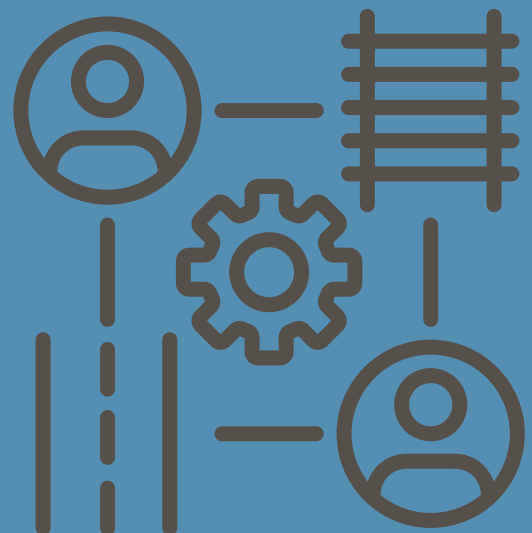


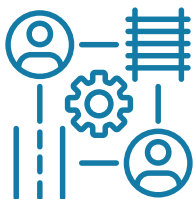
# SHADOW REPORT

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

*January – December 2021*







THROUGH  
DIALOGUE TO  
**EU**

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AND EFFECTS  
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WORKING GROUP  
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*January – December 2021*

 This project is funded  
by the European Union



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## SHADOW REPORT FROM MONITORING WORK AND EFFECTS OF THE SECTOR WORKING GROUP ON TRANSPORT IN THE PERIOD JANUARY – DECEMBER 2021

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### For the publisher:

Fani Karanfilova Panovska, executive director

### Authors:

Sabina Fakikj

Aleksandar Kolekeski, Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance IPA III (2021-2027)

Irina Jolevska, Gender Mainstreaming in Sector Working Groups

### Editors:

Danche Danilovska – Bajdevska

Nada Naumovska

Sandra Anastasovska Kuzmanovski

### Graphic design:

Кома

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# FOREWORD

## SUMMARY ON PERFORMANCE OF SECTOR WORKING GROUPS IN 2021

Shadow Reports from Monitoring Work and Effects of Sector Working Groups in 2019, 2020 and 2021 were developed under the hypothesis that SWGs are important bodies responsible for sector policy creation and monitoring in the Republic of North Macedonia and serve as forum for coordination of donor support for policy implementation.

The sector-wide approach was indicated as comprehensive approach for IPA II, used to assess and determine the state's qualification level in terms of utilization of IPA assistance for full sector support, and was followed by formation of sector working groups over the period 2015-2020. With the start of IPA III programming for the period 2021-2027, institutions continued the sector-wide approach and operation of sector working groups.

While, in formal terms, sector working groups have potential to be policy makers in relevant sectors, SWG monitoring findings in 2021 indicate to regression in terms of their functionality, civil society participation and effects from their work. Modest improvement is noted in respect to transparency in operation, having in mind that institutions responded to more than 85% of information requests made under the instrument for free access to public information, accounting for an improvement by more than 4% compared to 2020. Openness is also noted in terms of increased communication, especially because in 2021 representatives from all 12 SWGs accepted invitations for interview with the project team that monitors their work and performance.

Based on the analysis of meetings held by SWGs, total of 251 responses made by institutions under the instrument for free access to public information, 12 interviews with

IPA coordinators and discussions with 26 civil society organizations that participate in sector groups, flagship monitoring findings on performance of SWGs in 2021 concern the following:



- In 2021, SWGs held a total of 11 plenary sessions and 8 operational meetings, representing a decrease compared to 2020 findings, when they held a total of 19 plenary sessions and 21 operational meetings.
- None from 12 SWGs has complied with the minimum number of plenary sessions on annual level stipulated in their respective rules of procedure or draft rules of procedure, while 4 sector groups<sup>1</sup> did not hold any plenary session during 2021.
- In the case of 5 from 12 sector groups, civil society organizations have not participated in SWG work during 2021. In the case of 4 SWGs, civil society participation was absent due to the fact that the relevant sector group has not held any meeting, while one sector group has not invited civil society organizations to participate in its work.<sup>2</sup>
- SWGs that have held plenary session and invited civil society organizations to attend these meeting did not fully update data on civil society representatives resulting in invitations being sent to erroneous or non-existing e-mail addresses, which additionally narrows the space for civil society participation.
- Although IPA III Regulation anticipates that civil society organizations should be given space for meaningful participation in IPA programming and sector policy development, in the practice there is no actual space for substantial engagement of civil society organizations during plenary sessions and involvement of civil society representatives in operational meetings organized by SWGs.
- While donor coordination is anticipated as part of activities performed by sector working groups, the monitoring tools did not observe agenda items for SWG meetings held in 2021 that focus on donor coordination matters.

