## SECTORAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

## TRANSPORT

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|  | Programming years covered by the multiannual action | **2024-2027** |
| **CRITERIA FOR RELEVANCE ASSESSMENT** | IPA III Window and thematic priorit(y)/(ies) | **WINDOW 3: GREEN AGENDA AND SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIVITY*****Thematic Priority 2:* Transport, digital economy and society, and energy** |
| Links with specific policy instruments of the enlargement process | The **EC 2022 Report on North Macedonia** highlights that North Macedonia is **moderately prepared** in transport (Chapter 14 Transport policy). The proposed Sector Operational Programme (SOP) will contribute to addressing some specific issues mentioned in the Report, such as the need to strengthen the operational and administrative capacity of the inspection bodies and develop enforcement capacity to reduce fatalities on road and rail infrastructures, implement the connectivity reform measures on rail reform and open the rail transport market and adopt legislation on intelligent transport systems (ITS) and introduce combined transport and make further efforts to produce a strategic and legal framework to implement ITS and the core and comprehensive networks. As concerns Chapter 21: Trans-European networks, the Report underlines that the country has a **good level of preparation** in the area of transport networks. The proposed SOP will contribute to addressing some of the recommendations related to strengthening the operational and technical capacity of all management and stakeholder institutions dealing with the development of both Trans-European Transport (TEN-T) and Trans-Energy (TEN-E) networks and harmonise the legal framework with the Trans-European Network Regulation; mobilise sufficient resources to implement the Transport Community Treaty, and implement the final provisions of the Railway Border-Crossing Protocol with Kosovo.The SOP aligns with the **Stabilisation and Association Sub-Committee on Transport, Environment, Energy, and Regional Development's Conclusions and Recommendations** on 17 March 2022. About Transport, the conclusions indicated that the country needs to enhance its operational and administrative capacity across all modes of transport, strengthen the operational and administrative capabilities of all inspection bodies, improve road safety, and provide better education and awareness, especially for those who are at the highest risk. Additionally, it is necessary to strengthen the capacities of the public enterprises dealing with major road and rail infrastructure projects financed by the EU grant funds and blended with IFI’s loans to achieve successful and timely project implementation.The SOP follows the **Economic Reform Programme (ERP) 2023-2025** and significantly contributes to overcoming the country's challenges. The programme recognises that the country still faces challenges regarding the necessary reforms to achieve an appropriate level of competitiveness and inclusive growth of human capital, the green transition and the competitiveness of national companies, their integration into global value and the formalisation of the economy. The ERP proposes a measure 9. Implementation of an Intelligent Transport System (ITS) along Corridor X, whereby developing this measure, one of the strategic objectives stated in the National Transport Strategy will be fulfilled, i.e., maintaining a high level of safety and traffic flow in all conditions and will impact competitiveness through improvements in network capacity, and traveller mobility and enhance economic productivity.The proposed SOP will contribute significantly to achieving the objectives of the **Economic and Investment Plan (EIP) for the Western Balkans (COM (2020) 641 final).** It is crucial to commit firmly to implementing fundamental reforms aligned with European values to boost investment and economic growth in the region. In this sense, this Action is a critical element in promoting and improving the investments included in the EIP, and it aligns with the plan's priorities. The EU has prioritised investments in sustainable transport projects related to the European Trans-European Network (TEN-T), which is strategically crucial to the region and the EU. These investments require the Western Balkan side to adopt and implement regional rail, road safety, transport facilitation, and road action plans prepared by the Transport Community. Additionally, the Western Balkans must make speedy progress on transport connectivity reform measures to accelerate integration with the TEN-T, the EU acquis, and its digital and clean energy technologies. Finally, the Western Balkans should progressively adopt and implement all EU transport legislation and technical standards to support these investments.The SOP besides the focus on road and rail infrastructure, mainly contributes to the **Green Agenda for the Western Balkans**, reflecting the **European Green Deal** in the region, particularly climate action, including **decarbonisation, energy, and mobility**. Regarding smart and sustainable mobility, some initiatives are also in line with the Action: support the performance of the road safety action plan and the road action plan adopted within the frame of the Transport Community, including road maintenance and resilience. Furthermore, the SOP is also in line with the **TEN-T** connections with the EU, contribution to safe mobility, sustainable mobility, and synergy with the reforms promoted by the **Transport Community Treaty-TCT**. It will contribute to the current TEN-T policy based on Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013, which addresses the implementation and development of a Europe-wide network of railway lines, roads, inland waterways, maritime shipping routes, ports, airports, and railroad terminals. The ultimate objective of the policy is to close gaps, remove bottlenecks and technical barriers, strengthen social, economic, and territorial cohesion within the EU, and, through its extension, ensure closer integration of the western Balkans region with the EU.This SOP will support the implementation of the objectives of the **Communication “Europe on the Move – Sustainable Mobility for Europe: safe, connected and clean”** of May 2018, and the **EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030-Next steps towards “Vision Zero”** of June 2019**,** which confirmed the EU's long-term goal of moving close to zero fatalities in road transport by 2050 and added that the same should be achieved for serious injuries. It also proposed new interim targets of reducing the number of road deaths by 50% between 2020 and 2030 and reducing the number of serious injuries by 50% in the same period, as recommended in the Valletta Declaration.The SOP also supports the **Connectivity Agenda** which is transformed into the adopted Action plans of the Transport community, with improving connectivity within the Western Balkans, as well as between the Western Balkans and the European Union, and which puts a special emphasis on the preparation and financing of concrete regional infrastructure investment projects and on the implementation of technical standards and reform measures (e.g.: aligning/simplifying border crossing procedures, railway reforms, information systems, road safety and maintenance schemes, unbundling and third-party access).This SOP is also in line with **EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III**, applying the standards of conducting and using updated gender analysis to inform decision-making, in particularly in the field of transport safety and connectivity through inclusion of gendered indicators and needs assessment of women and members of other vulnerable groups, where applicable, in targeted sector. Activities will contribute to applying gender-sensitive and sex-disaggregated indicators and statistics in all mentioned fields.  |
| Contribution to the IPA III Programming Framework objectives | The proposed SOP is designed to contribute to the achievement of the specific objective of the **IPA III Programming Framework**, **thematic priority** **1: Environment and climate change,** and **thematic priority 2: Transport, digital economy and society, and energy** within **Window 3:** **Green Agenda and Sustainable Connectivity.** * Thematic priority 1: *To support the protection of the environment, improve its quality and contribute to actions and policies against climate change to accelerate the shift towards a low-carbon economy.*
* Thematic priority 2: *To promote smart, sustainable, inclusive, safe transport and to remove bottlenecks in key network infrastructures, to improve access to digital technologies and services, to accelerate the shift towards a low-carbon economy promote clean energy transition and a European integrated energy market* and in particular the support to the energy institutional reform, the de-carbonisation and the reform of the transport sector in line with the Transport Community Treaty.

