”) for 2026. These components are based on the subprogramme-related section of the ECE proposed programme budget for 2025, with modified or new elements highlighted in track changes. The Inland Transport Committee (“the Committee”) is invited to consider this information and provide recommendations on these components, as necessary. Those modifications and/or member States’ recommendations agreed by the Committee and included in its decisions will be reflected in the proposed programme plan of the subprogramme for 2026. It will be prepared by the secretariat at the end of 2024 and included in the ECE proposed programme budget for 2026.

Outline of key components of the programme of work

I. Objective

2. The objective, to which this subprogramme contributes, is to advance an intra-regionally and inter-regionally sustainable inland transport (road, rail, inland waterway and intermodality) system by making it safer, cleaner, more efficient, more inclusive and more affordable, both for freight transport and people’s mobility.

II. Strategy

3. The responsibility for the subprogramme is vested in the Sustainable Transport Division.

4. To contribute to the objective, the subprogramme will:

(a) Service the Inland Transport Committee and its 21 working parties and 13 administrative committees, as well as the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and more than 50 formal and informal expert networks, accounting for the Committee's central role in leading and coordinating its subsidiary bodies and its extended inter-regional geographical scope following the endorsement of the Committee's revised Terms of Reference by ECOSOC, and promote the achievement of the objectives of the ITC Strategy until 2030 and the ITC Strategy on Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Inland Transport;

(b) Administer the international regulatory framework for inland transport, which includes 61 United Nations legal instruments on safety, pollution, efficiency, multimodality and effectiveness (normative function) and ensure that the Committee's regulatory functions are up to date with current technologies and transport innovations – such as intelligent transport systems, autonomous vehicles, digitization of customs and transport documents, transport and border crossing facilitation focused information technology applications that they contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, where feasible – and are open to all United Nations Member States, as appropriate, by developing new and updating existing legal instruments, as necessary, including maintaining the database of international regulatory frameworks for inland transport;

(c) Provide an intergovernmental policy dialogue platform at the annual sessions of the Inland Transport Committee to review emerging challenges and emergency situations; support consensus-building during the Committee's events in favour of regional and interregional connectivity, climate change mitigation and adaptation, among other matters, including through the adoption of strategies, action plans, high-level statements or resolutions on harmonized actions by member States and contracting parties in order to enable the full implementation of the Committee's mandate;

(d) Analyse, and provide technical assistance and capacity-building on accession to and implementation of legal instruments, at the request of member States and contracting parties within and beyond the ECE region;

(e) Facilitate global improvements in road safety, through policy dialogue at Committee meetings, and by contributing to the work of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Road Safety and the operation of the United Nations Road Safety Fund, in cooperation with other international organizations, and provide capacity-building and advisory assistance with regard to promoting legal instruments, calls for proposals and other related activities, as appropriate;

(f) Support the efforts of member States to respond to and recover from emergency situations, including pandemics, and foster the functioning and development of national, regional and international inclusive transport systems and the implementation of the sustainable development agenda;

(g) Promote knowledge-sharing and cooperation among Governments and key stakeholders, raise awareness of emerging issues and best responses, contribute to the improved monitoring and measuring of the Goals, facilitate the adaptation of legally binding instruments and frameworks to new realities and prepare new guidance materials.

5. The above-mentioned work is expected to contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 3, 5, 6 to 9 and 11 to 13 and to result in:

(a) Improvements in sustainable mobility, and in monitoring and measuring the Goals;

(b) Improvements in inland transport, leading to safer, cleaner, more efficient, more inclusive and more affordable multimodal systems for contracting parties to the United Nations inland transport conventions;

(c) Enhanced efforts towards net zero emissions by 2050, guided by a Strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in inland transport to be adopted by the Inland Transport Committee in February 2024;

(d) More efficient and resilient cross-border flows of goods and people regionally and globally;

(e) Enhanced intergovernmental cooperation in emergency situations and minimized disruptions to the continued implementation and updating of United Nations inland transport conventions.

