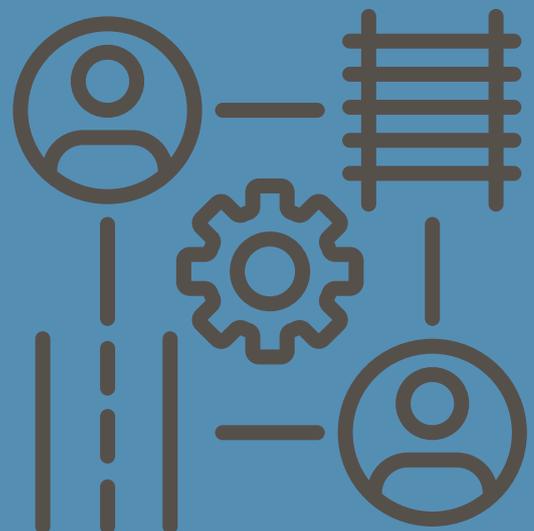
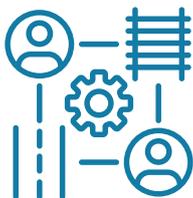


SHADOW REPORT

FROM MONITORING WORK
AND EFFECTS OF
THE SECTOR WORKING
GROUP ON TRANSPORT

January – December 2020





THROUGH
DIALOGUE TO
EU

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FOREWORD

The project “CSO Dialogue – Platform for Structural Participation in EU Integrations” is committed to ensuring structural participation of the civil society that expresses the views of citizens to impact key sector-wide reforms under the EU accession process. The sector working groups (SWGs)¹ are perceived as exceptionally important mechanism for consultations and civil society participation, and a forum for development of national policies and design of reform processes in the country. Hence, the second edition of 12 shadow reports on performance of sector working groups in 2020 is an attempt to bring this mechanism closer to the citizens and to critically analyse their organizational setup, functionality and efficiency.

For the purpose of the second edition of 12 shadow reports on performance of sector working groups in the period January – December 2020, project researchers monitored 17 from total of 19 meetings held by these working groups. Findings from observing SWG meetings and analysing sector policies were discussed at 11 interviews conducted with IPA coordinators from line ministries responsible for relevant sector groups, and with 34 civil society representatives that participate in SWGs. Moreover, changes noted in 2020 compared to 2019 are supported by responses obtained to 312 freedom of information requests inquiring about SWG performance in the course of 2020.

The general assessment implies certain progress in SWG performance despite the extraordinary year which, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, has raised challenges for the overall society. Progress is primarily noted in respect to transparency in SWG operation, notably by means of

¹ The sector working groups are a formal mechanism for consultations and cooperation among the executive authorities (ministries), civil society organizations, the donor community, and other interested parties. By the cut-off date for this report, 12 sector working groups with competences in different areas are established in the Republic of North Macedonia, in order to ensure the sector-wide approach.



greater access to published information that are of importance for SWGs. Furthermore, 2020 was marked by organization of 19 plenary sessions, compared to only 12 sessions held in 2019. However, despite the mild increase in the number of meetings, SWGs still do not meet pursuant to the frequency anticipated under the rules of procedure, which could guarantee a commitment to sector policies and reform implementation. SWGs demonstrated a satisfactory level of functionality, as stipulated in their respective rules of procedures, but these documents fall short in defining the role and position of civil society organizations within SWGs. Having in mind that the central focus of the project “CSO Dialogue – Platform for Structural Participation in EU Integrations” is put on civil society organizations and their efficient involvement in policy shaping, this report stresses the need for advancing the role played by civil society organizations in sector working groups.

GENERAL INFORMATION

SECTOR WORKING GROUP ON TRANSPORT

FORMED: 2015

NUMBER OF SWG MEMBERS: 36 under the decision from 02.07.2020 (of which 16 are deputy members)

CSO MEMBERS: one plenary session, 03.07.2020

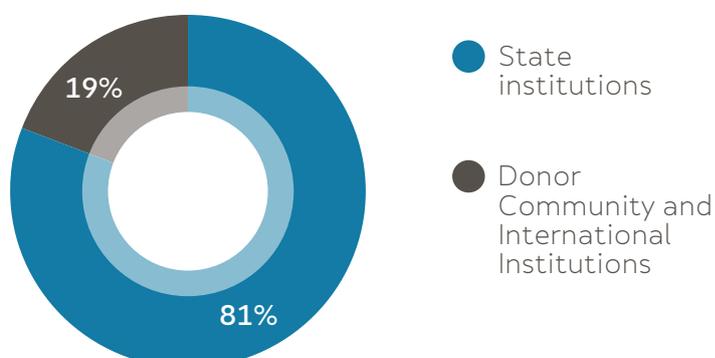
NUMBER OF MEETINGS HELD IN 2020:

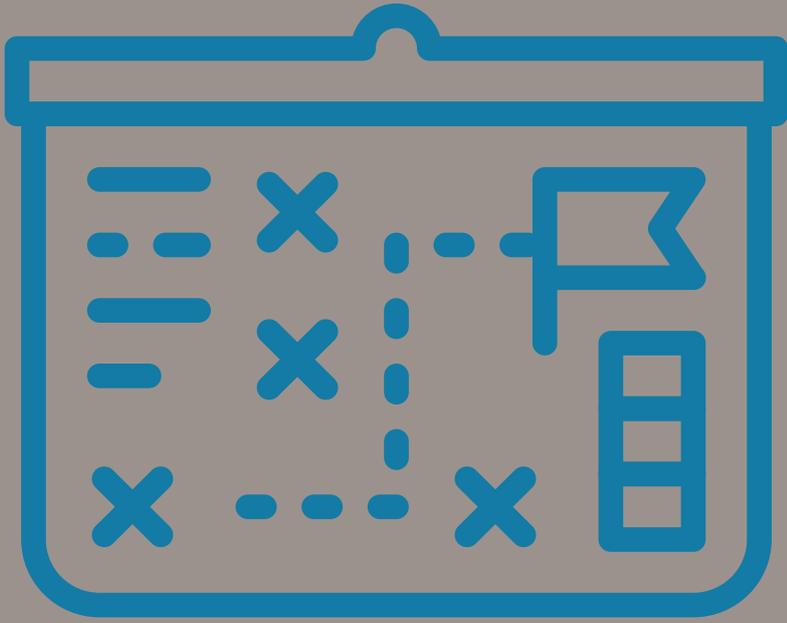
One plenary session, 22.06.2020

SWG CHAIR: State Advisor on Transport Policy at the Ministry of Transport and Communications

CHART 1.

