

**Updated Project Information Document (PID)****Report No: AB142**

<b>Project Name</b>	ALBANIA - TRANSPORT PROJECT
<b>Region</b>	Europe and Central Asia Region
<b>Sector</b>	Roads and highways (97%); Ports; waterways and shipping (1%); Railways (1%); General transportation sector (1%)
<b>Theme</b>	Infrastructure services for private sector development (P); Access to urban services for the poor (S)
<b>Project</b>	P078949
<b>Borrower(s)</b>	GOVERNMENT OF ALBANIA
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**1. Country and Sector Background****Coping with Major Shifts in Transport Demand**

Transport demand has changed radically since 1991, reflecting the structural changes in the economy and the realignment of trade flows in the region. The road fleet has grown from almost zero to about 234,000 vehicles in 2002, without a corresponding increase in the scale, or quality, of the infrastructure. Similarly, the number of flights at Rinas Airport continues to grow rapidly. Traffic at Durres Port has more than doubled since 1995 (with reported volumes of 2,750,000 tons and 748,000 passengers in 2002). On the other hand, both rail freight and passenger traffic have fallen to about 10 percent of the levels of their pre-1991 peak. Albania has responded to the change in transport demand by investing in transport infrastructure and privatizing a number of transport operations. Significant investments were undertaken at the ports of Durres and Vlora, Rinas Airport, and limited investments have also been made in Albanian Railways.

The earlier road investments, mostly donor financed, were initially concentrated on the main East-West corridor (TEN Corridor 8) running between Tirana and the Macedonia border, and on the main North-South corridor from Durres and Tirana through Shkodra to the Montenegro border. And the majority of the road sections on these corridors are now either under preparation, under construction, or complete. These investments have also, more recently, been accompanied by additional donor-financed projects rehabilitating other sections of the primary and secondary road network, and by community-based improvements on the tertiary, or local, road network. However, much remains to be done particularly in the strategic corridor to the north east of the country, to the border with Kosovo, and on the entire secondary

and local road network.

The maintenance of the road network was not emphasized initially; because pre-1991 roads were not designed for heavy traffic and needed rehabilitation before they could be efficiently maintained. The implication is that much of the network, awaiting rehabilitation, is in poor condition: 63 percent of the national road network, which includes primary and secondary roads, fell into this category in 2003, as revealed in Annex 11. This return of key strategic corridors of this network to good condition is a priority for the Government, as specified in the both the GPRS and the MTEF.

### **Increasing Funding of Transport Infrastructure**

While the condition of transport infrastructure has improved as a result of domestic and international financing, much remains to be done. For example, at the time of the preparation of the Road Maintenance Project in 2002, only 10 percent of the national road network was considered to be in good condition, with an additional 22 percent in fair condition. Annex 11 reveals that there had been a slight improvement by 2003, with 15 percent and 22 percent being the comparable figures.

In response, the Bank assisted the Government of Albania in the preparation of a Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) for the years 2003-2005 to address existing deficiencies in recurrent expenditure allocations for education, health, and road maintenance. The MTEF exercise called for the budget allocation for recurrent expenditure on road maintenance to be increased by 25 percent annually, from a base of US\$7.6 million in 2001, when the Government spent about 2 percent of GDP. The Government met this target in 2002 when US\$9.4 million was made available for road maintenance. Also, total investment spending for transport infrastructure is expected to planned to increase from 2.2 percent of GDP (13.4 billion Leks) in 2002 to 2.4 percent in 2005, supported by continued high levels of external financing for both road maintenance and construction.

### **Lack of a Clear Policy and Strategy for the Transport Sector**

The Government has successfully introduced a number of market-based policies since 1991 with the objectives of increasing transport efficiency and achieving harmony with European Union (EU) regulations. These initiatives have included the following activities which are now largely completed:

- Development and adoption of a Road Act;
- Adopting a strategy to require all road works (excluding routine maintenance) to be carried out by contractors selected on a competitive basis;
- Deregulation of inter-city road transport;
- Approval of a port authority law by the Albanian Parliament during September 2003;
- Creation of independent joint stock companies to manage Rinas Airport and operate the air traffic control system; and
- Transforming the Albanian Railways into a joint stock company (JSC), as proposed in the first World Bank project.