The SOP Transport is in line with the purpose of IPA III to support the construction of new transport infrastructure and upgrading of the existing one, with the objective of bringing the core and comprehensive transport network up to the EU standards. Fast and efficient transport link and greening transport with further investment in rail are crucial. The creation of these links will drive investments, facilitate regional trade and contribute to sustainable economic growth, thereby enhancing the quality of daily life for people in the region.The intervention also meets the requirement in the IPA III Programming Framework that investments should always be associated with those institutional regulatory reforms undertaken in the context of the alignment with the EU *acquis* and standards, and likely to ensure long-lasting and sustainable social and economic returns.  |
| Links with national, regional and global strategies | The proposed SOP is in line with the following global, regional, and national strategies:* The objectives of **United Nation’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, more specifically, the Action contributes to the following:

**Goal 11**. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. Target 11.2 Provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.* The **Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy of the European Union** and the connected **Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy Western Balkans** Perspective of the Transport Community which has defined objectives related to 10 key areas for making the transport sector more sustainable, smart, and resilient.
* The **National Transport Strategy 2018-2030 of North Macedonia** outlines the country's vision for developing the transport sector over the next decade. The strategy focuses on improving the quality and safety of transport infrastructure, promoting sustainable and environmentally friendly transport modes, improving connectivity and integration, enhancing transport safety and security, supporting economic growth and development, and strengthening transport governance and institutional capacity. The strategy aims to upgrade and modernise existing infrastructure and build new infrastructure where needed, promote public transport, cycling, and walking, improve cross-border transport links, reduce transport costs, and promote public-private partnerships.
* The **National Programme for Adoption of the *Acquis (NPAA).*** This three-year programme is revised and updated every year with activities that are proposed that will remove the remarks deriving from the progress report of the EC, as well as with short-term and mid-term priorities from the Accession Partnership Agreement.
* The **Strategy for Gender Equality 2022-2027**, aiming at accomplishing gender equality in society in which women and men, girls and boys have equal rights, access to resources, opportunities, and protection in all spheres of life, as a condition for complete and sustainable economic, demographic, and social development and progress of the country, i.e., a society in which women and men will have same privileges and responsibilities accomplished in real joint partnership.
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| Coherence with the Sector Approach | The Action falls under the Sector Working Group (SWG) on Transport. North Macedonia has made good progress in introducing the **Sector Approach**. Key strategy documents, especially those developed after 2017, use a rich data collection and measure success with SMART indicators. They are developed through a participatory process and benefit from the participation of relevant stakeholders, including civil society organisations and international donors. Authorities, donors, and civil society can discuss general and specific strategic directions and thus increase the compliance of the strategies with international and EU standards. The SWG is supported technically by the line ministry and guided methodologically by the Secretariat for European Affairs. The SWG work in two formats: technical, involving the experts from the participating organisations, and decision-making, involving the heads of the participating bodies. The SWG has the mandate to lead the sector policy dialogue, which includes the definition of sector priorities and the reporting on their implementation. As of 2020, the country put in place a **Performance Assessment Framework** (PAF), streamlining the policy objectives; based on a set of impact and outcome indicators, targets, and baseline data. The indicators formulated and agreed upon for this window provide a robust system for measuring compliance with the evidence-based approach to policy making. The PAF is available under <https://pafnorthmacedonia.mk/PAF/>.The **institutional set-up** is supportive to on-going and planned sector reforms with clear responsibilities allocated to the relevant national authorities.The **budgeting policies** for the sector have undergone significant improvements. The country has implemented a medium-term expenditure framework that helps to control the costs associated with substantial reforms and increase its credibility. In September 2021, North Macedonia adopted the Organic Law, further strengthening its budgeting policies for the sector. It introduces a new set of fiscal rules to guide fiscal consolidation and improve the budget process. Key reforms include medium-term projection, spanning both medium-term budgeting and a five-year fiscal strategy, as well as establishing a Fiscal Council, and independent body assessing fiscal policy. |