Distribution of various representatives in SWG Transport





METHODOLOGY APPROACH

For the purpose of this report, the project team combined several research methods for data collection, processing and analysis. Research work was comprised of desk analysis and field/online survey.

The desk research component included in-depth analysis of documents, laws and strategies that are of importance for this sector working group (*for more information see **BIBLIOGRAPHY.***) Moreover, the project team submitted **25 freedom of information requests** to the Ministry of Transport as the institution competent for operation of this sector group. Responses to all 25 information requests were disclosed in timely manner.

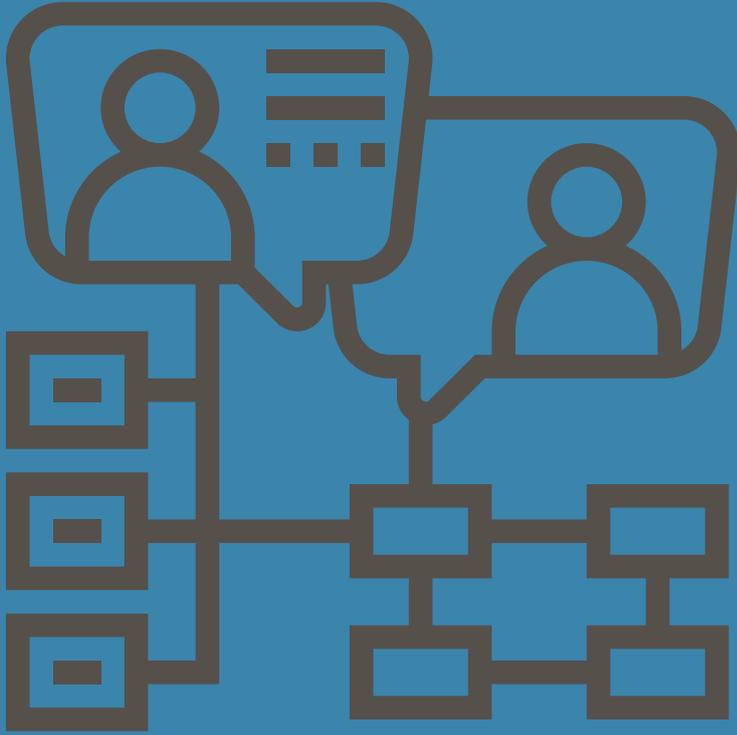
As regards field/online survey, the project team **interviewed**² the coordinator from the Ministry of Transport and Communications, and conducted³ with representatives from civil society organizations interested to join this sector working group. At the same time, in the capacity of observers, project researchers attended the **only meeting** held by this sector group during the monitoring period.

According to the monitoring methodology, performance of sector working groups is assessed in respect to five segments:

- SWG functionality;
- civil society participation in SWG;
- CSO capacity for contribution and participation in SWG work;
- effects from SWG work; and
- IPA.

2 Interview with the coordinator from the Ministry of Transport and Communications was conducted on 04.05.2021.

3 Interviews with representatives from civil society organizations interested to join SWG Transport were conducted on 28.04.2021.

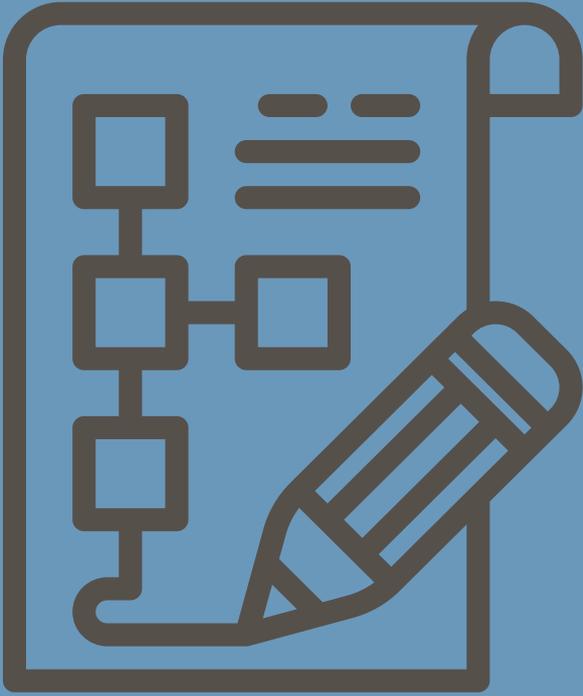


PART 1

SECTOR POLICIES

In 2020, there were no significant strategy documents or legislation adopted in the transport sector. The Ministry of Transport and Communications announced that development of strategies on intelligent transport systems and on traffic safety are in initial stage of preparations. In respect to traffic safety, the main goal is to create basis for formation of separate executive authority tasked with improving road traffic safety in order to reduce accidents and number of victims and injured. It is believed that such authority would ensure a systemic approach to traffic safety and would cover all aspects currently treated by several institutions: Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Interior, Public Enterprise for State Roads and Republic Council for Road Traffic Safety.