III. Deliverables to be implemented in 2026

6. The table below provides an outline of deliverables that are expected to contribute to the attainment of the objective stated above.¹

<i>Category and subcategory</i>	<i>2025 planned</i>	<i>2026 planned</i>
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies		
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents)	1147	1151
1. Documentation for the Inland Transport Committee	991	991
a. Inland Transport Committee and Bureau	31	31
b. World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations	550	550
c. Working Party on the Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs	33	33
d. Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods	160	160
e. Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics and subsidiary groups of experts	28	28
f. Working Party on Transport Statistics	14	14
g. Working Party on Road Transport and subsidiary groups of experts	18	18
h. Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety and subsidiary groups of experts	20	20
i. Working Party on Rail Transport and subsidiary groups of experts	30	30
j. Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics	12	12
k. Working Party on Inland Water Transport	45	45
l. Working Party on Customs Questions Affecting Transport and subsidiary groups of experts	50	50
2. Documentation for the Economic and Social Council	153	157
a. Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals	1	5
b. Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods	120	120
c. Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals	32	32
3. Documentation for the High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment	3	3
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings)	398	408
4. Meetings of the Inland Transport Committee	361	361
a. Inland Transport Committee and Bureau	16	16
b. World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations	121	121
c. Working Party on the Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs	8	8
d. Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods	58	58
e. Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics and subsidiary groups of experts	18	18
f. Working Party on Transport Statistics	6	6
g. Working Party on Road Transport and subsidiary groups of experts	12	12
h. Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety and subsidiary groups of experts	28	28
i. Working Party on Rail Transport and subsidiary groups of experts	30	30

¹ Figures under column “2026 planned” are early estimates indicative of known trends as reflected in column “2025 planned”. Hence the two columns are identical with the exception of bodies servicing the transport of Dangerous Goods and GHS. For these bodies, the 2026 estimates are identical to the 2024 planned figures, reflecting the biennial periodicity of the servicing cycles of these bodies.

<i>Category and subcategory</i>	<i>2025 planned</i>	<i>2026 planned</i>
j. Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics	6	6
k. Working Party on Inland Water Transport	18	18
l. Working Party on Customs Questions Affecting Transport and subsidiary groups of experts	40	40
5. Meetings of the Economic and Social Council	35	40
a. Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals	-	1
b. Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods	25	29
c. Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals	10	10
6. Meetings of the High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment	2	2
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge		
Field and technical cooperation projects (number of projects)	2	2
7. On the Trans-European North-South Motorway	1	1
8. On the Trans-European Railway	1	1
Seminars, workshops and training events (number of days)	11	11
9. Workshops for government officials and other stakeholders in the ECE region and in contracting parties to legal instruments under the purview of the Inland Transport Committee on intelligent transport systems; transport statistics and trends; road, rail, inland water, intermodal and intersectoral transport issues; and vehicle agreements and regulations	5	5
10. Seminars for national coordinators, experts, customs officials and transport industry on the efforts to digitalize the inland transport conventions	6	6
Publications (number of publications)	11	11
11. On the transport of dangerous goods	3	3
12. On the transport of perishable foodstuffs	1	1
13. On decarbonization of the inland transport sector and safe transport and cross-cutting issues	4	4
14. On vehicle regulations	1	1
15. On statistics	1	1
16. On border crossing facilitation	1	1
Technical materials (number of materials)	2	2
17. Recommendations for performance evaluation of automated driving systems	1	1
18. Transport statistics – country profiles	1	1

C. Substantive deliverables

Consultation, advice and advocacy: advisory services for contracting parties of United Nations transport conventions administered by ECE on legal instruments relating to inland transport, facilitation of transport, border crossing, road safety, vehicle construction, and transport of dangerous goods and other special cargo.

Databases and substantive digital materials: the International TIR Data Bank for users from more than 70 contracting parties of the TIR Convention; TIR and eTIR portals; the eTIR international system; the International Transport Infrastructure Observatory (ITIO); the Sustainable Inland Transport Connectivity (SITCIN) online user platform; the inventory of standards on inland water infrastructure; inventory of existing European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines and European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations standards and parameters; databases on transport statistics, road traffic accidents, transport of dangerous goods, transport of perishable foodstuffs, urban transport and transport and environment; Rail Security Observatory; digitized signs and signals (E-CoRSS) under the Convention on Road Signs and Signals; and smart and sustainable connectivity e-learning platform.

D. Communication deliverables

Outreach programmes, special events and information materials: information materials including brochures on legal instruments and activities of the subprogramme for global and regional access.

External and media relations: press releases for the subprogramme.

<i>Category and subcategory</i>	<i>2025 planned</i>	<i>2026 planned</i>
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Digital platforms and multimedia content: LearnITC and other digital platforms and multimedia content on sustainable transport and mobility; and website of the subprogramme.