<sup>1</sup> SWG Justice, SWG Public Administration Reform, SWF Roma Integration and SWG Home Affairs

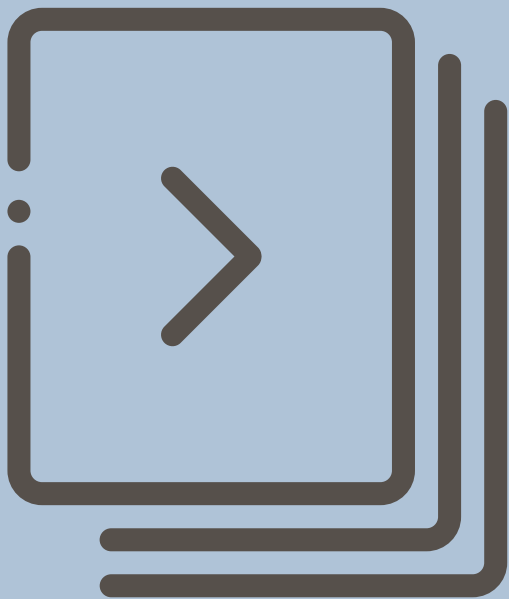
<sup>2</sup> SWG Competitiveness and Innovation



Based on the established state-of-play, encouraging steps have been made in 2021 towards enhanced structural dialogue. In particular, the Secretariat for European Affairs (SEA) initiated the process for amending the rules of procedures for SWGs in order to improve their overall performance and regulate civil society and donor participation. During interviews with representatives from competent institutions it was underlined that they are open to changing the rules of procedure with a view to regulate participation and role of civil society organizations in greater details. Expectations are that predictability of SWG dynamics and functionality will be improved in 2022, by creating the indicative calendar for meetings of all SWGs and by publishing information on phases for future IPA programming, as well as relevant documents for sector policies. Based on responses obtained from civil society organizations, evident is the request for their participation at the level of technical meetings that would allow them to be involved in all stages of policy development and adoption.

## HOW TO MOVE FORWARD?

SEA must urgently open consultations around the new rules of procedures for SWGs, which should include provisions that improve meaningful participation of civil society organizations, primary by ensuring availability and access to materials and information of operational nature, as well as by organizing inception training for new representatives to ensure thorough understanding of sector policy processes and IPA programming. These trainings should also target civil society representatives from Sector Monitoring Committees. The new rules of procedure should regulate in details the procedure for selection and work of civil society representatives, including the method for consultations with the broader civil society. Adherent actions are needed to implement plans aimed at improving participation, work predictability and transparency of SWGs.



# GENERAL INFORMATION

## SECTOR WORKING GROUP ON TRANSPORT

**FORMED:** 2015

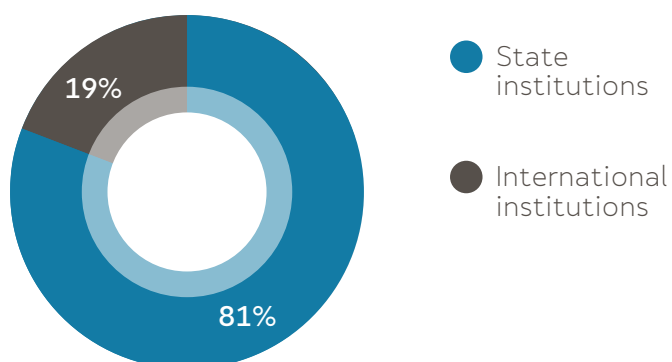
**NUMBER OF SWG MEMBERS:** 36 according to the decision from 02.07.2020 (of which 16 are deputy members)

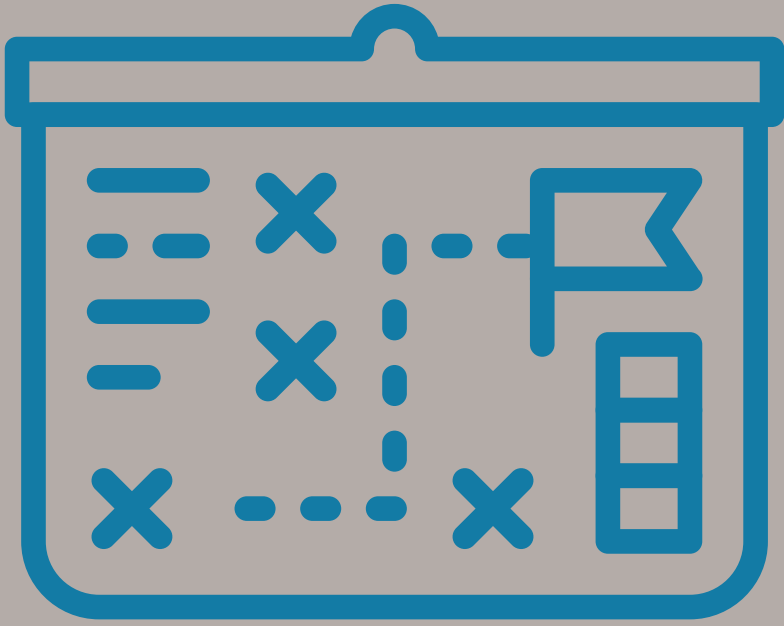
**NUMBER OF MEETINGS HELD IN 2021:**  
one plenary session, on 23.06.2021

**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 research.

The desk research component included in-depth analysis of documents, laws and strategies that are of significance for this sector working group (*for more information see [BIBLIOGRAPHY](#)*). Moreover, the project team submitted [freedom of information requests](#) to the Ministry of Transport and Communications as the institution competent for this sector group. Responses to information requests were disclosed after an appeal lodged before the Agency for Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information.