| Coherence with other IPA III programmes  | Overall, the proposed Action is aligned with the area of interventions of **IPA III 2021-2027 Strategic Response for North Macedonia**, under Window 3, *Thematic priority 2: Transport, digital economy and society, and energy*, regarding:Objective 2.1: To develop a harmonised transport sector that is internationally compatible and integrated into the TEN-T network that stimulates the economic and social development of the country, promotes environmentally friendly infrastructure, preserves the environment, and secures the needs of future generations.Planned areas of intervention (eligible interventions):* Construction of new and reconstruction, rehabilitation, upgrading, supervision of works and modernisation of existing railway sections along the Core and Comprehensive network according to the EU technical standards to provide quality and safe TEN-T connections with the neighbouring EU members and the wider region in the Western Balkans.
* Construction of new and reconstruction, rehabilitation, upgrading, supervision of works and modernisation of the existing road sections on the Core and comprehensive network according to the EU technical standards to provide quality and safe TEN-T connections with the neighbouring EU members and the wider region in the Western Balkans.
* Project preparation studies, such as feasibility studies, cost-benefit analyses, environment impact assessment, design documentation, tender documentation and assistance with tendering and contracts (tender specification, evaluation, preparation of contracts, etc.) related to reconstruction, rehabilitation, upgrading and modernization of the road and rail sections in compliance with the EU technical standards.
* Support evaluation, audit and control activities of the SOPT, including technical audits for the major projects,
* Support multimodality and sustainable transport systems, with stronger integration of various transport modes.
* Improvement of road and rail safety through intervention in infrastructure and soft measures implementation including but not limited to preparation of strategic documents, capacity building of the relevant stakeholders, improvement of the administrative capacities, communication activities and campaigns, exchange of know-how, good practises and experience with the EU member States, surveys, and analysis etc.
* Promoting modal shift through the advancement of transport services with quality and innovations as well as improvement of availability, affordability, and accessibility of the transport services to the vulnerable groups.
* Further reducing the transport impact on the environment through introducing and supporting green transport modes and increasing transport and infrastructure efficiency by using smart and IT tools and introducing digital and clean energy technologies.
* Advancement of sector planning and development through preparation of sector and project documentation (planning documents, project preparation studies such as feasibility studies, cost-benefit analyses, environmental impact assessments, design documentation, as well as assistance for capacity building in terms of preparation of TD and contracts: tender specification, evaluation, preparation of contracts, etc. Further elevation and advancement of the transport sector integration to the EU transport area with an approximation of the legal framework with the EU *acquis* and European standards and increasing transport stakeholder capacity to assume the obligations of an EU membership.
* Measures to support the implementation of green, urban transport and sustainable connectivity planning activities, such as feasibility studies, cost-benefit analyses, environment impact assessment, design documentation, tender documentation, as well as for capacity building in terms of preparation of TD and contracts etc.
* Technical assistance for the approximation for the relevant EN standards, Provision of technical assistance related to transfer of “know-how” experience in the area of identification, assessment, selection of eligible projects and projects preparation and implementation of Major construction projects.