The following activities are ongoing and await completion:

- Contracting out of the maintenance works (including routine maintenance) to be carried out by contractors selected on a competitive basis;
- Establishment of an independent port authority at Durres and progressively transferring port operations to the private sector;
- Development of road vehicle registration and inspection systems; and
- Updating of the 1988 Railway Law to make it more consistent with the EU regulations, which is

expected to be passed during 2004.

**However, these activities have been introduced without a clear, coherent and comprehensive policy and strategy for the development of the sector.** The lack of such a framework can result in the introduction and preparation of individual projects, potentially with private sector involvement in commercially viable projects, that may be inconsistent both with the requirements of the sector, and with the financing priorities and capabilities of the country. The recent initiative by General Electric would fall into this category. The result could be unbalanced sector development, and imbalances between capital and recurrent budgets both within and across the different national sectors.

A second area of concern is that multiple projects from different donors, each with their different financial management, reporting and evaluation approaches, are likely to create excessive transactions costs for the responsible public sector bodies that are having to respond to similar requests from external parties in numerous different ways. This can be clearly illustrated by the problem of the supervision of different projects, which in the multiple project environment, create independent burdens as the respective domestic stakeholders have to respond to the different requirements of the individual donors. A third concern is that the development of 'self-standing' managerial modalities by the different donors, in the form of Project Implementation Units (PIU), often supported with international consultants, does little to develop domestic capacity in the planning or management of a particular sector. This problem has been explicitly recognized by the World Bank in the road sector in Albania and, as a result, the current PIU is to be absorbed by the General Roads Directorate (GRD) at an opportune point. A final concern reflects the experience in Albania, and elsewhere, that parallel financing of adjacent projects is fraught with difficulties, with different evaluation, procurement, and supervision procedures leading to wide disparities and sometimes discontinuities in implementation of the physically adjacent projects. The result is detrimental both to the development of the country, but also more narrowly, on the viability of those adjacent projects, which proceed to the original timetable.

The response of the Government of Albania to these problems has been twofold: firstly, the forthcoming Albania National Transport Plan study, which is funded by the EU, is intended to identify the policy and strategy for the sector, should provide a framework for integrated action in this sector. Secondly, the Government has requested the World Bank to assess the potential benefits of introducing a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp). The origin of these programs can be traced back to the mid-1990s, when there was increasing recognition on the part of the donor community that a lack of coherence and co-ordination was dissipating the potential benefits of projects, reducing both their sustainability and inhibiting the development of domestic capacity as project management was undertaken outside the structures of the domestic Government. The possibility of introducing such an initiative is progressing independently.

### **Improving the Road Network as a High Priority**

While the transport sector is changing rapidly, and the Government has responded with the support of the international donor community, it has become clear that among all transport investments the government must maintain a very high priority on maintaining and improving the road network both in rural and urban areas. The Government's main policy directions for the road sector, as summarized in the MTEF, are as follows:

- Completion of the rehabilitation and upgrading of the main North-South and East-West road corridors;
- Progressively increasing the annual road maintenance budget;
- Rehabilitation of road vehicle inspection centers, introduction of a vehicle registration information system, and improvement of driver education; and

- Strengthening of the Inter-ministerial Road Safety Council.

Within these road investment priorities, the Government has placed highest investment priority in improving (a) the Durres Kukes Morine Road corridor and (b) the transport system in Tirana. The emphasis on the Durres Kukes Morine Road corridor reflects the fact that it is the section of the national highway network which is in poorest condition, on average, and because it serves the area of the nation with the lowest per capita income as established by the recent NSSD and Poverty Assessment study. This road corridor also serves as a primary link between Kosovo and the Durres port and therefore would benefit the development of the port by increasing its "hinterland." Within this corridor, the priority section is the 26.4 kilometers between Milot-Reshen section, which serves a number of communities at the western end of the corridor, and links with the main North-South Highway.

Road investment in Tirana is also particularly important as the city is growing rapidly, reflecting its position as the main economic engine of Albania. Currently, the urban road system and traffic management practices are not keeping pace with its burgeoning population, land-use development, and an increasing motor vehicle fleet, which already comprises a substantial part of the national total. This section of the middle ring road is a 'missing link' in the completion of the rehabilitation of the entire middle ring road, and as such it is a strategic priority for the Municipality. The improvement of traffic management across the entire urban network of Tirana is to be pursued by the Municipality from their own resources.