As regards field/online component, the project team [interviewed](#)<sup>3</sup> representatives from the Ministry of Transport and Communications. According to the monitoring methodology, performance of sector working groups is assessed in respect to five segments:

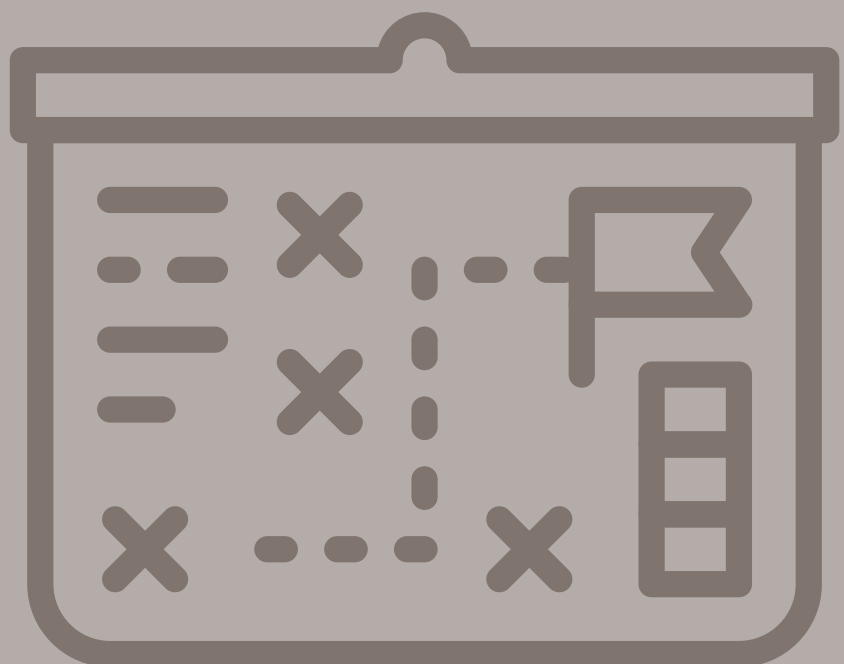
- SWG functionality;
- civil society participation in SWG;
- CSO capacity for contribution and participation in SWG work;
- effects from SWG work; and
- IPA.

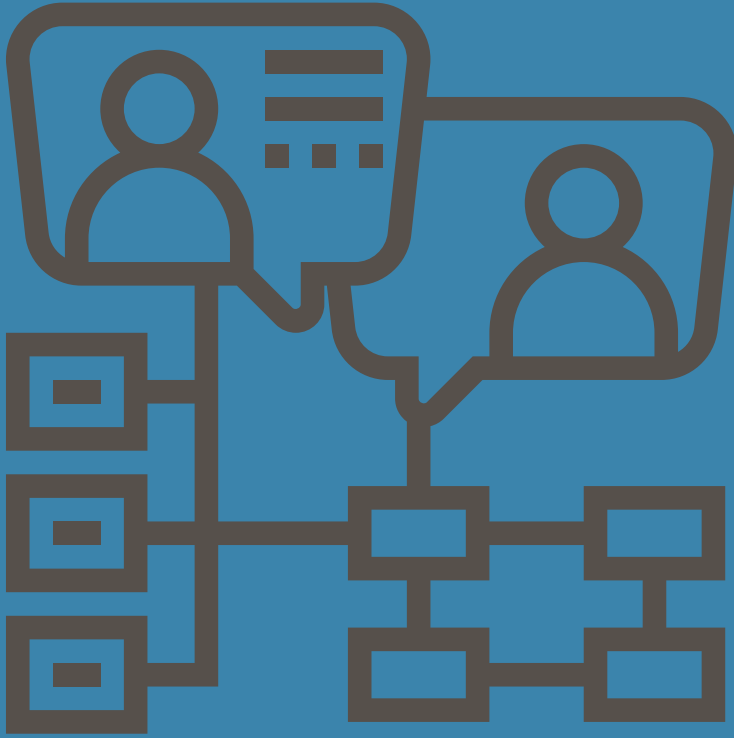
<sup>3</sup> Interview with the coordinator and other relevant representatives from the Ministry of Transport and Communication was conducted on 18.01.2022.



Based on the methodology for monitoring work and effects of sector working groups, performance of SWGs in all these five segments is measured against 31 standards and 21 indicators. Scores calculated for these standards (1 is the lowest and 3 is the highest) are used to assess progress in work of all 12 sector working groups at annual level.

Nevertheless, having in mind that five of twelve SWGs did not hold plenary sessions in 2021 and given that most standards and indicators are directly related to SWG meetings, unlike last year, this monitoring report does not include scores for individual segments of SWG performance. This method is applied to all SWGs, including those that have held plenary sessions in 2021, in order to maintain same approach to assessment for all 12 sector working groups.