The Sectoral Operational Programme shows coherence with and/or will be complementary to several ongoing and planned actions under IPA annual and multiannual action programmes, multi-country programmes and WBIF, as well as projects financed and implemented by other EU Member States, other donors or IFI’s and will build on their results and achievements.* **Sector Operational Programme for Transport 2014-2020.** The Sector Operational Programme Transport 2014-2020 of North Macedonia aimed to improve the quality and safety of transport infrastructure, promote sustainable and environmentally friendly transport, enhance the competitiveness of the transport sector, strengthen institutional capacity and governance, and promote regional connectivity. This was to be achieved through various measures, including upgrading and maintaining roads, railways, ports, and airports, investing in public transport and cycling infrastructure, promoting innovation and research, and improving transport links between North Macedonia and neighbouring countries. Total amount of IPA € 109 m plus 15% national co-financing.
* **WBIF**. North Macedonia Orient/East-Med Corridor: North Macedonia-Bulgaria CVIII Rail Interconnection, Kriva Palanka-Border with Bulgaria Section WBIF EU grant 2022 in total of €149.2 m and funds from the Sector operational programme 2014-2020 in total of €60,765m. Also, WBIF supports other projects such as the Construction of the motorway Skopje – Blace, support for deployment of the ITS on hihway A1 (Corridor 10), Construction of the Express Road A2 Kriva Palanka-Stracin, also the construction of the North Macedonia Orient/East-MED corridor VIII rail interconnections Kumanovo-Kriva Palanka. In regards to the Kumanovo-Kriva Palanka rail intersections the amount of WBIF investment grant is €68.5m for construction, as well as €7.8m for the preparation of the technical documentation and supervision of the works. In the mid 2022 the contracts with selected contractors were signed. The contractors were commenced in work and till the end of 2022 the advanced payments were done. The progress of the works of both sections are advancing well.
* **World Bank. Local Roads Connectivity Project** **(2019-2025).** The objectives are to improve government capacity to manage local roads and improve access to markets and services. The project will be supported by a EUR 70 million IBRD loan. The project will include the following four components: (a) Capacity Enhancement, (b) Rehabilitation of Local Roads and Community Facilities, (c) Project Implementation Support, and (d) Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC).
* **World Bank**. **Modernisation of the road network infrastructure in the Republic of North Macedonia** **(2014-2023).** The project aims to enhance the connectivity of the country's road network with regional and national roads and improve road safety. This will be achieved by upgrading 350 km of regional roads, strengthening the institutional capacity of road agencies, and improving the quality and safety of selected sections of the national road network. (€ 135 m.).
* **Construction of Express Road A2 section Kriva Palanka – Stracin**

The Public Enterprise for State Roads (PESR) is implementing Road Upgrading and Development Project (RUDP) with loan from World Bank. The project sets out the completion of motorway corridors, and the efficient connection of the road network to the corridors as its short-term priorities. The new express road is expected to strengthen mobility and trade, and to increase the opportunities for social and economic benefits, both nationally, as well as for the neighbouring countries. Due to unforeseen events during the project implementation on 23.02.2023 PESR submitted to SEA a WBIF application for approval of €43.2 m grant amount. * **Deployment of Intelligent Transport System (ITS) on Highway A1 (Corridor 10) – North part and National Traffic Management Center (NTMC)**

