SUMMARY RECORD

7th Meeting on International Transport Statistics

21-22 October 2021 virtual meeting

Chair: Ms Patricia Hu, Director, US Bureau of Transportation Statistics

1.   Welcome and objectives of the meeting

The 7th ITF International Transport Statistics meeting took place virtually on 21 and 22 October 2021. Ms Patricia Hu, Director of the US Bureau of Transportation Statistics, chaired the meeting. There were 80 participants, representing 32 countries and 10 international organisations. We were pleased to welcome a few countries, which attended the ITF statistics meeting for the first time as well as two non –ITF member countries i.e. Vietnam and Brazil (observer status).

During the opening session, the chair reminded that the objective of the meeting is to share knowledge and experience to improve the quality, the coverage and the harmonization of transport statistic. One of the goals of the meeting is also to inform participants on recent developments in transport statistics. Mr. Jari Kauppila, Head of the ITF Quantitative Policy Analysis and Foresight Division, welcomed all participants, introduced the meeting background, and expected outcomes.

2.   Approval of the minutes from the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

3.   Inclusion and Transport

Mr. Kauppila reminded participants of the theme of "Transport for Inclusive Society" for the next ITF Summit to take place in Leipzig in May 2022. Statistics are critical to provide transport planners, analyst and modellers with the required information to ensure a better transport equity and gender balance in the sector.

Ms. Wei-Shiuen Ng from the ITF presented the ITF's Gender Analysis Toolkit for Transport Policies. She explained that gender analysis is the first step towards gender equality and the project is a systematic analytical process used to identify, understand, and describe gender differences and the relevance of gender within a specific context. This process allows the analysis of different impact of the same policies on both women and men, and requires the collection of gender disaggregated or gender sensitive data. The toolkit

would provide a better understanding of the effectiveness of various transport policies and how their impact could vary by gender.

The ITF conducted an "Integrating Gender Perspective in Transport Policies" survey for the first time among its Member Countries in July 2021 to better understand how many countries already collect transport data disaggregated by gender or gender sensitive data. Out of the total number of ITF member countries that have responded to the questionnaire (26 countries), 20 countries collect gender-disaggregated data in their travel surveys. The questionnaire designed for the survey was focused on taking stock of policy initiatives, data gathering practices, and policy tools used by ITF member countries that can help support the mainstreaming of gender analysis in transport policies, in order to develop policies that reflect the needs, preferences and priorities of women and men. In the case that countries are not undertaking work on gender in transport, the aim was to understand why (by choice, lack of resources, lack of funding, etc.), so that the ITF Secretariat could assess what can be done to address this question.

Ms Patricia Hu from BTS summarized activities at USDOT that took place after the Executive Order 13985, which states that executive departments and agencies must recognize and work to redress inequities in their policies and programs. USDOT's equity efforts are centred on three population groups: the underserved, the overburdened, and the disadvantaged. The assessment focusses on three areas: equitable distribution of grants and financial assistance; building a workforce of the future in the transport sector; and building capital, network and skills for both the above-mentioned population groups and women entrepreneurs. Ms Hu also explained that there are three common data barriers to conduct equity assessment: data exist but cannot be used, data are not accessible due to privacy issues, data do not exist or are of very low quality.

4.   Mobility Data

Mr. Alexandre Santacreu from the ITF took us through the main conclusions of the report from the roundtable "Big Data for Travel Demand Modelling." He explained that the key message of the report is that big data can complement but cannot replace traditional data collection and travel surveys and very often, they do not capture socio-demographics information that is critical to forecast travel demand. On this basis, the report makes a series of recommendations such as to protect and share private and commercial data, to develop guidelines for the use of big data in transport models and invest in the data-related training of the public sector workforce.

Mr. Ronald Jansen from the UN informed about an international collaboration on the use of mobile phone data (MPD). He presented the result of a paper on "Guiding principles to maintain public trust in the use of mobile operator data for policy purposes", based on experiences from three projects in Ghana, Gambia and Estonia, in which MPD were used to monitor human mobility. During the Covid-19 pandemic Governments needed timely, frequent and geospatially detailed data to monitor the effectiveness of measures implemented to reduce human mobility and therefore reduce the spread of the virus. M. Jansen described five principles, which should be applied in the design and execution of the projects to ensure trust in using MPD: necessity and proportionality; professional independence; privacy protection; commitment to quality; and international comparability. The principle of privacy protection while using MPD was generally treated as most important and newly developed privacy preserving techniques can help. He also mentioned the UN Committee of Experts on Big Data and data science for official statistics, in which more than 300 experts from around the world collaborate across nine Task Teams, some taking on transport issues, especially related to maritime transport

Mr. Erki Saluveer from Positium presented the main pitfalls in projects with mobile phone data. He mentioned the five principles explained in the previous presentation and highlighted how they are

interlinked and how maximizing efforts in adhering to one specific principle can catalyse the downfall of others. He described the three main pitfalls: creating methodologies and best practices only for a single project losing the possibility of international comparability; failing to describe the differences between the reality model and the data model; letting the privacy aspects lead the course of the project. Mr. Saluveer gave some tips on how to prepare for projects with MPD.

Ms Giovanna Astori from Italy informed about a project to fill data gap on passenger mobility indicators by re-using microdata from a national mobility survey. The project is ongoing, at present the output is under analysis and part of the indicators produced will be included in the Statistics Explained on Passenger Mobility publication by Eurostat by the end of the year. Ms Astori will keep the group updated on its development.

5.   Innovation in transport measurement

M. Mario Lapointe from Canada presented an innovative way to monitor rail network performance using information from RailState, a private company that uses cameras and sensor technologies to recognise and classify each train movement on the network.