According to the National Transport Strategy 2018-2030, which is the key strategy document in the transport sector, attainment of first short-term objectives is anticipated as late as 2021. Hence, there could be no discussion about achievements made in 2020, although this sector has several ongoing projects financed by different donors and creditors (EU, WB, EBRD, Exim Bank). These projects generally concern construction or modernization of road infrastructure, as well as development of relevant project design documents.



PART 2

SWG FUNCTIONALITY

2.1 RULES OF PROCEDURE

SWG Transport has its own rules of procedure, but this document is in the form of draft text and is not formally adjusted to needs and guidelines provided by the lead institution. The Ministry of Transport and Communications has submitted comments and proposals for amending the rules of procedure for this sector group to the Secretariat for European Affairs (SEA) back in 2018, but after two years they have still not received any feedback whether their comments and proposals are accepted and whether the rules of procedure should be adequately changed, including whether changes will be made by the Secretariat for European Affairs or each sector group should individually adopt their own rules of procedure. On this account, the rules of procedure for SWG Transport are in the form of draft text and are not published on the official website of the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

A separate annex to the draft rules of procedure enlists SWG members, i.e. provides a list of line ministries, state institutions, public enterprises, donors and international financial institutions that are represented in this sector group. However, the annex does not provide specific information in



terms of other organizations, such as civil society organizations, academia and trade unions that should be represented, nor it provides any guidelines about the method for their selection.

It should be noted that SWG composition was changed under the decision on establishing SWG Transport adopted on 02.07.2020. The number of members and deputy members was reduced to 36 from 39 members indicated in the decision on establishing SWG Transport from 23.04.2018. This reduction is made on the detriment of the number of members from the lead institution, i.e. Ministry of Transport and Communications, while the composition of represented institutions remained unchanged. Continuity in work of the sector group is ensured by the fact that only 4 from 36 members and deputy members are newly appointed.

A total of 14 institutions participate in SWG Transport, as follows: Ministry of Transport and Communications, PE for Sate Roads, PE for Railway Infrastructure Railways of RNM Transport JSC Skopje, Agency for Civil Aviation, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Environment Ministry of Local Self-Government, Secretariat for European Affairs, Cabinet of the Prime Minister of RNM, Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, EU Delegation to RNM, Office of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in RNM and Office of the World Bank in RNM.

In that, as the lead institution in SWG Transport, the Ministry of Transport and Communications is represented with highest number of members, those being: chair, deputy chair, secretary, 4 members and 3 deputy members, while other institutions are represented with only one member and one deputy member each.

Civil society representatives are not members of SWG Transport nor are they included in the capacity of observers. This sector group does not have representatives from the ranks of so-called “non-state actors”, i.e. representatives from the academia, chambers of commerce, trade unions and the like.

Pursuant to the rules of procedure, minutes are taken at meetings held by the sector working group in pre-defined format and content, and there are rules in place for distribution of minutes, submission of comments and final adoption by SWG members. However, access to these minutes is restricted to those that are not SWG members with the justification that they include confidential information.

SWG Transport does not inform the public about its work on the Ministry of Transport and Communications' websites or in the media.

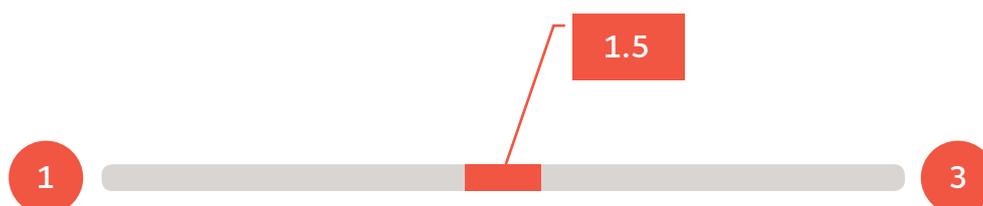
2.2 ANNUAL PLAN

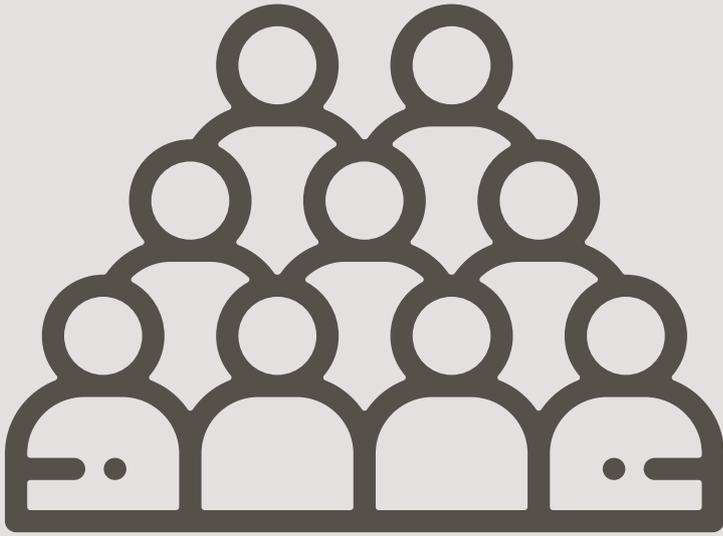
SWG Transport does not develop annual work plans that would be aligned with the indicative calendar for IPA programming and would be created with participation of all SWG members. Moreover, it does not develop and adopt annual work reports that would reflect achievements made by this sector group.

ASSESSMENT ON SWG FUNCTIONALITY

According to the methodology for monitoring work and effects of sector working groups, **SWG functionality** is measured against 14 standards and 8 indicators that focus on creation of relevant work documents by SWGs (rules of procedure, annual work plan and annual work report) and their enforcement in the practice. All standards and indicators are assigned a numeric value, whereby 1 is the lowest and 3 is the highest score.

Average score on functionality of SWG Transport in this monitoring period is calculated at 1.5.