The project aims to improve the transport and trade efficiency and safety along Corridor X. In particular, the ITS development (Intelligent System for Traffic Management and Control) is to equip the highway with traffic-technical and telemetry systems on the built-up highway profile and all structures on it, taking into account climate zones, terrain types, traffic oscillations, vehicle structures etc. in total amount of €12.3 m.* **World Bank. Western Balkan Trade and Transport Facilitation project (2019-2025).** The objective of the project is to reduce the time and cost of trade and increase the region's competitiveness by improving trade and transport infrastructure. This will be achieved through the implementation of various activities, including the modernisation of border crossing points, the development of transport corridors, and the implementation of trade facilitation measures. The project aims to create a more integrated and efficient transport network within the region, as well as to connect the region to the wider European transport network (€ 26,2 m.).
* **EBRD. Modernisation of the road network infrastructure in the Republic of North Macedonia (2014-2023).** The EBRD has been supporting North Macedonia in improving the country’s transport infrastructure with investments in rail and road. The Bank has provided € 275 million to construct road and railway projects in the country.

 **Construction of motorways linking the capital of Skopje with the border of Kosovo.** The loan is of an amount of € 580 m. First phase in length of 1.9 km is ongoing and funds are secured through own state resources. Second phase of Skopje-Blace, new 10.5 km long subsection of the TEN-T Route 6 motorway (the “Motorway A4”), is covered by a loan agreement from EBRD signed on 01.07.2022 in amount of 167,600,000.00 EUR loan and Investment Grant from WBIF approved on 17.12.2019 of up to 20,820,169 EUR. Currently PESR is applying for increase of Investment Grant through SEA. At the moment Infrastructure Project has been applied for approval from the designer side.* **IPA III 2024 Action Document “EU for Reforms and Resilience”**

 Output 1.3 *Improved transport policy and legal harmonisation** Strengthening the capacities of the Ministry of Transport and Communication (MoTC) to proceed to lead a modern and even more effective overall national transport policy, to be provided by TA with high-level advice on transport-related issues and implementation actions in line with the EU’s overall objectives for a cleaner, greener, safer, and smarter mobility.
* Technical assistance for the preparation of the EU *acquis* in the transport sector, especially for the accession negotiation process (Cluster 4) and in parallel with meeting the requirements of the Transport Community Treaty (Annex 1).
* Alignment with the EU *acquis* on transport safety and passengers’ rights (e.g., Regulation 181/2011 concerning the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport and Regulation 1371/2007 for the rights of passengers in rail transport, and Regulation (EU) 2021/782 on the rail passengers rights and obligations), as well as the implementation of the rights of passengers in all modes of transportation.
* Harmonising the current North Macedonian standards in the railway infrastructure sector with the TSIs and EN standards (the project should include the Institute for standardisation and other relevant institutions to obtain maximum harmonisation) and establishing a verification body in North Macedonia (DeBO).

The **Law on Interoperability for the Railway System** has been amended to provide for the adoption of technical specifications for interoperability (TSI). Specifically, the Minister of Transport and Communications will prescribe the TSI for the structural and functional subsystems based on the proposal of the Directorate for Safety in the Railway System. Additionally, the amendment specifies that the Directorate for Safety of the Railway System will publish the adopted TSI on its website as soon as it is published in the "OG of the RNM." The Institute for Standardization of the RNM will draw up and adopt a list of national standards for applying European standards upon request by the Ministry of Transport and Communications. The list will be published on the Ministry of Transport and Communications website immediately after adoption by the Institute for Standardization of the Republic of North Macedonia. The by-laws established in the law will be adopted no later than six months from the law's effect. The Government has reviewed the Law on Interoperability for the Railway System and submitted it for adoption in the Assembly.Output 2.3 *Improved transport safety enforcement and implementation capacity** Technical assistance to support the *Road Traffic Safety Agency* (RSA), which is planned to be established by the end of 2023, in establishing and functioning the overall road safety system in the country, including setting up a unified database regarding road safety features that should be found within the executive body.
* Technical assistance to the newly established *Road Traffic Safety Agency* (RSA) for preparation of a new Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan.
* Support to design and implement modern public awareness and education measures, sensitising society to road safety issues within the newly established RSA.
* Strengthening the enforcement and technical capacities of the Railway Safety Directorate (RSD) and the State Transport Inspectorate (STI) in their respective competencies.
* Technical assistance to the future *Railway Safety Agency* (RSA) for preparation of a new Rail Safety Strategy and Action Plan.
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| Indicative budget (in EUR) | **Total EUR: 106,000,000.00****EU contribution EUR: 50,000,000**Indicative split per programming year:

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| ***Spending Schedule*** | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | Tot. OP |
| ***Costs (in MEUR)*** | **10** | **15** | **15** | **10** | **50** |

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| Indicative list of areas of support under the operational programme | ***1: Rail Transport Infrastructure**** Construction of new and reconstruction, rehabilitation, upgrading, supervision of works and modernisation of existing railway sections along the Core and Comprehensive network according to the EU technical standards to provide quality and safe TEN-T connections with the neighbouring EU members and the wider region in the Western Balkans. Project preparation studies, such as feasibility studies, cost-benefit analyses, environment impact assessment, design documentation, tender documentation and assistance with tendering and contracts (tender specification, evaluation, preparation of contracts etc.) related to reconstruction, rehabilitation, upgrading and modernization of the rail sections in compliance with the EU technical standards.
* Support evaluation, audit and control activities of the SOPT, including technical audits for the major projects.
* Support multimodality and sustainable transport systems, with stronger integration of various transport modes.
* Advancement of sector planning and development through preparation of sector and project documentation (planning documents, project preparation studies such as feasibility studies, cost-benefit analyses, environment impact assessments, design documentation, as well as assistance for capacity building in terms of preparation of TD and contracts: tender specification, evaluation, preparation of contracts, etc.).
* Promoting modal shift through the advancement of transport services with quality and innovations as well as improvement of availability, affordability, and accessibility of the transport services to the vulnerable groups.

Specific projects:* *Construction and supervision of railway section along the Corridor X Kumanovo-Deljadrovce.*
* *Preparation of project documentation documentation for improvement of the railway network along Corridor X-branch 10d.*
* *Assessment and testing carried out and design and tender documentation for railways bridges along Railway Corridor X.*
* *Design and tender documentation for extension of railway border crossings (Tabanovce, Bogorodica, Kremenica, Blance).*
* *Preparation of study and project documentation for establishing railway connection between the main passenger station in Skopje with the airport in Skopje.*

***2: Road Transport Infrastructure*** * Construction of new and reconstruction, rehabilitation, upgrading supervision of works and modernization of the existing road sections on the Core and comprehensive network according to the EU technical standards to provide quality and safe TEN-T connections with the neighbouring EU members and the wider region in the Western Balkans.
* Project preparation studies, such as feasibility studies, cost-benefit analyses, environment impact assessment, design documentation, tender documentation and assistance with tendering and contracts (tender specification, evaluation, preparation of contracts etc.) related to reconstruction, rehabilitation, upgrading and modernization of the road sections in compliance with the EU technical standards.
* Support evaluation, audit and control activities of the SOPT, including technical audits for the major projects.
* Support multimodality and sustainable transport systems, with stronger integration of various transport modes.
* Advancement of sector planning and development through preparation of sector and project documentation (planning documents, project preparation studies such as feasibility studies, cost-benefit analyses, environment impact assessments, design documentation, as well as assistance for capacity building in terms of preparation of TD and contracts: tender specification, evaluation, preparation of contracts, etc.).
* Promoting modal shift through the advancement of transport services with quality and innovations as well as improvement of availability, affordability, and accessibility of the transport services to the vulnerable groups.

Specific projects:* *Rehabilitation of state road A1, section Gevgelija-Greece border (Bogorodica) (right carriageway).*
* *Preparation of technical documentation and implementation of measures for improvement of road safety.*
* *Design and tender documentation for Exoress way A2, Section Stracin-Romanovce.*
* *Design and tender documentation for construction/upgrading of motorway section Katlanovo-Veles, right carriageway.*

***3: Urban Transport and Sustainable Connectivity**** Further reducing the transport impact on the environment through introducing and supporting green transport modes and increasing transport and infrastructure efficiency by using smart and IT tools and introducing digital and clean energy technologies.
* Project preparation studies, such as feasibility studies, cost-benefit analyses, environment impact assessment, design documentation, tender documentation and assistance with tendering and contracts (tender specification, evaluation, preparation of contracts etc.) related to the area of urban transport and sustainable connectivity.
* Advancement of sector planning and development through preparation of sector and project documentation (planning documents, project preparation studies such as feasibility studies, cost-benefit analyses, environment impact assessments, design documentation, as well as assistance for capacity building in terms of preparation of TD and contracts: tender specification, evaluation, preparation of contracts, etc.
* Measures to support the implementation of green, urban transport and sustainable connectivity planning activities, such as feasibility studies, cost-benefit analyses, environment impact assessment, design documentation, tender documentation, as well as for capacity building in terms of preparation of TD and contracts etc.
* Promoting modal shift through the advancement of transport services with quality and innovations as well as improvement of availability, affordability, and accessibility of the transport services to the vulnerable groups.

