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Fifth session

Geneva, 4 March 2024

Report of the Group of Experts on cycling infrastructure module at its fifth session

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I. Attendance

1. The Group of Experts on Cycling Infrastructure Module (hereafter called GE.5) held its fifth session on 4 March 2024. The session was chaired by Mr. M. Eder (Austria) and held as an in-person meeting. The session took into account the deliberations held during an ad hoc informal session in Brussels on 31 January and 1 February 2024 hosted by the Belgium/Government of Flanders (Department of Mobility and Public Works).
2. Representatives of the following United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) member States participated: Austria, Belgium, Estonia, France, Ireland, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
3. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: Energy Efficiency and Environment Protection Association (Enverçevko), European Cyclists' Federation (ECF), Partnership for Urban Mobility, Team of Inventions and Innovation of Iran (Islamic Republic of), Velo and Territories and Confederation of the European Bicycle Industry (CONEBI)/ World Bicycle Industry Association (WBIA).

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.5/GE.5/8

4. GE.5 adopted the agenda for the fifth session as contained in ECE/TRANS/WP.5/GE.5/8.

III. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe cycling network (agenda item 2)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.5/GE.5/2023/3/Rev.1

5. GE.5 had agreed at its previous sessions on 3 principles to be applied for devising United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) cycle route network from the national networks and on a density indicator to achieve as far as possible a comparable density of the future network. Countries which had designated their national cycling networks had been invited to consider the three agreed principles and the indicator and indicate to the secretariat national routes to form the ECE cycle route network.
6. The secretariat informed GE.5 of limited feedback received from countries on the designation of the ECE cycle route network. At the same time, the secretariat presented a first proposal of a possible partial ECE cycle route network. The incompleteness of the network was due to the fact that no devising of network can be done for countries for which no national or supranational (e.g. EuroVelo) data were available.
7. GE.5 thanked the secretariat for preparing the first proposal. GE.5 also noted that in some cases the national routes were interrupted and as such unless the gaps can be resolved (e.g. through planned routes), these routes should not form the ECE cycle route network.
8. GE.5 requested then the secretariat to show on the ECE network the EuroVelo routes, so that it can be visible which links are the other important links in addition to EuroVelo of the proposed ECE cycle route network.
9. GE.5 also requested countries to work with the secretariat and to further modify the ECE cycle route network so that it would reflect countries choices for the routes.
10. GE.5 confirmed to countries that both the existing and planned routes can form the ECE cycle route network, and as far as possible, countries should indicate to the secretariat which of the routes or section of routes were existing versus planned. GE.5 also expressed a desire for the network to show in the future for each existing or planned route the features such as type of the network (e.g. cycle track, cycle lane, greenway, mixed traffic) and their specific parameters (e.g. width, surface quality, etc.). The secretariat and ECF were requested

to make a proposal for the route features to be reported in the future and uploaded to the ECE International Transport Infrastructure Observatory (ITIO).

11. GE.5 reviewed then ECE/TRANS/WP.5/GE.5/2023/3/Rev.1 which contains the draft guide for designation of cycle route networks. GE.5 agreed to: (a) include as Annex 1 tables with density indicators for networks, (b) transfer to Annex 2 decision matrix on selection of suitable types of linear cycle infrastructure including guidance of separating cycle and pedestrian traffic and tables with recommended parameters per infrastructure type, (c) keep in Annex 3 recommendations concerning crossings, and (d) add Annex 4 which would include definitions of types of cycle infrastructure as worked out and agreed upon in a separate document.

12. GE.5 also agreed that the guide should help in setting up cycle route networks at any level and not only national one, and therefore requested the secretariat to review and correct the text to reflect this approach.

13. Finally, GE.5 requested that the guide's final version should be prepared with a table of contents so that future users can easily navigate through it. The guide should also be published separately from GE.5 final report so that it can be easily accessible to interested transport professionals. GE.5 requested the secretariat to explore issuing the guide as a self-standing publication in the three ECE working languages.

IV. Cycling infrastructure definitions and standards (agenda item 3)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.5/GE.5/2023/2/Rev.2, ECE/TRANS/WP.5/GE.5/2023/4, and ECE/TRANS/WP.5/GE.5/2024/1

14. GE.5 had been reviewing at its previous sessions proposals for common definitions for various types of cycling infrastructure. ECE/TRANS/WP.5/GE.5/2023/2/Rev.2 contains all the agreed definitions. GE.5 had also received comments on these definitions from the informal intergovernmental road signs group (IIRSG) of the Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety (WP.1), in particular regarding cycle track and cycle lane. At the fifth session, GE.5 was invited to take a stance on the comments received.