PART 3

CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

The rules of procedure for SWG Transport anticipate involvement of civil society organizations, although they are not specifically named in the annex. However, in the practice, civil society representatives are not members of this sector group nor are they involved as observers. Hence, civil society organizations were not informed or invited to participate in the only plenary session held in 2020. This is important to be stressed because, according to the IPA coordinator from the Ministry of Transport and Communications, based on guidelines obtained from the Secretariat for European Affairs, back in 2018 the secretariat has identified civil society organizations that wish to monitor work of SWG Transport and the ministry invites them to SWG meetings, depending on the agenda topics. These civil society organizations are: Center for Research and Environment Information Eko-Svest, LAG Agro Leader and Institute for Sociological Research and Sustainable Development ISIOR – Struga.

It should be noted that declarative position of the lead institution for SWG Transport about inviting civil society organizations according to agenda topics for SWG meetings was not enforced in the practice since 2018, when civil society organizations were invited for the first and last time to attend the plenary session of this sector group dedicated for presentation of the draft version for the National Transport Strategy 2018-2030. The formulation “civil society representatives are invited depending on agenda topics for



meetings held by SWG Transport that overlap with their areas of operation” would make any sense only if ministry representatives had actually been in contact with the three civil society organizations interested to monitor work of this sector group and are familiar with areas of operation they cover in the period from the sector working group establishment in 2018 until development of this report in April 2021.

On the contrary, during interviews with civil society representatives conducted for the purpose of this report it was shared that not only were they not invited to attend the only meeting held in 2020, but have not been consulted or contacted by the Ministry of Transport and Communication throughout the entire 2020 on any issues related to the transport sector. That has prevented participation of civil society organizations in work of this sector group, leaving it closed to them also in terms of information dissemination.

Civil society organizations react to this treatment by the sector working group and believe they should be involved in creation of policies and projects in the transport sector, in the interest of citizens and in order to ensure:

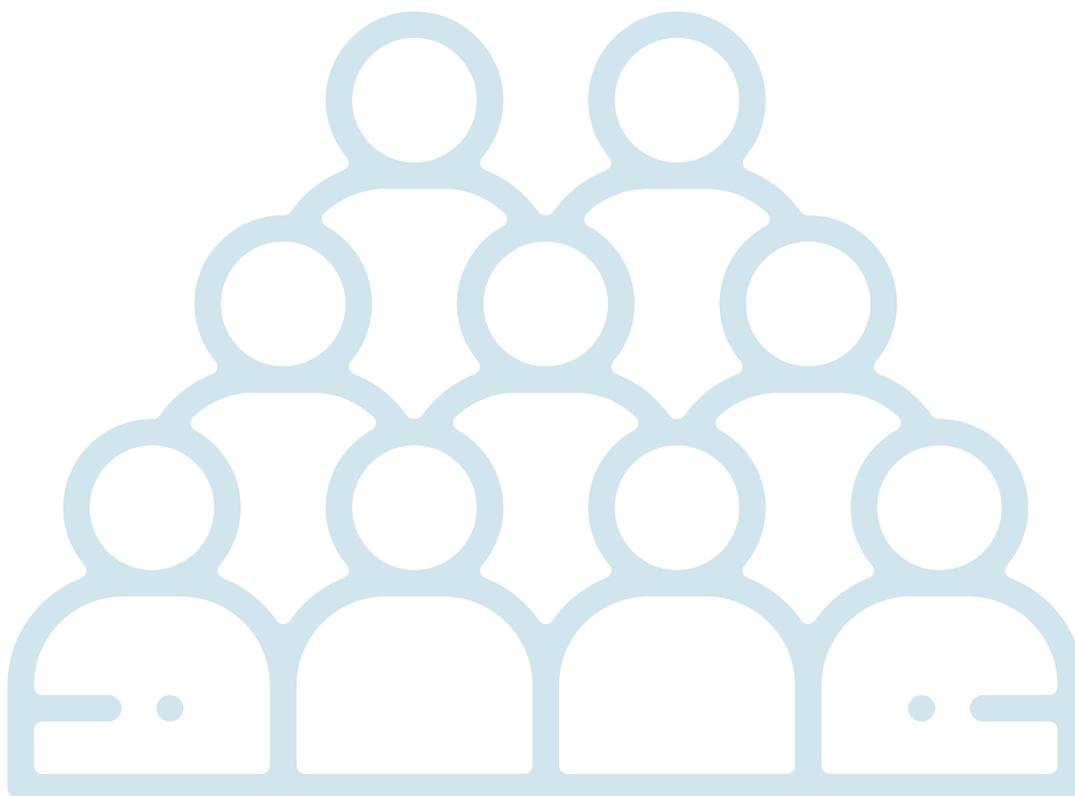
- protection of the rights of local population concerning access to adequate transport infrastructure;
- environmental protection in implementation of transport projects;
- stimulating equitable regional development;
- adequate compensation for land expropriation, etc.