# PART 1

## SECTOR POLICIES

Relevant documents from the transport sector adopted in 2021 include the Law on Determining Public Interest and Nominating a Strategic Partner for Implementation of the Infrastructure Construction Project Corridor 8 and Corridor 10, as well as amendments to several legal acts, such as: the Law on Treatment of Illegally Constructed Buildings, Law on Road Traffic Safety, Law on Inland Waterway Traffic, Law on Public Roads, Law on Railway System Safety and Law on Road and Railway Transport of Hazardous Substances.

[Law on Determining Public Interest and Nominating a Strategic Partner for Implementation of the Infrastructure Construction Project – Corridor 8 \(section: Tetovo-Gostivar-Bukojchani and motorway section Trebenishta-Struga-Kjafasan\) and Corridor 10 \(motorway section Prilep-Bitola\) in the Republic of North Macedonia](#) was adopted by the Parliament in July 2021. This piece of legislation, proposed by a group of MPs, ensures implementation of the Memorandum signed by the Government with the consortium *Behtel and Enka* as strategic investor for construction of motorways Tetovo-Gostivar, Struga-Kjafasan and Prilep-Bitola. It should be noted that the law was adopted in fast-tracked procedure and without public consultations. State Commission for Prevention of Corruption motioned a constitutional review petition before the Constitutional Court, but the court did not adopt a decision on initiation of review



proceedings. Reaction against the decision to adopt separate and specifically designed law for construction of motorways with the strategic partner *Behtel and Enka* was issued by the Civil Society Platform for Fight against Corruption, comprised of 17 member-organizations that work on issues related to anticorruption, rule of law and good governance.

**Amendments to the Law on Treatment of illegally Constructed Buildings** was adopted in July 2021, after a failed attempt for adoption of new Law on Regulating the Status of Illegally Constructed Building that should have enabled legalization of illegally constructed buildings in the period from 3 March 2011 to 1 January 2021. On the account of fierce reactions by citizens and civil society organizations that the new law would allow legalization of such buildings constructed in protected areas, adoption of the new law was postponed, but changes to the existing legislation (Law on Treatment of Illegally Constructed Buildings) adopted by the Parliament in July 2021 extend the period for legalization of illegally constructed buildings (those completed before 3 March 2011 for which legalization application is submitted) by additional 5 years.

2021 amendments to the **Law on Road Traffic Safety** were aimed at ensuring regular implementation of driving license tests under conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Amendments to the **Law on Inland Waterway Traffic** from June 2021 resulted in changes concerning inspection supervision over inland waterway traffic and reduction of misdemeanour fines regulated under the law.

**Law on Amending the Law on Public Roads** from July 2021 introduced changes in respect to exemptions for distance between state roads and railway tracks.

Amendments to the **Law on Railway System Security**, which entered into effect in August 2021, imply one-year postponement for enforcement of provisions under Article 13, paragraph (6).

Additions to the **Law on Road and Railway Transport of Hazardous Substances** from December 2021 implied interventions necessary in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemics.

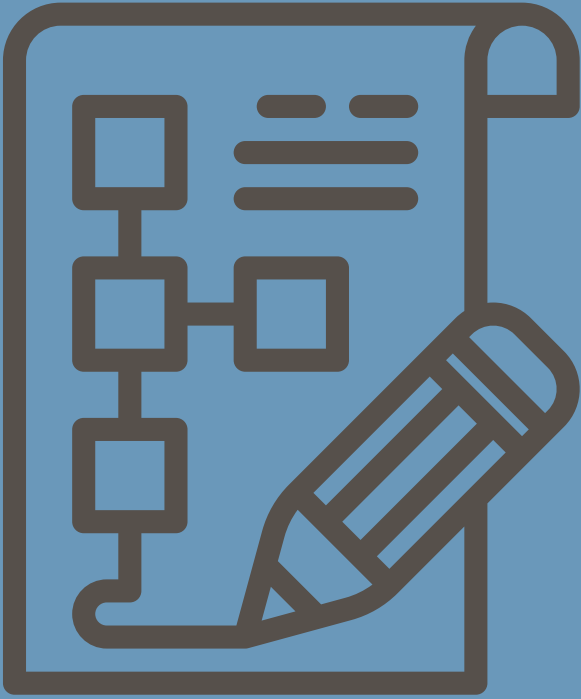
In December 2021, ENER published an announcement for start of the process for developing the **Law on Civil Aviation, together with the law's draft text**. Adoption of this new law is justified

with incomplete alignment of civil aviation regulations with novelties in standards and recommended practices, as given in the Annex to the Chicago Convention and accepted in EU regulations and directives from the Agreement on Establishing the European Common Aviation Area, and inability to fully address remarks by ICAO USOAP and ICAO USAP assessment missions, including EU missions and EU annual progress reports for North Macedonia.

**Draft Strategic Plan 2022-2024 of the Ministry of Transport and Communication**<sup>4</sup> was adopted in August 2021 and includes measures, projects and activities to be implemented by this ministry in the next three years.