### **Continuing Port Reform**

Prior to 1991, the ports were formerly centrally managed public enterprises which fulfilled all regulatory as well as operational functions. International trade was restricted, procedures were outdated and port operations were performed poorly. The former monopoly granted to the national flag carrier and the old age of ships calling at Albanian ports explain why outmoded practices such as direct delivery, the use of nets etc., are still in use, and the low level of unionization. The situation has improved, but most port regulations and management activities are still not well adapted to modern commercial practices. Currently, the majority of the facilities at Durres Port are in a deleterious condition, out-dated and of low capacity. The seaport and basin areas are restricted, and often encumbered by the remains of old activities. Only the most urgent needs have been addressed under different donor-financed initiatives. Operational improvements need to be implemented (indirect delivery), to make the best use of existing infrastructure and other investments will be needed in due course, e.g., the rehabilitation of other berths, storage areas and warehouses, and dredging, some of which can be done by the private sector.

The following activities have been identified as priorities within the port sector:

- implementing the Port Law and finalizing the draft Maritime Code;
- creating other autonomous port authorities under the Landlord Port model;
- developing commercial training and encouraging participation of the private sector in port development whenever possible;
- developing a reliable database on maritime trade, port activity and ship movements, so as to improve the quality of the development studies;
- avoiding duplicate port investments (in particular at Durres and Vlora, two ports less than 100 km apart);
- further reducing staff at Durres Port;
- adopting international accounting standards; and
- giving priority to operational measures, i.e. improving port facilities throughput before investing in new facilities.

The forthcoming ANTP study, funded by the EU, is intended to identify the policy and strategy for the sector and, as such, should identify the development strategy for the port sector, providing a framework to guide future activities.

### **Building Capacity in Municipal Transport**

Albania is experiencing very rapid growth in private motor vehicle travel within urban areas, reported to be 7 percent per annum in Tirana currently, with the consequent negative impacts in terms of traffic congestion, road safety (especially pedestrian safety), and the environment. This phenomenon has been accompanied and exacerbated by a corresponding deterioration in the level of service of urban bus services from the public sector operators and the emergence of small private sector operators who, at present, are largely unregulated. While the situation is most acute in Tirana, as the principal urban area of Albania, these problems are gradually spreading to other urban areas. The Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunication (MOTT) needs to develop best practices and outreach capabilities to assist Albanian urban areas in better managing traffic and in planning and regulating urban bus services. Accordingly, the Ministry has agreed to allocate staff and resources to begin to address urban transport issues and has requested technical assistance and training to develop in-house capability as a means to provide assistance.

### **Addressing the Decline in Railway Demand**

The Albanian railway system is independent of the majority of neighboring systems, with only one international connection to Montenegro. This link was itself closed during the Balkan conflict, but has recently been re-established and, together with the decline in the economy, now carries only about 10% of pre-1991 traffic volumes. Most railway infrastructure and rolling stock are in poor condition and financial performance continues to be extremely weak due to the low volume of traffic which currently constitutes only about 1% of total passenger and freight traffic in Albania. Substantial investments would be required to bring the core infrastructure and rolling stock up to acceptable modern standards.

The Government's strategy has, so far, involved the approval of a number of recommendations by the Council of Ministers in 1993. These were intended to initiate the separation of infrastructure and operations and the termination of uneconomic lines. However, an updating of government policy, especially with respect to the future contribution of the railway within a national transport policy framework has been lacking, and little concrete action has followed these initial measures. The forthcoming ANTP study, which is funded by the EU, and is intended to identify the policy and strategy for the sector, should provide a framework for integrated action in this sector.