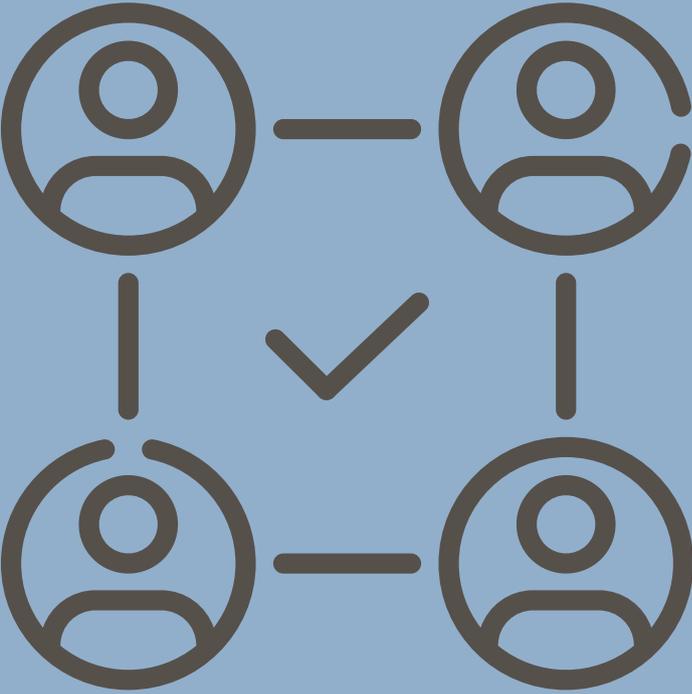
ASSESSMENT ON CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

According to the methodology for monitoring work and effects of sector working groups, **civil society participation in SW** is measured against 9 standards and 3 indicators that focus on the number and the status of CSOs involved in SWG work. Moreover, they cover regular and timely delivery of invitations and necessary materials for SWG

meetings, as well as opportunities afforded to CSOs to join discussions before, during and after meetings. All standards and indicators are assigned a numeric value, whereby 1 is the lowest and 3 is the highest score.

Average score on civil society participation in SWG Transport in this monitoring period is calculated at 1.0.



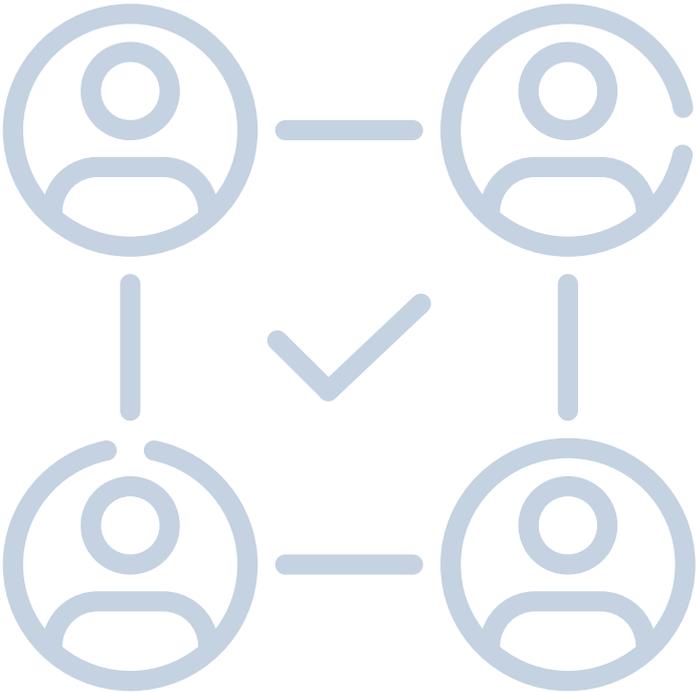


PART 4

CSO CAPACITY

Having in mind complete exclusion of civil society organizations from work of this sector group, an assessment cannot be made in respect to their capacity for contribution to development of policies and influence in selection of projects from the transport sector. According to civil society organizations that wish to join work of this sector group, they hold relevant capacity and can contribute in areas for which they expressed interest for participation.

Average score on CSO capacity for contribution and participation in SWG Transport N/A





PART 5

EFFECTS FROM SWG WORK

According to the rules of procedure, SWG Transport should meet at least once every three months. However, as was the situation in 2029, in 2020 as well this sector group held only one meeting. It took place on 03.07.2020 as online event and concerned reconsideration of strategic response for IPA III, Window 3: Green Agenda and Sustainable Connectivity, thematic priority 2: Transport, digital economy and society, and energy.

Minutes from this meeting are not made publicly available. Such position assumed by the sector group's chair is explained with the fact that SWG meetings imply discussion of projects and forthcoming tender procedures that include confidential information which, in their opinion, could serious harm implementation of tender procedures. Identical explanation was also given for the meeting held in 2020, which concerned strategic response for IPA III and action fiches for the transport sector, again implying confidential information that cannot be shared in the public before the official start of tender procedures. Undoubtedly, this position shows that minutes from SWG meetings are not viewed as tool for better information dissemination to the broader public and efforts are not taken to publish these minutes by excluding information designated as confidential.

In the capacity of lead institution for SWG Transport, when assessing performance of this sector group in the course of 2020,



representatives from the Ministry of Transport and Communications repeated the last year's assessment whereby, for the time being, the biggest burden for operation of the sector group falls on SWG members from this ministry. Engagement and contribution by SWG members from other state institutions are assessed as insufficient and minimal.

Moreover, representatives from the Ministry of Transport and Communications claim that SWG Transport regularly monitors implementation of foreign aid, provides recommendations and proposals for coordination and improved utilization of assistance funds, but in their opinion, what is missing is the feeling of ownership over projects among end beneficiaries, i.e. other institutions involved.

This sector group does not have functional system for planning and development of annual plans that would be made available to broad spectrum of stakeholders, and therefore it does not organize consultations for the purpose of improving this segment of work. SWG Transport is perceived as operational body for coordination and monitoring the dynamics of ongoing projects, which creates an impression that it does engage in analysis of sector policies and strategies.

The fact that SWG Transport does not develop annual plans or annual reports prevents actual assessment to be made in respect to effects from SWG work. At the same time, absence of transparency in work of SWG Transport does not allow insight in functionality of the system used to monitor implementation of planning documents, but also development of monitoring reports, recommendations and proposals for amendments to these documents.

5.1 GENERAL INFORMATION ON IPA III PROGRAMMING (2021-2027)

The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III) concerns the programming period 2021-2027. The European Commission introduced this instrument together with the new EU multiannual financial framework. IPA programming took place throughout the entire 2020 and was initiated with development of PAF indicators⁴, followed by strategic responses and action fiches.

