



Corridor VIII in North Macedonia

Railway section Beljakovce – Kriva Palanka



North Macedonia is geographically at the crossroads of two transnational transport axes: namely North-South (Corridor X) and East-West (Corridor VIII), also known as Pan-European corridors and as such part of the Trans-European transportation networks (TEN-T). Corridor VIII is a multi-modal transportation network that includes maritime ports and inland waterways, airports, roads and rail-

ways that are projected along the east-western axis, and it begins at the southern Italian ports of Bari and Brindisi, passes through Albania, North Macedonia and leads to the Black Sea ports of Varna and Burgas in Bulgaria. The railway part of Corridor VIII in North Macedonia has a total length of 315 km and the central part of this corridor, from Skopje to Kicevo is operating. Missing connections are both at the Western end (from Kicevo to the border with Albania) and at the Eastern end (from Kumanovo to the Bulgarian border).



The section to the Bulgarian border includes rehabilitation and construction of 3 sub-sections (total length of 88.2 km), financed by the European Union and WBIF partners:

- Kumanovo – Beljakovce, 30.8 km
- Beljakovce – Kriva Palanka, 34 km
- Kriva Palanka - Bulgarian Border, 23.4 km



Flagship 1 Connecting East to West



The investment project for the section Beljakovce – Kriva Palanka concerns the rehabilitation of 34 km of CVIII railway track to modern standards. The planned development includes several railway bridges, over and underpasses, 5.5 km-long tunnels, railway stations and halts, and a new signaling and telecommunication system. This WBIF project is included in the Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans 2021-2027, under Flagship 1 “Connecting East to West” (Sustainable Transport).

Estimated total investment

€ **152m**

including signalization



EBRD provides loan finance

WBIF EU grants

€ **69m**

Previous WBIF grants

€ **6m**

National contribution

€ **1m**

Start of works:
October 2022

Estimated completion:
Q4 2025

Results



More than **200** new jobs created



Direct access to modern means of transport for more than **350,000** people



Decrease in travel time between Skopje and Sofia



Increase by **20%** in annual freight volume by 2040



Reduction of current air and noise pollution levels



Reduced operational and maintenance costs for railway operators



Improved trade flows within North Macedonia and the region

*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.