

CITIZENS' SUMMARY

Operational Programme Transport and Transport Infrastructure (OPTTI) is approved by the EC with Decision C(2014) 10232 from 19.12.2014. Prepared is modification of the Programme. The suggested changes are coordinate by Coordination Council for European Union Funds Management with Minutes No.2 from 16.10.2015 and by Monitoring Committee of OPTTI on 23.10.2015. The Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria approved a project for modification of the Programme (Minutes 48 from 27.11.2015). The modification of OPTTI 2014-2020 was sent to EC on 27.11.2015 and was reviewed by the Services of the Commission, however due to the limited time for processing it wasn't approved. As a result of the additional consultations held with the representatives of EC, in the project for amendment of OPTTI 2014-2020 were made additional changes, which are reviewed and approved by Coordination Council for European Union Funds Management (31.03.2016).

With Decision OPTTI-1/01.09.2015 of the Director of Managing Authority of the Operational Programme Transport and Transport Infrastructure 2014 - 2020 are opened all procedures for direct awarding of grant assistance under OPTTI. The application of the beneficiaries of OPTTI is made electronically through UMIS 2020.

In OPTTI Indicative annual work programme for 2015 were provided to be received for assessment application forms for the following projects: the project Rehabilitation of Plovdiv – Burgas railway line, Phase 2; the project Struma Motorway, Lot 3 Blagoevgrad – Sandanski, and the project for Construction of metro line 3 of Sofia Metro.

At 31.12.2015 in UMIS 2020 are submitted 12 application forms: 5 for infrastructure projects - 1) Struma Motorway - Lot 3.1, Lot 3.3 and Zheleznitsa Tunnel, 2) a project for Sofia Metro extension: Line 3, Stage I – section Vladimir Vazov Blv.-Central urban Area-Zhitnitsa St.; 3) Phase 2 of the project for improvement of the systems for navigation and topohydrographic measurements on Danube River, 4) a project for rehabilitation of the railway infrastructure at the sections of Plovdiv - Burgas railway line – reconstruction, repair and modernization of traction substations Burgas, Karnobat and Yambol, 5) construction of four road overhead bridges, and part of the modernization of the railway section Septemvri - Plovdiv, a project for design and implementation of integrated information system for planning and managing the resources in SE Port infrastructure, a project for technical assistance for the preparation of remaining construction of Black Sea Motorway and five projects for improvement of the administrative capacity of the beneficiaries. All submitted applications are in the process of evaluation.

Under way is the preparation of the major projects, planned for funding under the Programme, and until now there are not any significant problems.

Advanced payment in the amount of BGN 25,673,308.98 (EUR 13,126,554.44) was paid under the Programme. The first grant contract (BFP) was signed on 24.09.2015 with the National Company Strategic Infrastructure Projects for fulfilling the project BG16M1OP001-2.001-0001 Struma Motorway, Lot 3.1, Lot 3.3 and Zheleznitsa Tunnel. The contract is signed on the basis of Decision 725 of the Council of Ministers from 18.09.2015. The total value of the funding under the contract for grants is in the amount of BGN 739,245,318.00, from which BGN 628,358,520.30 are from the Cohesion Fund of the European Union, and BGN 110,886,797.70 are from national cofunding.

During 2015, between the Bulgarian authorities and the Services of EC was held an intense discussion about a possible change of the way of constructing of Struma Motorway in the section passing through Kresna Gorge. The Bulgarian authorities held the opinion that the originally planned tunnel option for passing through the Gorge has hidden risks during the construction and operation of it, which necessitates a search for other solution. There were coordinated actions in the direction of possible reconsideration of the original decision under EIA. MA of OPTTI holds the opinion that this question has to be resolved until the end of 2016, otherwise there is a real risk, notwithstanding the technical decision selected, that the project will not be finished within the Programme period.

During 2015, the Managing Authority of OPTTI made a evaluation plan of the Programme, which was presented for approval at the fourth meeting of the Monitoring Committee, held at the end of 2015. The members of the Committee gave their suggestions and it was decided the plan to be revised and presented again to MC.

During the Programme period 2014-2020 the investments from ESIF in the transport are connected with the availability of general plan(s) for the transport or frame(s) for investments in the transport, which observe the legal requirements for strategic evaluation of the environment and determine: the contribution to the Single European Transport Area in harmony with Article 10 of the Regulation (EU) 1315/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council (5), including the priorities for investments in: the main network TEN-T and the total network, where are envisioned investments from ERDF and the Cohesion Fund, as well as in the secondary connections; a portfolio of realistic and conceptually clean projects, for which is envisioned a support from ERDF and the Cohesion Fund.

With the help of JASPERS is made an analysis of the existing strategic documents (focused on the General Transport Master Plan), and the main conclusions are connected with this that the focus of the analysis in the General Transport Master Plan is directed in a large degree upon the infrastructure, including to a lesser degree organisational and operational problems. Although on the principle the approach of the analysis of the problems is considered to be suitable, the analysis of the organisational and operational questions has to be developed in depth, more specifically, how these questions and problems should be connected with the quality and use of the infrastructure.

The preparation of the Integrated Transport Strategy until 2030 is in harmony with the fulfilling of the Ex-ante conditionalities of the European Commission for implementation of EU structural and investment funds in the period 2014 – 2020 and with the Partnership Agreement. In connection with this, on 13 January 2016 between the Ministry of Transport, Information Technologies and Communications (MTITC) and the Consortium InfraCare PTV DZZD is signed a contract D-5/13.01.2016 for Development of Integrated Transport Strategy in the period until 2030". The contract amounts at the value of 3,403,200.00 with VAT, with the term of fulfilling 14 months after the date of signing. The activities are financed under the Priority Axis Technical Assistance of OPTTI from the project BG16M1OP001-5.001-0007 "Development of Integrated Transport Strategy in the period until 2030".

The scope of the Strategic document will cover all types of transport and travel through, to, from and in the Republic of Bulgaria. The development of tools for transport modelling will be the main part of the preparation of the Integrated Transport Strategy in the period until 2030. The Integrated national transport model will be based on multimodal approach for prognosis of the demand for passenger and cargo transportation. The purpose of the National transport model is to create a tool, which can be used for testing and simulation of future main flows of traffic of passengers and cargo by type of transport and by route, on the basis of multiple assumptions regarding the economic and infrastructure regimes, as well as the regimes for charging and tariffs. This will contribute for more effective use of the fundings under the programs co-funded by EU and for the fulfillment of priority infrastructure projects, which in turn will increase the competitiveness of the national economy and will provide high level of mobility for people and business.