<sup>4</sup> Draft Strategic Plan is available at: <http://mtc.gov.mk/media/files/2021/Nacrt-strateski%20plan%20na%20MzTV%202022-2024.pdf> [last retrieved on 07.09.2021]



# PART 2

## SWG FUNCTIONALITY

### 2.1 RULES OF PROCEDURE

SWG Transport has own rules of procedure, but this document is still in the form of draft text and is not formally adjusted to needs and guidelines of the sector group's chair, although a request in that regard was submitted to the Secretariat for European Affairs (SEA) back in 2018. It is expected for these weaknesses to be addressed with adoption of the new rules of procedure, whose finalization includes proposals and suggestions from civil society representatives.

According to the rules of procedure, SWG Transport should hold at least one session every three months. However, this is the third consecutive year in which this sector group organized only one meeting.

The current rules of procedure for SWG Transport are not published on the Ministry of Transport and Communications' website.

As noted in the last shadow report, SWG Transport has 36 members according to the last decision on formation of this sector group from 02.07.2020. A total of 14 institutions are represented in the sector group, as follows: Ministry of Transport and Communications, PE State Roads, PE Railway Infrastructure Railways of RNM, 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, Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, EU Delegation to North Macedonia,



Office of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in RNM, and Office of the World Bank in RNM. In that, the Ministry of Transport and Communications is represented with highest number of SWG members: chair, deputy chair, secretary, 4 members and 3 deputy members, while other institutions are represented with 1 member and 1 deputy member each.

In 2021, the status of civil society organizations in SWG Transport was not formally changed in order to allow their involvement as members or observers. Nevertheless, for the first time in three years of monitoring SWG performance change was noted in respect to invitation of 4 civil society organizations to attend SWG session. Otherwise, this sector working group does not include any representatives from so-called “non-state actors”, i.e. representatives from the academia, chambers of commerce, trade unions, etc.

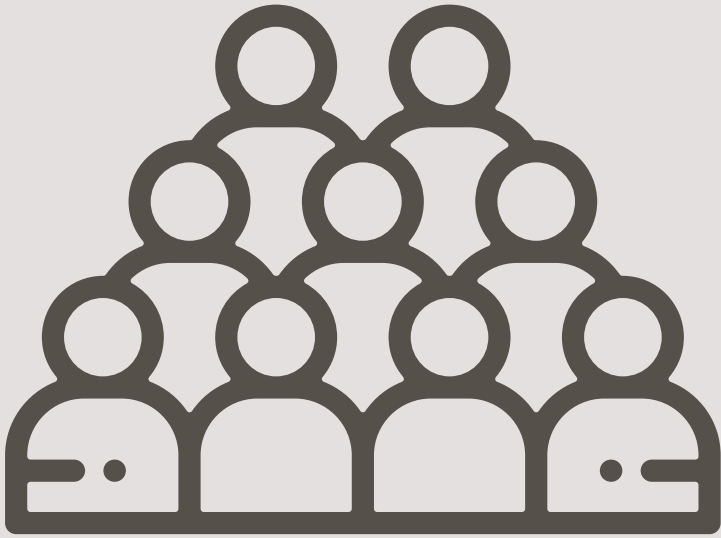
According to the rules of procedures, minutes are taken at SWG meetings in pre-defined format and contents, including the method for dissemination of minutes, submission of comments thereto and adoption by members of SWG Transport. On the other hand, access to these minutes is limited only to SWG members. Access to minutes from SWG plenary session held in 2021 was secured under the instrument for free access to public information.

SWG Transport does not inform the public about its work, neither on the Ministry of Transport and Communications’ website nor in the media.

## 2.1 ANNUAL PLAN

SWG Transport does not develop annual plans that would be aligned with the Indicative Calendar for IPA Programming and would be agreed by all SWG members. Hence, this sector group does not adopt annual work reports that reflect its achievements.







# PART 3

## CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

This segment of operation notes a positive step forward compared to the last three years. Actually, in 2021 the Ministry of Transport, in the capacity of sector group coordinator, acted upon its declarative position on SWG openness related to inviting civil society organizations to attend SWG meetings, depending on agenda topics discussed. In 2019 and 2020, CSOs were not invited to any sessions held by SWG Transport.

Invitation for participation in the only session held by this sector group in 2021 was extended to 4 civil society organizations identified through the project [“CSO Dialogue – Platform for Structural Participation in EU Integrations”](#). These were: Center for Environment Research and Information Eco-Svest, LAG Agro Leader, Institute for Social Research and Sustainable Development ISIOR–Struga, and Association for Promotion and Information in the Field of Sustainable Transport, Mobility and Green Environment EUROMOBI.