⁴ Performance Assessment Framework (PAF)

IPA III is introduced with adoption of the Regulation on Establishing the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance and the Regulation on Implementing Rules and Principles for IPA III⁵ by the European Union, and is coherent to other funds, programmes and instruments of the Union, primarily the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument. According to its structure, IPA III is organized into 5 windows:

1. Rule of Law, Fundamental Rights and Democracy;
2. Good Governance, Acquis Alignment, Good Neighbourly Relations and Strategic Communication;
3. Green Agenda and Sustainable Connectivity;
4. Competitiveness and Inclusive Growth;
5. Territorial and Cross-Border Cooperation.

Each window is comprised of several thematic priorities, as follows:

TABLE 1:
IPA III windows and thematic priorities

WINDOW 1: RULE OF LAW, FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY	WINDOW 2: GOOD GOVERNANCE, ACQUIS ALIGNMENT, GOOD NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Judiciary; ◆ Fight against corruption; ◆ Fight against organized crime; ◆ Migration and border management; ◆ Fundamental rights; ◆ Democracy; ◆ Civil society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Good governance; ◆ Administrative capacity and acquis alignment; ◆ Good neighbourly relations and reconciliation; ◆ Strategic communication, monitoring, evaluation and audit.

⁵ Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III) COM/2018/465 final.



WINDOW 3: GREEN AGENDA AND SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIVITY

- ◆ Environment and climate change;
- ◆ Transport, digital economy and energy.

WINDOW 4: COMPETITIVENESS AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

- ◆ Education, employment, social protection and inclusion policies, and health;
- ◆ Private sector development, trade, research and innovation;
- ◆ Agriculture and rural development;
- ◆ Fisheries.

WINDOW 5: TERRITORIAL AND CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

This window is comprised of a separate list of thematic priorities given in Annex 2 to the IPA III Regulation.⁶ Modalities for implementation of this component include:

- ◆ cross-border cooperation with IPA countries;
- ◆ participation in micro region strategies.

According to the IPA III Regulation, the European Commission proposes a programming framework for the period 2021-2027 that includes all priority areas eligible for funding. Based on this programming framework, each IPA III country develops its strategic responses, elaborating links between EU priorities and those under national and sector strategies, followed by development of projects in the next phase.

IPA III does not include specific financial allocations per beneficiary country. Actually, countries will have to compete for the total of 14.162 billion euros available on the basis of their capacity and project proposals. However, IPA III introduces the principle of fair share in order to ensure certain balance and proportionality in distribution of IPA III funds among beneficiary countries.

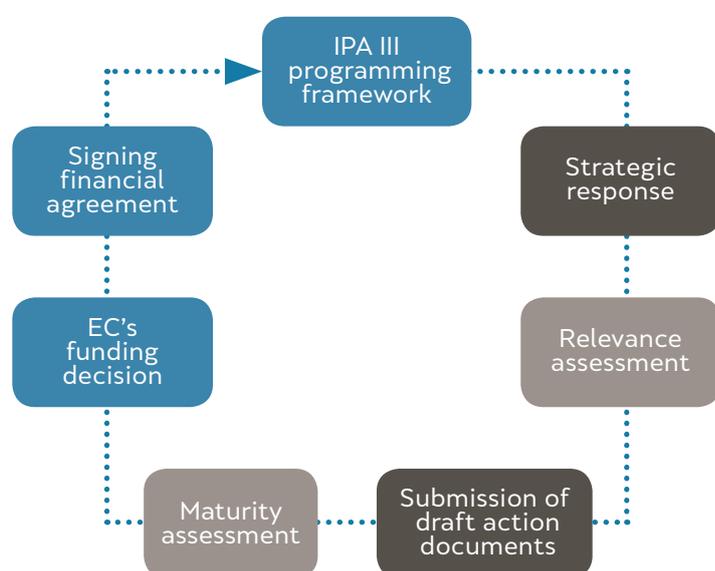
IPA III programming is pursued in two stages.

1. **Relevance assessment.** In this stage, the country develops summary action fishes with elaboration of proposed projects. The European Commission assesses these fishes in terms of their relevance. .

⁶ COM/2018/465

2. **Maturity assessment.** This stage implies development of action documents, but only for projects that have passed the relevance assessment, followed by detailed elaboration. The European Commission assesses projects in terms of their maturity. After action documents are approved, the country presents the European Commission with tender documents for projects approved in both stages, followed by signing of financial agreements for individual action documents.

CHART 2.
IPA III programming cycle



The process for developing strategic and action documents for the years 2021 and 2022, but also for next programming years, is anticipated to take place within the existing sector working groups (SWGs), established under the sector-wide approach from IPA II.

In the second half of 2020, under coordination from the Secretariat for European Affairs, sector working groups

developed and presented the European Commission with 22 action fishes, of which 10 for the year 2021⁷ and 12 for the year 2022.⁸