M. Robert Lamour from Canada explained the need to understand changes in the transport activity to adapt solutions. He explained that, in order to identify if changes reflect a long-term shift or are just the result of a specific request, they needed more timely information and looked into various sources such as tourism activity, weekly aviation movements, or weekly rail statistics.

Ms Noreen Dorgan from Ireland informed that they developed a traffic counter model based on information from AIS data.

6.   Lightning talks

Mr. Mario Lapointe from Canada presented the Urban Mobility Measurement at Transport Canada. On the basis of speed data collected on the entire road network, they developed a travel time index that tells how much longer a trip will take during peak hours.

Mr. Robert Lamour from Canada presented a Canadian Economic Dashboard that comprises 18 components (GDP by industry, vehicle registration) based on now casting information.

7.   ITF statistics activities

Ms. Aurelie Kopacz and Rachele Poggi presented the ITF transport statistics data collection, the ITF transport performance indicators and related publications.

Mr. Guineng Chen informed about the recent dissemination of two databases: the "Indian Urban Mobility", a policy simulation tool to identify efficient urban mobility pathways to mitigate CO2 in cities, and the "ITF Transport Outlook" that contains all scenarios outputs until 2050 for urban and non-urban passenger and freight transport data.

Ms Rachele Poggi presented the latest available results from IRTAD, the ITF road safety group. The next annual report will focus on the pandemic impact on road safety. She also mentioned the Safer Cities Streets programme that brings around 50 cities together to improve road safety.

Ms Evangelia Alexandraki informed about the new developments related to the Common Questionnaire. Eurostat designed a new tool to transmit, process and validate data on Excel files. The tool will be implemented in November for the 2020 data collection.

Mr. Jari Kauppila recalled the importance of Transport Satellite Accounts (TrSA). They are an important tool to help policy makers to measure the role of the transport activity in the economy. ITF created a few years ago a working group to set a common framework to build internationally comparable TrSA. A brochure explains the why, the what and how TrSA do to add value to policy decision. However, since the pandemic, the work was put aside and M. Kauppila asked the participants if they would like to resume this activity. It was then decided to reinstate TrSA working group and discuss the path forward in the next meeting.

8.   Climate policy

Ms. Malithi Fernando gave an overview of the key findings in the 2021 ITF Transport Outlook publication. This ITF flagship publication describes estimates of global transport volumes and emissions through 2050 under different policy scenarios, based on in-house models for all modes of freight and passenger transport at the global, national and city level. The focus of the 2021 Outlook is reshaping mobility in the wake of Covid-19, for a cleaner environment and fairer societies. Ms Fernando presented and described the three policy scenarios i.e. "Recover" (current trajectory), "Reshape" (a paradigm shift) and "Reshape +" (reinforce Reshape); and their corresponding impacts. She explained that in the current situation transport CO_2 emissions are set to rise but with highly ambitious policies, this growth could be almost 70% less in 2050 than in 2015.

Mr. Nikolaos Roubanis from Eurostat presented their action plan to meet policy needs arising from the European Green Deal programme. The action plan comprises many themes and Mr. Roubanis focussed on the transport statistics part.

Ms Elisabeth Windisch informed about the ITF contribution to the International Programme for Action Climate (IPAC) by the Environment Directorate at the OECD. This is a monitoring exercise on climate action progress that complements the UNFCCC five-year process of the revision of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) that countries submit to the UNFCCC under the Paris Agreement. The ITF contributes to IPAC to the extent of its available transport data information.

9.   Data gaps in transport policy

Ms. Rachele Poggi explained that the transport sector is facing new challenges and that data is critical to understand new mobility patterns. The ITF has then identified some key variables of interest and asked data providers, by means of a survey sent last July, if those variables are or will be available in their country. The answers showed that some information exist, but data gaps remain mainly for infrastructure, active mobility and transport costs. The next steps will be to collect available data, set priorities for the unavailable information and help countries to collect them.

10.   International co-operation

Mr. Nikolaos Roubanis presented Eurostat transport statistics in the pandemic context. He informed how aviation, maritime, rail, inland waterways and transport safety developed a response to the Covid-19 crisis and presented future projects related to passenger mobility, light duty vehicles and intermodal transport.

Mr. Alexandre Blackburn from the UNECE updated the group on their transport statistics activities and pointed out important data gaps concerning particularly public transport. He also recalled that in September 2020 the UNECE and the ITF organised a virtual webinar on mobility data that was very well attended. The main take away from the webinar were that traditional data remain an important source; however, countries have a lot of interest in Mobile Operators Data and that it was important to develop partnerships to ensure sustainability of data sources and respect privacy.

Ms. Iuliana Lupu from DG Move gave an overview of the latest developments in recent EU transport policy and related data needs. She mentioned the European Green Deal, which aims at reducing transport emissions to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. She also described the "Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy" that aims to make transport systems more sustainable, smart and resilient.

Mr. Vincent Vu from UIC gave updates on recent trends in passengers and freight transport trends. He informed that data can be viewed and visualised using the Railisa web-based application and their statistics Glossary is available on-line via RailLexic.

11.   Conclusion and next steps

In the concluding remarks, Ms. Hu suggested that for the next meeting, we address important issues mentioned during these two days sessions such as critical data gaps, harmonizing mobility data collection, transport safety, disruptions in supply chains, challenges in using AIS data and a path forward to re-open TrSA discussions. She emphasized the importance of aligning meeting discussions to the incoming ITF summit theme. For example, part of our next meeting should focus on the 2022 ITF Summit theme on "Transport for Inclusive Society".

The ITF 8th international transport statistics meeting will be in Paris at the OECD headquarters, on Thursday 14th and Friday 15th April 2022.