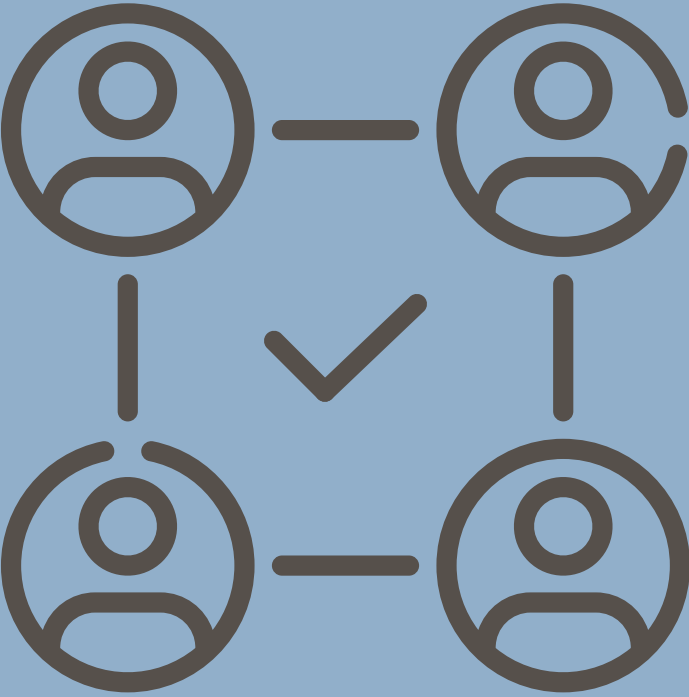
The meeting was attended only by Eco-Svest with two representatives. The fact that other CSOs did not respond to this invitation shows that civil society participation in SWG Transport is not properly utilized.

CSOs share the opinion that they should be involved in policy creation and development of projects in the transport sector, especially with a view to ensure:



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

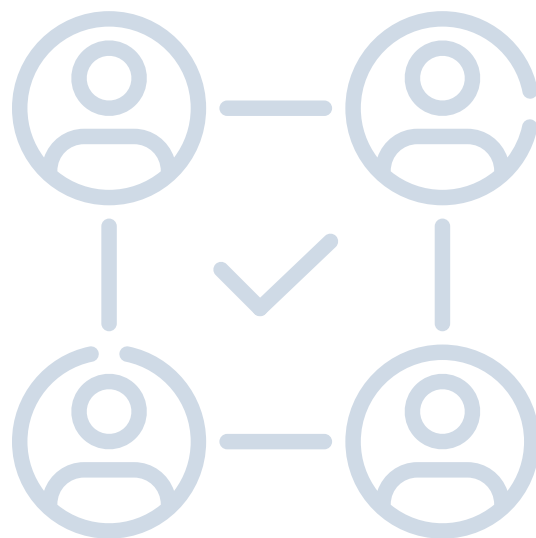




# PART 4

## CSO CAPACITY

Having in mind minimal involvement of civil society organizations in this sector group, an assessment cannot be made about civil society capacity for contribution in creation of better policies and for exerting influence in selection of projects in the transport sector. According to civil society organizations, they have capacity to contribute to areas in which they have expressed interest for participation. For the time being, this remains solely an attitude on the part of CSOs which, in practice, have not demonstrated great interest and will to join work of SWG Transport.





# PART 5

## EFFECTS FROM SWG WORK

According to its rules of procedure, SWG Transport should meet at least once every three months. However, as noted in the previous two years, in 2021 this sector group held only one meeting/session.

The purpose of SWG meeting held on 23 June 2021 concerned presentation and discussion of IPA III action document for the year 2022 and proposed projects in the transport sector (railway and roads). Moreover, this meeting was concluded with adoption of operational conclusions related to finalization of the action document, including specific obligations and deadlines.

This meeting was attended by 24 persons, of which 12 are representatives from state institutions, 7 representatives from the EU Delegation, 3 representatives from support for EU fund management and 2 representatives from the Center for Environment Research and Information Eco-Svest as civil society participants.

Minutes from this meeting are not publicly available, but copy thereof was secured under the instrument for free access to public information. Representatives from the Ministry of Transport and Communications justified non-publication of minutes from SWG meetings with the fact that current rules of procedure do not oblige them and that discussions at SWG meetings concern projects and upcoming



tender procedures, including confidential information which, in their opinion, might seriously harm the tendering and contracting process.

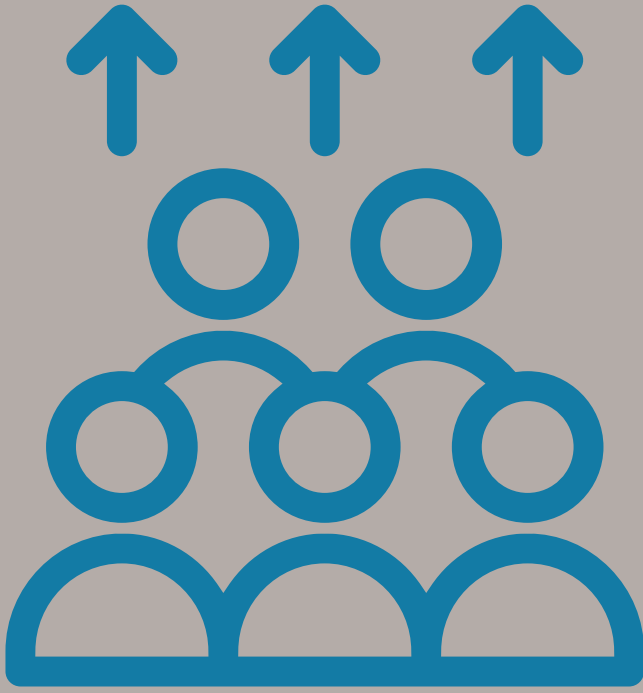
Asked to summarize SWG performance in 2021, representatives from the Ministry of Transport and Communications reported that this sector group regularly monitors implementation of foreign assistance, provides recommendations and proposals for coordination and promotion of foreign aid absorption, but underlined absence of “project ownership” among end-beneficiaries, i.e. other institutions.