### **Involving the Private Sector in Transport**

Albania has made progress in privatizing and deregulating transport operations. Road freight and passenger transport (excepting urban public transport) have now been successfully privatized. The pilot privatization of 40% of the Urban Transport Enterprise (Tirana) took place in 1996. The development of the road transport industry has followed EU recommendations. Road transport is now regulated by Road Code which established a General Directorate of Transport Services responsible for technical control and vehicle inspection, licensing, driver qualifications and vehicle registrations. This form of organization has improved vehicle inspections and road safety, and improved the collection of circulation and registration taxes. Albania is a member of an international freight transporters association ANALTIR. Albania has also adopted a Railway Law based on European practice. Albanian Railways is a limited liability company operating under MOTT, and has separated out a number of non-core activities. The recent approval of the Port Law, in September 2003, transforms Durres Port to be a Landlord Port with larger concessions, and two private stevedoring companies have been established. In addition, separate organizations have been established to administer civil aviation, control air traffic and manage Rinas Airport under the overall

authority of MOTT.

Much remains to be done to implement approved legislation and continue the privatization process. One important issue is frequent changes in the senior professionals/administrators within the sector following changes in the political administration. Albania has an insufficient cadre of transport professionals to sustain this process, and the result is detrimental to the development of institutions within the sector, and indirectly, to the development of the national economy. One solution might be to establish a system of permanent civil servants, and the Albania's aspiration to join the EU reinforces the validity of this proposal. In addition, in permitting the free movement of people and goods, and allowing the possibility for a small country to thrive within a larger group, the EU also provides an important model of rules and behavior for Albanians to emulate.

## **2. Objectives**

The project development objective is to improve traffic flow, reduce transport costs and contribute to a reduction in the rate of accidents on both the Milot-Rreshen section of the main road from the Port of Durres to Kukes and the border with Kosovo at Morine, and the selected section of the middle ring road in Tirana.

## **3. Rationale for Bank's Involvement**

Albania has received substantial amounts of financial support for road construction and rehabilitation from the European community and from international and bilateral organizations, but there remains much to be done before Albania's road network is suitable for supporting its economic development. The broad experience of the Bank in assisting the institutional strengthening of road administrations to better manage and maintain national and rural road networks, supporting and implementing traffic safety policies, and in coordinating with a large number of co-financiers puts it in a unique position to fill this role. In addition, the participation of the Bank in a project which may cost more than \$200 million may be a catalyst attracting further financing from other donors. Also, the experience of the Bank with road financing arrangements and the execution of high level and influential road safety awareness seminars will provide useful background for assisting the Government in these areas. Thus the Bank has a comparative advantage in undertaking the project.

## **4. Description**

The project will consist of three broad components: The first project component will be the 26.5 kilometer Milot - Rreshen section of the Durres - Morine road corridor. This road section is located mostly within the Mirdite District which has a poverty incidence ranging between 20-40% of the population, and improving access to this area is a strategic objective of the Government. Lesser amounts of project funds will be directed at assisting GRD and the PIU to manage the project as well as providing some needed equipment to facilitate the work of GRD in managing and monitoring the condition of the pavement.

The second project component will be the widening and rehabilitation of 3.5 kilometers of the northern and eastern sections of the Middle Ring Road in Tirana. The road segment financed under the Project will be widened from the existing two lanes with parking to four lanes with parking where space permits. The Middle Ring Road will be designed to consistent standards and is intended to demonstrate the proper design of an important urban arterial taking into account appropriate geometric design principles, adequate sidewalk and pedestrian crossing provisions, proper street lighting, appropriate street signing and pavement marking, provision of traffic signals at important intersections, and provision of appropriately designed parking and loading areas.

This portion of the Middle Ring, which is in very poor condition and heavily congested, provides an

important distributor function around the center of the city. This investment is particularly significant and timely as the road network outside the Middle Ring Road is very poorly developed with only a few radial roads and a jumble of non-continuous and low standard roads serving the rapidly developing city fringe. Beyond this distributor function, the Middle Ring Road section financed under the project serves large numbers of commercial establishments and provides access to 5 hospitals, the city railway station and several informal bus terminals. The Middle Ring Road segment financed under the Project will complete this important route around the City center that has been financed over several years using city funds and prior world Bank finance. The Bank financed a 0.5 km section along the western portion of the Ring under the Road Maintenance Project. The city has financed the remaining sections of the Ring.