⁷ <https://www.sep.gov.mk/data/file/Dokumenti/Akciski%20fisea/2021.zip>

⁸ <https://www.sep.gov.mk/data/file/Dokumenti/Akciski%20fisea/2022.zip>



TABLE 2. 2021 and 2022 action fiches for IPA III

ACTION FISHES 2021			
INDICATIVE TITLE OF THE ACTION	INDICATIVE BUDGET	CO-FINANCING RATIO	
		EU	MK
1. EU for Efficient Judiciary and Enhanced Prevention of Corruption	10 million euros	85%	15%
2. Civil Society Facility	3 million euros	/	/
3. EU for Modern Administration	10 million euros	100%	0%
4. EU for Good Governance	9 million euros	89%	11%
5. EU Integration Facility	5 million euros	100%	0%
6. EU for Environmental Standards	12 million euros	83%	17%
7. EU for Clean Air	14 million euros	86%	14%
8. EU for Prespa	23,7 million euros	76%	24%
9. Preparation of European Transport Corridors Projects	9,5 million euros	100%	0%
10. EU for Green Growth	27,5 million euros	73%	27%
ACTION FISHES 2022			
INDICATIVE TITLE OF THE ACTION	INDICATIVE BUDGET	CO-FINANCING RATIO	
		EU	MK
1. Private Sector Development ⁹	9,2 million euros	87%	13%
2. EU in Support of the Fight against Organized Crime	5,2 million euros	88%	12%
3. EU for Improved Border Management, Migration and Asylum Policy	7,8 million euros	90%	10%
4. Civil Society Facility	3 million euros	/	/
5. EU Integration Facility	10 million euros	100%	0%
6. Union Programmes	15,4 million euros	50%	50%
7. EU for Modern Waste Water Systems	53 million euros	50%	50%
8. EU for Safe Roads	20 million euros	50%	50%

⁹ Sector fiche with remaining funds under Component I from IPA I for the years 2012 and 2013.

9.	EU for Quality Employment and Equal Opportunities	6,6 million euros	91%	9%
10.	EU for Health	5,9 million euros	85%	15%
11.	EU for Trade Facilitation	8,1 million euros	72%	28%
12.	EU for Development of Agriculture	6 million euros	83%	17%

5.1.1 Strategic response and action fiche for transport

The strategic response for the transport sector is part of **Window 3 - Green Agenda and Sustainable Connectivity**, thematic priority: Transport, digital economy and energy.

TABLE 3 . Strategic response and action fiche for transport

SWG	STRATEGIC RESPONSE	KEY THEMATIC PRIORITIES	ACTION FICHE	ACTION FICHE OBJECTIVES
TRANSPORT	WINDOW 3: GREEN AGENDA AND SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIVITY Thematic priority 2: Transport, digital economy and energy	(1) Transport	(2021) <i>Preparation of European Transport Corridors Projects</i> – 9.5 million euros, 100% EU financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Construction of motorway A1, Prilep-Bitola ◆ Upgrade of section Tetovo-Gostivar along road corridor X ◆ Rehabilitation/reconstruction of bridges and structure along railway corridor X ◆ Capacity extension of the railway border crossings (Tabanovce, Boorodica, Kremnica, Blace)
			(2022) <i>EU for Safe Roads</i> – 20 million euros, 50% EU financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Replacement of guardrails on several sections along corridor X (second phase), based on detailed design aiming to replace the guardrail for the entire length of corridor X in North Macedonia.

ASSESSMENT ON EFFECTS FROM SWG WORK



According to the methodology for monitoring work and effects of sector working groups, **effects from SWG work** are measured against 3 standards and 8 indicators that focus on changes effectuated by SWG work through planning and monitoring, and methods for foreign aid coordination. All standards and indicators are assigned a numeric value, whereby 1 is the lowest and 3 is the highest score.

Average score for effects from work of SWG Transport in this monitoring period is calculated at 1.0.





PART 6

GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE 12 SECTOR WORKING GROUPS

The obligation for gender mainstreaming in work of sector working groups (SWGs) arises from the national legislation, but also from the Country Indicative Strategy Paper for the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance 2014–2020 (IPA II),¹⁰ the European Union’s Gender Action Plan (GAP II)¹¹ and the broader EU acquis. As elaborated in the previous Shadow Report, GAP II stresses the need for gender mainstreaming in programs and assistance programming,¹² while IPA II treats gender equality as cross-cutting issue and as separate priority area for support.¹³

10 European Commission, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II), Revised Indicative Strategy Paper for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2014-2020). Available at: <https://bit.ly/3hxZE2W>

11 Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through European Union (EU) External Relations 2016-2020 (GAP II). Available at: <https://bit.ly/2Quy3oo>

12 Ibid.

13 European Commission, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II), Revised Indicative Strategy Paper for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2014-2020). Available at: <https://bit.ly/3hxZE2W>



This year was hallmarked by the public health crisis, which furthered already existing gender gaps and inequalities. The COVID-19 pandemic had negative impact on women's participation in the labour market in RNM, whose activity rate was already low before the crisis. According to the most recent data available, 62.3% of women,¹⁴ in the country are economically inactive, compared to 37.7% of men.¹⁵ Moreover, 77% of health sector employees in RNM are women,¹⁶ which means that women - at the time of crisis – found themselves at the frontline of this struggle. Women are more represented in sectors that have been most affected by the crisis. For example, 80% of textile industry workers are women.¹⁷ Therefore, under conditions of pre-existing and deepened inequalities, addressing these issues by gender mainstreaming in work of all bodies and institutions, including SWGs, gains an even greater importance.

6.1 FINDINGS FROM MONITORING SECTOR WORKING GROUPS

6.1.1 SWG meetings

In the course of 2020, SWG meetings rarely included discussion on policy impacts in terms of gender equality as a cross-cutting theme. Information and data collected by the cut-off date for this report¹⁸ allow the conclusion that, as noted in the 2019 report, only two sector groups have integrated the gender perspective in their work: SWG Education, Employment and Social Policy and SWG Agriculture and Rural Development. This refers to the conclusion that SWGs have still not recognized their key role in promoting gender equality by means of gender mainstreaming in development and implementation of sector policies.

14 State Statistical Office (MAKStat Database 2019). Active population according to economic activity, gender and age. Economic inactivity of women. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3yt39Ov>

15 State Statistical Office (MAKStat Database 2019). Active population according to economic activity, gender and age. Economic inactivity of men. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3yt39Ov>

16 ILO (2020). Covid-19 and the World of Work NORTH MACEDONIA Rapid Assessment of the Employment Impacts and Policy Responses, available at: <https://bit.ly/3mGGtV7>

17 Ibid.

18 By the cut-off date for this report, information and data were collected from line ministries responsible for eight sector working groups: SWG Justice, SWG Public Administration Reform, SWG Local and Regional Development, SWG Education, Employment and Social Policy, SWG Home Affairs, SWG Transport, SWF Public Finance Management, and SWG Agriculture and Rural Development.