SWG Transport does not have functional system for planning and developing annual planning documents that would be made available to a broad range of stakeholders. Absence of obligation for development of SWG annual plan and annual work report is explained with lack of adequate provision under the rules of procedure.

At the same time, lack of transparency on the part of SWG Transport prevents insight in functionality of the system used to monitor implementation of planning documents, development of monitoring reports, recommendations and proposals for amendments to these documents, etc.







# PART 6

## INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE IPA III (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 III was introduced with adoption of the Regulation on Establishing the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance and the Regulation on Implementing Rules and Principles for IPA III<sup>5</sup> by the European Union, and is coherent with other funds, programmes and instruments of the Union, primarily the Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument.

- 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;

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



4. Competitiveness and Inclusive Growth;
5. Territorial and Cross-Border Cooperation

For more information on IPA III programming (2021-2027) see the report [IPA: Cross-Cutting Issue.](#)

## 6.1 IPA III PROGRAMMING (2021-2027) IN THE TRANSPORT SECTOR

IPA III funds anticipated for the transport sector are part of WINDOW 3: Green Agenda and Sustainable Connectivity, thematic priority 2: Transport, Digital Economy and Energy. The action document “EU for Transport Connectivity and Safe Roads” is developed for the year 2022, with total budget of 29.5 million EUR, of which 19.5 million EUR are contribution from IPA III. Action fiches are still not elaborated for the action “EU for Modern Transport Systems”, anticipated for implementation in 2023 and 2024, which means that these are strategic indicators in the earliest stage of development and they can be changed in the future.

**TABLE 1.***IPA III programming (2021-2027) in the transport sector***WINDOW 3:  
GREEN AGENDA AND SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIVITY**

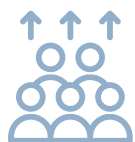
Thematic priority 2: Transport, Digital Economy and Energy

**Implementation period: 2022**

Action	Estimated total budget (million EUR)	Requested contribution from IPA (million EUR)	Implementation plan/arrangement
<a href="#"><u>EU for Transport Connectivity and Safe Roads</u></a>	29.5	19.5	The action is anticipated for implementation under direct management (indirect management by the beneficiary country can be anticipated). <b>The action document</b> is developed and submitted to the European Commission services in November 2021.

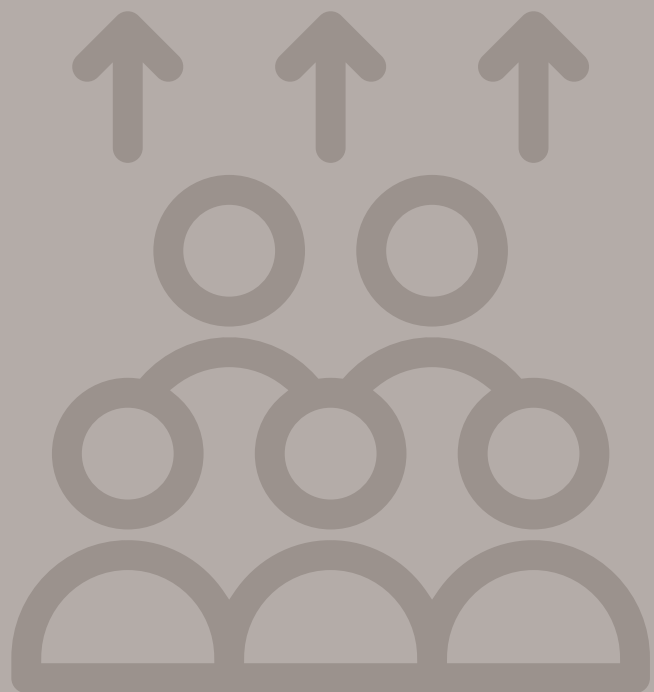
**Implementation period: 2023 and 2024**

<a href="#"><u>EU for Modern Transport Systems</u></a>	15,0	15,0	Direct management
--	------	------	-------------------



**TABLE 2.**  
2022 Action Document “EU for Transport  
 Connectivity and Safe Roads”

2022 ACTION DOCUMENT “EU FOR TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY AND SAFE ROADS”		
Expected outcomes	EU contribution (EUR)	Indicative third party contribution
1. Key future investments prepared	10,000,000	0
2. Improved road safety along Corridor X	9,500,000	2,000,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,500,000</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>







# PART 7

## GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN SECTOR WORKING GROUPS

Gender mainstreaming is a process for systematic consideration of implications on women and men from a planned action, including legislation, policy or program, in any area and at all levels.<sup>6</sup> In that, the ultimate goal is to achieved gender equality. Within the national legislation of the Republic of North Macedonia, gender mainstreaming is defined under the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men<sup>7</sup> and represents an obligation for all state bodies and institutions. Failure to incorporate the gender perspective implies adoption of gender-neutral or gender-blind policies that are unable to address existing inequalities and could contribute to deepened gender gaps.