The third broad project component will involve the provision of technical assistance to the Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunication and Durres Port Authority. In the case of the former, this will involve the following: (i) supporting ongoing port reforms; (ii) establishing a capability to regulate urban transport; (iii) preparing a railway reform and investment project; (iv) developing capability in implementing public-private-partnerships in transport; (v) carrying out feasibility studies; and (vi) carrying out staff training. In particular the support to the port sector will focus on: (i) strengthening and reorganizing the institutional and managerial aspects of port operations; (ii) contracting out selected port services; (iii) implementing the new port authority law; (iv) preparing new by-laws in conformity with EU standards; and (v) initiating several reforms of the maritime and port sectors particularly related to the legal framework.

The project will include the following components:

#### 1. DURRES-KUKES-MORINE ROAD

1a. Rehabilitation of the 26.5 km of roads between Milot and Rreshen as part of the Durres - Morine road corridor

1b. Equipment for road survey (pavement management), office supplies and vehicles

1c. Technical support, training

#### 2. TIRANA COMPONENT

Rehabilitation of 3.5 km of the Middle Ring Road in the city of Tirana

#### 3. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Technical Assistance to Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunication including (i) supporting ongoing port reforms, (ii) establishing capability to regulate urban transport, (iii) preparing a railway reform and investment project, (iv) developing capability in implementing public-private-partnerships in transport, (v) carrying out feasibility studies, and (vi) carrying out staff training

#### 5. Financing

##### Source (Total ( US\$m))

BORROWER (\$20.00)

IDA (\$20.00)

**Total Project Cost: \$40.00**

#### 6. Implementation

The General Roads Directorate (GRD) under the MOTT will be responsible for the national roads component and the General Directorate of Public Works (GDPW) and the Transport Department (TD) in Tirana will be responsible for the City of Tirana components. The Project Implementation Unit (PIU), established under the earlier and ongoing road projects in the GRD (Emergency Road Repair and Road Maintenance Projects) will be responsible for overall project management, including procurement of civil works, goods, and services, project monitoring, and reporting on the project status to the Albanian government and the Bank. It is expected that the PIU will work closely with the GRD, GDPW and TD, particularly with respect to contract management. The PIU consists of about eight persons with skills in general management, procurement, highway engineering, environment, and accounting. Since the GDPW and the TD of the Tirana city government will work closely with the PIU to manage the project activities for the City (as it is currently the case under the Road Maintenance Project), consolidated reports can be prepared for submission to IDA and a single Special Account can be used.

#### 7. Sustainability

The sustainability of the project will depend on the degree of Government and Municipality commitment to provide adequate future financing for road maintenance within their respective domains, together with the commitment of the former to restructure the GRD to better manage road construction and rehabilitation programs. While the present level of road maintenance financing is clearly inadequate for maintaining the national road network, the Government's commitment to providing increases of 5 percent each year is an encouraging indication of its commitment. This level of increase was achieved in 2002, despite serious budget constraints. The restructuring of the GRD is well under way, and this proposed project will provide the means to continue that process. GRD now has the capacity to undertake road maintenance contracts, and undertakes all of its periodic maintenance on that basis.

A further risk to the sustainability of the project is the rate of increase of car ownership and motorization in Tirana city, and the concomitant impact in terms of the erosion of the projected benefits on the Middle Ring



Road. The commitment of the Municipality to improve the management of the streets under their domain, and consider the introduction of appropriate traffic restraint policies, will contribute much to the 'locking' in of the benefits engendered by the provision of improved road space within the city boundaries.

### **8. Lessons learned from past operations in the country/sector**

The World Bank has extensive experience in road construction and maintenance in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, together with numerous other countries around the world. The Bank has learned that the selection of the most appropriate route and road design should be based on careful economic analysis of the alternative routes, and only construction that promises to yield a rate of return higher than the normal threshold of 12% should be undertaken. It has also learned that in most cases maintenance should be given priority over new construction when financing is constrained, except in those cases where the new construction can provide an economic rate of return that matches the potential returns from additional maintenance activity, or there are significant benefits that are not immediately reflected in the traditional appraisal methods.

Specific experience in implementing IDA and other donor-financed projects in Albania points to additional lessons as summarized in the Report of the Donor Coordinators Meeting of February 16, 2001:

- Feasibility and detailed engineering studies need to be completed to good standard before a project begins;
- Current land use and/or transport/urban master plans (with utility locations) are required before detailed designs can be prepared;
- Land expropriation arrangements need to be completed before civil works contracts start;
- Where appropriate, a timely and firm commitment from the Government to reimburse VAT/customs duties is required; and
- It is important for the Government to assure the continuity of key personnel in Ministries and transport organizations.

