

Brief information on the Sectoral Operational Programme of Transport 2007-2013

The preparation for absorption of the financial resources from the Cohesion Fund and European Regional Development Fund, allocated for the modernization of the transport infrastructure is one of the main priorities of the Ministry of Transport.

According to the Proposal for a Council Regulation COM (2004) 492/14.07.2004, laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund the programming and preparation for the absorption of the Structural and Cohesion Funds since 2007 should be done by development of multi-annual strategic documents – Operational Programmes.

The number and the responsibilities of the institutions for the development of the Operational Programmes are negotiated between the Republic of Bulgaria and European Commission in the framework of the Chapter 21 “Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments”.

The Sectoral Operational Programme on Transport is one of the eight Operational Programmes that should be developed in Bulgaria in order to absorb the EU funds for the period 2007-2013. The Programme will be co-financed by two EU funds: Cohesion Fund and European Regional Development Fund.

Management:

With the Council of Ministers Decision №4 from 21.01.2000, put into force on 17.12.2004, the Coordination of Programmes and Projects Directorate within the Ministry of Transport was designated to act as Managing Authority of the Sectoral Operational Programme on Transport 2007-2013. According to the Proposal for a Council Regulation COM (2004) 492 Managing Authority is: “an Authority, or public or private national, regional or local body designated by the Member State, or the member State itself when it carries out that task, to manage an Operational Programme”.

The development of the Sectoral Operational Programme on Transport started in October 2004. In order to apply the partnership principle, one of the main principles in the Cohesion Policy, the Sectoral Operational Programme on Transport is developed by the Working Group with a representation of the main interested socio-economic groups. The Working Group for preparation of the Sectoral Operational Programme on Transport was established with an Order of the Minister of Transport in October 2004. The Working Group consists of 35 representatives from the central administration, Municipalities, Non-Governmental and Employer’s Organizations, Universities.

The Managing Authority of the Programme nominates, assesses the administrative capacity and selects bodies to implement the functions of Intermediate Bodies of the Sectoral Operational Programme on Transport for the period 2007-2013. According to the Proposal for a Council Regulation COM (2004) 492/14.07.2004, laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund Intermediate Body is: “any body or public or private service which acts under the responsibility of a Managing or Certifying Authority or which carries out duties on behalf of such an authority vis-à-vis beneficiaries implementing operations”.

After the assessment of the administrative capacity and readiness for implementation of the functions of Intermediate Bodies, on the basis of certain criteria, the Managing Authority selected three bodies to act as Intermediate Bodies of the Sectoral Operational Programme on Transport: National Railway Infrastructure Company, Maritime Administration Executive Agency and the Road Executive Agency.

With a Decision of the Council for modernization of the State Administration №79/19.05.2005 the National Railway Infrastructure Company, Maritime Administration Executive Agency and Road Executive Agency were officially approved to act as Intermediate Bodies of the Sectoral Operational Programme on Transport.

- With a Decision №1/06.06.2005 of the Management Board of the National Railway Infrastructure Company the Internal Rules of Procedure of the Company were amended and the Strategic Development, Investment Planning, Programming and Management of Projects Unit was designated to implement the functions of Intermediate Body of the Sectoral Operational Programme on Transport.
- With a Council of Ministers Decision №169/20.07.2005 the Internal Rules of Procedure of the Maritime Administration Executive Agency were amended and a Unit within the Agency was designated to implement the functions of Intermediate Body of the Sectoral Operational Programme on Transport.
- With a Council of Ministers Decision №176/26.07.2005 the Internal Rules of Procedure of the Road Executive Agency were amended and the Absorption of EU Funds Directorate within the Agency was designated to implement the functions of Intermediate Body of the Sectoral Operational Programme on Transport.

The Managing Authority delegates to the Intermediate Bodies certain functions and responsibilities, laid down in a written agreements between the Minister of Transport and the Manager of the body designated to act as Intermediate Body.

Programming:

Up to 22.11.2005 the Working Group for preparation of the Sectoral Operational Programme on Transport has carried out nine working sessions and has prepared:

- Analysis of the current situation in transport sector;
- SWOT analysis;
- Strategy for development of the national transport infrastructure;
- Goals of the Operational Programme;
- Priorities of the Operational Programme;
- Compliance with the EU legislation and EU policies and priorities (public procurement, state aid, equal opportunities, transports policy, etc.)

Under development:

- Indicators for control and evaluation of the programme;
- Financial plan of the operational programme and financial allocation of the funds per priorities per year;
- Institutional implementation framework for management, monitoring and control of the programme;
- Communication Plan.

Main points of the programme:

The **overall strategic goal** of the Sectoral Operational Programme on Transport is:

- *Development of sustainable transport*

The **specific strategic goals** of the Sectoral Operational Programme on Transport are:

- *Integration of the national and urban transport system into the European Union transport network;*
- *Improvement of the transport services;*
- *Achievement of balance between the transport modes.*

The goals will be achieved by concentration of EU financial resources under the following **priorities**:

- *Development of the national transport infrastructure;*
- *Development of sustainable underground urban transport;*
- *Development of multi-modal transport;*
- *Improvement of the maritime and Danube River navigation and safety*
- *Technical Assistance*

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