Gender equality is among core values of the European Union.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, EU membership is conditioned with respect and promotion of fundamental European values.<sup>9</sup> The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance in the period 2021-2027

6 European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), Glossary and Thesaurus, A-Z Index, available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1185?lang=mk>

7 Article 4, paragraph (1), item 10) of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, “Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” no. 6/12, 30/13, 166/14, 150/15 and “Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia” no. 53/21.

8 Article 2 of the consolidated version of the Treaty on the European Union, available at: <https://bit.ly/3s4gjrR>

9 Ibid. Article 49, paragraph (1)



(IPA III) stipulates that implementation of IPA III should be led by the principles of gender equality and enhanced rights of women and girls,<sup>10</sup> in line with and aimed at attaining the minimum standards established under the EU's new Gender Action Plan 2021-2025 (GAP III) titled "An Ambitious Agenda for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in EU External Action".<sup>11</sup> GAP III is organized into five pillars and the third pillar anticipates activities in six key areas of engagement.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, GAP III reflects goals and objectives defined under the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, IPA III defines gender equality as specific objective, but also thematic priority eligible for support.<sup>14</sup> In that, it is stressed that gender equality is a cross-cutting issue that should be adequately reflected and integrated in the overall implementation process.<sup>15</sup> Goals of IPA III assistance under the thematic priority on gender equality fully correspond to six areas of engagement from GAP III, which provides an additional indicator for the need for these two documents to be linked. On that account, work within sector groups - that represent forums for interdepartmental cooperation and are competent for creating and implementing national policies and programming, monitoring and evaluating foreign aid - should be guided by and aligned with GAP III. Finally, due consideration should be made of the EU's commitment that, by 2025, at least 85% of all new external actions should include gender equality as important or general goal.<sup>16</sup>

An important element of the sector approach to gender mainstreaming is building and enhancing technical competences of all stakeholders

- 10 Regulation (EU) 2021/1529 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 September 2021 establishing the Instrument for Pre-Accession assistance (IPA III), available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R1529&qid=1643627286827&from=en>
- 11 EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III – An Ambitious Agenda for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in EU External Action, available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/join\\_2020\\_17\\_en\\_final.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/join_2020_17_en_final.pdf)
- 12 Ibid. GAP III anticipates activities grouped into six thematic areas: ensuring freedom from all forms of gender-based violence; promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights; strengthening economic and social rights and empowerment of girls and women; advancing equal participation and leadership; implementing the women, peace and security agenda; addressing challenges and harnessing opportunities offered by the green transition and the digital transformation.
- 13 A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0152>
- 14 Regulation (EU) 2021/1529 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 September 2021 establishing the Instrument for Pre-Accession assistance (IPA III), available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R1529&qid=1643627286827&from=en>
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III – An Ambitious Agenda for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in EU External Action, available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/join\\_2020\\_17\\_en\\_final.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/join_2020_17_en_final.pdf)

involved in implementation of sector policies.<sup>17</sup> Hence, equal importance is assigned to capacity building on gender mainstreaming among policy makers, but also among people involved in policy implementation.

For more information, see [Shadow Report on Gender Mainstreaming in Sector Working Groups](#).

## 7.1 GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN SWG TRANSPORT

As the lead institution in SWG Transport, the Ministry of Transport and Communications (MTC) has not developed or used any gender analyses in its policy creation process. In 2021, MTC has not organized any trainings on gender-responsible operation. Meetings held by this sector group did not include coordinators for equal opportunities or their deputies, nor external experts that work on promotion of gender equality. According to ministry representatives, coordinators for equal opportunities and their deputies do not have competences to participate in work of SWG Transport. Moreover, they underline that selection of priority projects in this sector does not contribute to gender discrimination and does not favour particular groups, adding that, at the level of individual projects and at the level of operational programmes, there are special sections that address gender equality.

In the section on equal opportunities for women and men, the Ministry of Transport and Communications' Strategic Plan 2022-2024 includes measures for integration of gender-responsible budgeting in several programs, primarily in respect to activities with a social dimension, as well as in respect to social housing construction and eligibility. SWG Transport has not developed an action plan for IPA III programming documents that includes the gender perspective.

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17 EIGE, Glossary and Thesaurus, A-Z Index, available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1359?lang=mk>



## FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**1.** In 2021, SWG Transport continued its poor work dynamics and held one plenary session instead of the minimum four sessions anticipated under the rules of procedure. This was also noted in 2019 and 2020. This work dynamics appears insufficient in order to monitor implementation of action plans under the National Strategy on Transport 2018-2030; draft strategy documents, relevant developmental programs or planning documents; monitor and evaluate achievements; and propose and take corrective measures. Hence, the recommendation from last year's report for organization of more sessions by this sector group remains valid.

**2.** Civil society participation in this sector working group as members or observers needs to be formalized under an open and inclusive process for selection of SWG members from the ranks of civil society organizations.

**3.** Work of this sector work is characterized by exclusively low transparency, best represented in the fact that the website of its lead institution does not host any documents on the sector group. This raises the need for additional efforts to increase transparency and accountability in operation of SWG Transport, which would imply development and publication of annual plans and annual work reports, as well as publication of information on SWG composition, meeting agendas and minutes, etc.

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