15. Taking into account the IIRSG comments, GE.5 concluded the following:

- Cycle track – keep the original 1968 Conventions' definition, which means the sentence to distinguish between compulsory and non-compulsory cycle tracks should not be incorporated into the definition; instead, an explanatory note to the definition should elaborate on the concept of compulsory and non-compulsory cycle tracks and explain their application and signage.
- Greenway – add an explanatory note to clarify on the signposting of greenways; for completeness of definitions, also add a definition of cycle and pedestrian track/path.
- Cycle lane – add an explanatory note to clarify the markings of cycle lanes by continuous or broken lines as per Article 26 bis of the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals and relate it to the meaning of the mandatory and advisory cycle lanes.
- Traffic light exemption for cyclists – add explanatory note to clarify the use of this solution taking into account Article 21 (2) (a) of the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic.

16. GE.5 requested the secretariat and ECF to revise the definition document as per the conclusions above and, if appropriate, propose further changes, in particular by adding explanatory notes to other definitions. This document should then be shared with experts for them to provide comments before the last session in order to have them reflected in the GE.5 draft final report.

17. GE.5 reviewed then ECE/TRANS/WP.5/GE.5/2024/1 which contains the proposal for cycle definitions. GE.5 changed further the definition of wide carrier cycle. It agreed that there was no reason for the wide carrier cycles to be equipped with type 2 of auxiliary electric motor and therefore decided to remove the mention of it from the definition. With this change, GE.5 agreed to have concluded its work on the cycle definitions unless any

comments would be raised before the last session. GE.5 also agreed to include the cycle definitions in the document proposing modifications to the 1968 Conventions on Road Traffic and Road Signs and Signals, including further changes arising from these new definitions.

18. Finally, GE.5 continued its discussion on the proposals for possible modifications to the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals and on Road Traffic based on ECE/TRANS/WP.5/GE.5/2023/4 and comments made by IIRSG.

19. GE.5 agreed to the following proposals for modifications:

- inclusion in both Conventions: the definition of cycle street,
- inclusion in the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic, or its European Agreement: specific rules to govern cycle streets,
- inclusion in the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals:
 - the non-compulsory and the end of non-compulsory cycle track signs and provisions,
 - the cycle street and the end of cycle street signs and provisions,
 - the additional panel and provision to indicate the directions from which cyclists can enter the crossing,
 - the provisions on markings and the road sign as well as an example of a markings diagram for preselection of lanes,
 - the additional panel and the provision for traffic light exemption for cyclists,
 - the provision on markings and an example of a markings diagram for advanced stop line for cyclists,
 - the sign and a markings diagram and the relevant provisions for the two-stage turn provision, and
 - the sign and the provision for cycle route identification sign, and an example for EuroVelo route sign.

20. At the same time, GE.5 agreed not to propose inclusion in the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals of sharrows, 2–1 road and examples of advance direction and directions signs dedicated to cyclists. Recommendation concerning these types of cycle infrastructure should be made through the explanatory notes to the types of cycle infrastructure definitions.

21. GE.5 requested then ECF and the secretariat to revise the document on the modification proposals for changes to the 1968 Conventions and share it with experts for them to provide comments before the last session in order to have them reflected in the GE.5 draft final report.

V. Other business (agenda item 4)

22. There was no issue raised under this item.

VI. Date and place of next meeting (agenda item 5)

23. The secretariat informed GE.5 that its sixth and last session was scheduled to take place in Geneva on 22 to 24 May 2024.

24. The secretariat also informed GE.5 that as of 22 January the Conference Services of the United Nations Office in Geneva stopped providing services for online/hybrid meetings. As a result of this decision, meetings held at the premises of the Palais des Nations can only be held in in-person format.

25. GE.5 expressed its dissatisfaction about the fact that holding of hybrid meetings was no longer possible. GE.5 stressed that hybrid format allows for wider consultation on matters on which expertise is sought from experts who are not available to travel to Geneva, while providing expert opinions in the discussion of the group of experts works equally effective regardless of whether it is done in-person or through online means.

VII. Summary of main decisions (agenda item 6)

26. GE.5 read through the report of its fifth session and adopted it.
