

Western Balkans - Eastern Mediterranean European Corridor: Rail Corridor VIII

Sustainable transport Flagship 1 - Connecting East to West

The European Commission supports the Western Balkans in bringing the region's core and extended core transport network up to EU standards.

Rail Corridor VIII forms the east-west hinterland connection between the Black and the Ionian Seas, passing through Bulgaria, North Macedonia, and Albania.

With EU financial assistance for project preparation and investment co-financing under the **Economic and Investment Plan**, North Macedonia and Albania are upgrading the existing lines and constructing the missing links along the corridor to remove bottlenecks, shorten physical distances, increase connectivity and shift more passengers and freight to sustainable modes of transport. Reform measures accompany these investments to improve the competitiveness of the rail sector.

€2.1 bn
estimated total investment

€1.8 bn
North Macedonia

€357 m
Albania

€367.6 m
EU grants approved

€302.6 m
North Macedonia

€65 m
Albania

594.7 km
total length
(North Macedonia and Albania)

416.6 km
EU supported length

262.8 km
North Macedonia

153.8 km
Albania

Co-financiers:



Results and benefits



Safe and reliable international mobility of passengers and goods



Lower operational and maintenance costs for railway operators



Improved journey times and competitive transport services



Reduced congestion, transport emissions and impact on the environment



Support the countries' socio-economic development and competitiveness



Integration with the Trans-European Transport Network

October 2024

Global Gateway

The Global Gateway is delivered through a **Team Europe approach**, which brings together the EU and EU Member States with their financial and development institutions.

Connectivity that transforms economies and societies

The eastern stretch of Corridor VIII, which connects North Macedonia with Bulgaria, is part of the Western Balkans - Eastern Mediterranean European Corridor and a flagship project of the **EU's Global Gateway**.

The Global Gateway is Europe's offer for connecting the world by encouraging public and private investments in a global network of transportation and supply chains, green energy, modern telecommunications, education and research. In the transport sector, it promotes infrastructure investments that create sustainable, smart, resilient, inclusive and safe modes of transport and supports networks providing connectivity with the Trans-European Transport Network.

EU supported sections



North Macedonia

- 1 Kriva Palanka – border with Bulgaria**
Length: 23.4 km
Status: under procurement
- 2 Beljakovce – Kriva Palanka**
Length: 34 km
Status: under construction
- 3 Kumanovo – Beljakovce**
Length: 30.8 km
Status: under construction
- 4 Skopje – Kičevo**
Length: 102.6 km
Status: under preparation
- 5 Kičevo – Struga**
Length: 50 km
Status: under preparation
- 6 Struga (MKD) - Lin (ALB)**
Length: 22 km
Status: under preparation

Albania

- 6a Border with North Macedonia - Lin**
Length: 10.3 km, crossborder
Status: under preparation
- 7 Lin - Rrogozhinë**
Length: 110 km
Status: under preparation
- 8 Durrës – Rrogozhinë**
Length: 33.5 km
Status: under preparation

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.