Specific projects:* *Preparation of project documentation on a level of DD and deployment of the ITS on the Road Corridor 8 (Tetovo-Skopje Bypass-Stip).*
* *Preparation of project documentation for improvement and implementation of adaptive systems for traffic management and control in cities above 20,000 inhabitants.*

***4: Technical and Horizontal Sector Assistance**** Technical assistance for improving project planning and capacity and capabilities for management of the implementation of infrastructure projects.
* Planning and developing technical documentation supporting investment projects implementation.
* Supporting retention policy for IPA operational and MA structure.
* Technical audit for infrastructure projects implementation.
* Further elevation and advancement of the transport sector integration to the EU transport area with approximation of the legal framework with the EU *acquis* and European standards and increasing transport stakeholder capacity to assume the obligations of an EU membership.
* Technical assistance for approximation of the relevant EN standards,
* Advancement of sector planning and development through preparation of sector and project documentation (planning documents, project preparation studies such as feasibility studies, cost-benefit analyses, environment impact assessments, design documentation, as well as assistance for capacity building in terms of preparation of TD and contracts: tender specification, evaluation, preparation of contracts, etc.
* Improvement of road and rail safety through intervention in infrastructure and soft measures implementation including but not limited to preparation of strategic documents, capacity building of the relevant stakeholders, improvement of the administrative capacities, communication activities and campaigns, exchange of know-how, good practises and experience with the EU member States, surveys, and analysis etc.
* Provision of technical assistance related to transfer of “know-how” experience in the area of identification, assessment, selection of eligible projects and projects preparation and implementation of Major construction projects.
* Promoting modal shift through the advancement of transport services with quality and innovations as well as improvement of availability, affordability, and accessibility of the transport services to the vulnerable groups.

Specific projects:* *Technical audit for the Major project Construction of railway section along Corridor X Kumanovo-Deljadrovci.*
* *Technical assistance to the operating structure for preparation and implementation of projects within the SOPT 2024-2027 under IPA III.*
* *Technical assistance for improving the capacity building within the development of TEN-T network and implementation of Transport Community Treaty.*
* *Visibility and communication activities to ensure the SOP is communicate effectively to all stakeholders and that the benefits of the programme are widely understood.*

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| **Area of Support** | Total Value | IPA, WBIF, IFI’s contribution |
| 1: Rail Transport Infrastructure | 62,500,000.00 | 53,125,000.00 |
| 2: Road Transport Infrastructure | 10,500,000.00 | 8,925,000.00 |
| 3: Urban Transport and Sustainable Connectivity | 30,000,000 | 25,500,000.00 |
| 4: Technical and Horizontal Sector Assistance | 3,000,000.00 | 2,550,000.00 |
| **TOTAL** | **106,000,000.00** | **90,100,000.00** |

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| Institutions involved in the management of the operational programme | The institutional framework for IMBC under IPA III and the FFPA is currently in development and pending agreement. As part of this process, a comprehensive analysis of potential alternative institutional frameworks will be conducted, considering the possible future institutional framework for Cohesion Policy.Once the institutional framework is agreed upon, documents will be created before the NAO requests entrustment. These documents will include the following:* Organigrams outlining the roles and responsibilities of the NIPAC Technical Secretariat, Management Structure, Managing Authority(ies), IBPMs, and IBFM(s).
* A decree specifying the mutual relations between the structures for IPA III, including the Audit Authority
* An act of systematisation and job descriptions for the NIPAC Technical Secretariat, Management Structure, Managing Authority IBFM(s), IBPMs.
* Operational agreements and a bank protocol.
* Protocols to ensure IT security across all structures involved in IMBC.
* A manual of procedures for the NIPAC Technical Secretariat, Management Structure, Managing Authority(ies), IBFM(s), and IBPMs.
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