6.1.2 Trainings

Recommendations made under the 2019 Shadow Report concerned specially designed training for SWG members on gender mainstreaming that would be complementary to already existing gender equality training for administrative officers.

Namely, in 2017 the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP), with the support from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN WOMEN), developed an e-training course on gender equality intended to enhance knowledge of public administration employees. This training course is comprised of two modules, basic and advanced, and is administered by the Ministry of Information Society and Administration (MISA) through the E-learning Management System, which is accessible only to administrative officers.

Defeating is the fact that, in 2020, this basic module of the gender equality training was attended by only three administrative officers and nobody attended the advanced module. For comparison, in 2019 the basic module was attended by 359 and the advanced module was attended by 54 administrative officers. From its introduction to present, the gender equality training was attended by a total of 11,017 administrative officers. However, this figure pales into insignificance against the fact that, by 31.12.2020, public sector institutions employ a total of 131,183 persons.¹⁹ Here it should be noted that this training course is available only to administrative officers, but not to other groups of public sector employees.²⁰

In October 2020, under the Project for Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) and in cooperation with UN WOMEN, MLSP organized four one-day trainings on strategic planning, which featured gender mainstreaming elements. These trainings were attended by professional and management staff members and those involved in strategic planning and policy/program development at institutions, including coordinators and deputy coordinators for equal opportunities. In total, all four trainings were attended by 32 staff members from 13 line ministries and 1 state institution.

¹⁹ Ministry of Information Society and Administration. 2020 Report from the Register of Public Sector Employees. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2T3DTxW>

²⁰ Pursuant to Article 14 of the Law on Public Sector Employee ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 27/14, 199/14, 27/16, 35/18 and 198/18 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 143/19 and 14/20), job positions of employees in public sector institutions are categorized into four groups: administrative officers, officers with public authority, service providers assistance/technical staff.

In December 2020, a two-day online training was organized on gender mainstreaming in strategic planning and gender responsive budgeting, attended by 33 staff members from 14 line ministries.



6.1.3 Gender analysis of policies

In 2020, the Ministry of Transport and Communications, responsible for SWG Transport, established a working group tasked with identification of pilot program that will be subject of gender-responsive budgeting. Its work is still underway.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In 2020, SWG Transport continued the low dynamics of work and held only one session for the entire year instead of minimum four sessions, as anticipated under the rules of procedure. This was also the case in 2019. Such work dynamics seems to be insufficient in respect to monitoring action plans for implementation of the National Transport Strategy 2018-2030, development of strategy documents, relevant development programs or planning documents, monitoring and evaluating achievements and proposing and taking corrective measures. Hence, SWG Transport is recommended to adherently enforce its rules of procedure and to hold more sessions. In that regard, due consideration should be made of the possibility for organization of plenary sessions and operational meetings. In particular, plenary sessions would be focused on discussing strategy documents and policies and their implementation with all SWG members, enhanced with involvement of civil society representatives, while operational meetings would be organized for discussion of projects underway or planned for implementation, with participation of representatives from institutions involved.

2. Having in mind that SWG Transport does not include civil society representatives, either as members or as observers, the civil society is prevented to impact processes, policies and projects in the transport sector. This shortcoming in operation of SWG Transport must be immediately addressed by means of open and inclusive process for selection of SWG members from the ranks of civil society organizations.

3. Performance of this sector group is characterized by exceptionally low transparency, which is best illustrated by the fact that the website of the lead institution literally does not host any document about this sector working group. This imposes the need for

additional efforts to be taken in respect to increasing transparency and accountability for SWG operation, which would imply development and publication of annual work plans and annual work reports, but also publication of information on SWG composition, meeting agendas and minutes, etc.



FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN TERMS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE 12 SECTOR WORKING GROUPS

1. Most SWGs have still not recognized the importance of gender mainstreaming as a cross-cutting theme in their work. Although some line ministries have engaged in gender analysis of particular policies or have performed gender-responsive budgeting for individual programs, oftentimes these documents are not discussed and are not taken into account at SWG meetings. Hence the need for gender mainstreaming in work of all SWGs and use of gender analyses on state-of-affairs in specific sectors as baseline for policy development, implementation and evaluation.

2. It is recommended for e-training on gender equality to become part of the framework of generic competences and annual training programs, thereby underscoring its mandatory implementation and ensuring greater coverage in terms of trained administrative officers. Moreover, it is equally important for training materials to be regularly, timely and continuously updated, in order to avoid the risk of outdated content. While implementation of specially designed training course on gender mainstreaming in strategic planning represents a step forward, it is still early to assess its effects. It is recommended for participants in such trainings and workshops to mandatorily include SWG members. In order to ensure that such training gains an even greater importance, it would be desirable to evaluate knowledge of training participants and to regulate organization of such trainings on regular instead of ad-hoc basis.

3. Given that recommendations from 2019 Shadow Report are not fully taken into consideration, valid is the recommendation for involvement of coordinators and deputy coordinators for equal opportunities in SWGs, including civil society representatives with expertise and experience in the field of gender equality, as support for gender mainstreaming in all SWGs.

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- ◆ Responses obtained to information requests submitted under the instrument for free access to public information
- ◆ Draft text of the rules of procedure for SWG Transport
- ◆ Decision on establishing SWG Transport from 23.04.2018
- ◆ Amendments to the decision on establishing SWG Transport from 02.07.2020
- ◆ Agenda for the meeting held by SWG Transport on 02.07.2020