All of these lessons have been taken into consideration in the design of this project.

The Bank has also learned that the efficiency of road administrations can be greatly improved over the traditional model previously used in the Central and Eastern European countries by adopting practices used extensively in the Western countries. This includes the use of economic analysis incorporated into Pavement and Bridge Management Systems, improvements in quality control and laboratory testing methods, the use of contracting for both periodic and routine maintenance operations, utilization of relatively new technologies such as pavement re-cycling, "mill-and-fill" operations, and improved techniques for applying surface dressings.

Another lesson relates to the turnover of key staff within the Albanian civil service (frequent changes in project officials, including PIU personnel) affecting the day-to-day decision-making process, which has hampered the implementation of previous projects. This was improved by the establishment of an energetic and competent "independent" PIU during project implementation of previous transport projects. The selected PIU members were domestic consultants, paid in accordance with local market rates, and acting with the delegation and autonomy defined in the appraisal and credit agreement documents. To ensure close coordination with the Government, the PIU is located within the GRD. Difficulties have been encountered during the procurement process of past projects, often due to the lack of understanding of Bank procurement rules by some contractors. An adequate budget for close supervision from the Bank team as well as regular training for the construction industry is required. These lessons will be applied to this project.

## **9. Environment Aspects (including any public consultation)**

**Issues** : In accordance with World Bank policies and procedures for Environmental Assessment (EA) the project was assigned a “Category A” and two EA documents were prepared for the two main project components, namely the Milot-Reshen section of the Durres-Morine corridor, and the Tirana Middle Ring Road.

The proposed Milot-Reshen section of the Durres-Morine corridor is the primary component of the proposed Albanian Transport Project. The new alignment for this section of the Durres-Morine corridor will involve the construction of approximately 26.4 kilometers of new road through a previously undeveloped area. This will involve land acquisition for the right-of-way, clearing and grubbing vegetation, significant infilling behind the railway solum and the creation of embankments, together with the development of new borrow sites and/or quarries. As required by OP 4.01 (Environmental Assessment) three public consultations were held in Milot, Rubik and Rreshen respectively. The Albanian language EA was disclosed on **(date)** at Milot, Rubik and Rreshen and the English language EA was sent to the World Bank Infoshop on **(date)**. Main issues identified in the EA and incorporated into the EMP associated with construction activities included dust and noise from construction, borrow pit restoration, and waste water management from equipment washing. When the project is completed, the main issue associated with the project is altered patterns of surface runoff. All these issues have been satisfactorily addressed in the EMP.

The Tirana Middle Ring Road is a principal city arterial which carries roughly 20-25,000 vehicles/day. This road acts as a demarcation line between the old inner city and the newer outlying areas. For the purposes of rehabilitation, the Middle Ring Road has been divided into roughly seven segments along its entire length, all of which will be completed by the completion of the proposed project. To date, the City of Tirana has financed reconstruction of two of the segments, and will be financing a third. The World Bank has financed reconstruction of a fourth segment under the existing Road Maintenance Project. The remaining three segments are to be financed as a component of the proposed project. The project will involve widening the road within the existing right-of-way to two moving lanes in each direction separated by a physical median. Additional parking lanes and bus bays will be provided in most locations. The road widening will require the partial and full removal of some structures. A mitigation plan has been developed by the city. Again, as required by OP 4.01 (Environmental Assessment) two public consultations were held in Tirana. The Albanian language EA was disclosed on June 14, 2004 at Tirana Municipality, the Mini-Municipalities No.3, 4, 8, and 9, and the Municipality website and the English language EA was sent to the World Bank Infoshop on **(date)**. Main issues identified in the EA and incorporated into the EMP associated with construction activities included dust and noise from construction and soil erosion.

## **10. List of factual technical documents:**

Durres-Kukes-Morine Final Report, November 2003, Tecnic Consultants.

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**Note: This is information on an evolving project. Certain components may not be necessarily included in the final project.**