**EVALUATION REPORT**



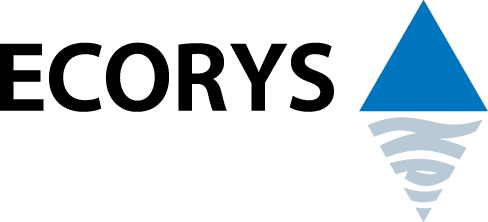
**INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF**

**OPERATIONAL PROGRAM TRANSPORT 2007-2013**

**LOT No 4**

**“Evaluation of Horizontal Issues Integration in the OPT Management, Monitoring and Implementation”**

The Project is financed by ERDF through Operational Program Transport 2007-2013



Summary

This Report presents the results of the implementation of the project on Independent evaluations of Operational Program Transport 2007-2013 under Lot No 4 “Evaluation of Horizontal Issues Integration in the OPT Management, Monitoring and Implementation” under Contract No D-30/27.06.2011 between the Ministry of Transport, Information Technologies and Communications and Consortium ECORYS composed by ECORYS Netherlands BV and ECORYS South East Europe LTD.

The evaluation is performed according to the indicative plan for evaluation of the Operational Program Transport 2007-2013. It is carried out in the period January - April 2012 and presents the current state towards April 2012.

The evaluation aims at improving the quality, efficiency, impact, sustainability and compliance with the assistance submitted by the Cohesion Fund, the European Fund for Regional Development and the National budget, including:

* Improvement of the management and implementation of Operational Program Transport 2007-2013, including the efficiency and effectiveness of the expenditures made;
* Optimization and maximum increase of the use of financial activities;
* Evaluation of the effectiveness of the activities under Operational Program Transport 2007-2013 for achieving the objectives of the National Strategic Reference Framework;
* Increase of transparency of the activities of public institutions involved in the program implementation

A set of methods and techniques, such as stakeholder analysis, review of the national and European documents, review of the administrative documents, expert panels, online questionnaire to experts of the Managing Authority and the Program beneficiaries, individual interviews and workshop, was used for conducting the evaluation.

In conducting the evaluation, consultations were carried out with experts of the Managing Authority, the beneficiaries, the Central Coordination Unit and representatives of the horizontal issues at the Operational programe Monitoring Committee.

The results of the questionnaire were used to illustrate the text of the report. The answers of all questions were presented in a separate appendix.

The main conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation were presented to the Client at a working meeting at the end of the evaluation in order to facilitate the review of the report and its use. During the evaluation and prior to submission of the draft version of the report, interim results were also promptly discussed with representatives of the Managing Authority of Operational Program Transport.

In order to facilitate the evaluation, an overview was made of the horizontal principles contained in the Operational Program Transport 2007-2013, as well as of the horizontal principals in key European and national strategic documents and the regulations governing the management and implementation of programs and projects co-financed by the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund of the European Union. On the basis of the review, six horizontal principles whose application should be examined in Operational Program Transport were selected and defined. These principles were used as a starting point for carrying out the assessment. They are as follows:

* *Sustainable development* – development of sustainable transport, which includes: а) physical accessibility; b) socio-economic affordability; c) safety; d) environmental friendliness; e) energy efficiency.
* *Provision of employment* – creation or reduction of employment, both during the implementation of measures/projects after their completion.
* *Competitiveness (including state aid and public procurement)* – contribution to enhancing the competitiveness of the Bulgarian economy. State aid and public procurement are considered to be part of this principle (public-private partnership and concessions are also within the scope of this principle but they are not applied and examined in this Operational Program).
* *Implementation of innovative solutions and information technologies* – use of innovative technological solutions and information technologies for the development of transport systems.
* *Provision of equal opportunities and non-discrimination –* observance of the principles for equality in order to create equal opportunities for access of people with disabilities. Where appropriate, the principle should be considered on a larger scale – non-discrimination by gender, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation or otherwise.
* *Partnership* – inclusion and reflection of the views of all stakeholders at all stages – programming, preparation, implementation, monitoring and reporting of OPT. Compliance with the European and national transport networks and policies, partnership programs and complementariness of the measures with other programs.

The review of horizontal principles is supported and extended by an analysis of the external effects which traces the development of the horizontal policies at European and national level and their impact on the Operational Program Transport.

According to the Terms of reference, the evaluation of integration of the horizontal principles in the management, monitoring and implementation of Operational Program Transport answers the following key questions grouped by themes as follows:

Coverage of the horizontal principles in identification and evaluation of projects

**1. How are the key horizontal priorities, including sustainable development, involved in the evaluation of projects?**

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| Horizontal principles are involved in the selection and evaluation of the projects in OPT 2007-2013 as follows:  Investment projects:   * At pre-selection stage – through a better ranking by collecting more points; * At preparation stage – through meetings and discussions with the Managing Authority and other stakeholders (NGOs, branch organizations and others); * At application-for-funding stage – by providing information in the application form; * At evaluation stage – through the collection of more points.   Projects for development of investment projects:   * At application-for-funding stage – by providing information in the application form.   Technical Assistance Projects:   * At application-for-funding stage – by providing information in the application form.   In the evaluation of projects under OPT 2007-2013, the horizontal principles are considered only for the investment projects. Although information for some horizontal principles is provided in the application form of projects for preparation of investment projects and technical assistance projects, they are not evaluated.  For investment projects, the evaluation of including the principles is made by awarding points in the presence of a certain horizontal principle which contributes to a greater result in the formation of the overall evaluation of the project. This method of evaluation is appropriate for horizontal principles that are also part of the priorities of the operative program, such as the principle of a connection with the Trans-European Transport Network. Technical evaluation (through awarding of points) is appropriate also in the pre-selection of investment projects because in this way a greater priority is given to projects that have a better project readiness for implementation and also better reflect the objectives of the program. Evaluation through awarding of points is not appropriate for horizontal principles that are legally regulated or whose implementation is obligatory, given that they should be anyway observed, they do not give any advantage. |

**2. To what extent are horizontal principles taken into account in the identification and implementation of the projects?**

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| Horizontal principles are considered primarily in the identification and implementation of infrastructure projects under Operational Program Transport 2007-2013 and to a much lesser extent in the implementation of projects for the preparation of infrastructure projects and technical assistance projects. This is due to the nature of the project. Investment projects can consider most of the horizontal principles while technical assistance projects can consider only the principles of equality, partnership and implementation of public procurement rules.  For **investment projects**, the following horizontal principles are taken into consideration:  At project selection stage: sustainable development (compliance with environmental legislation); employment; competitiveness (connection with Trans-European Transport Networks); partnership (complementarities with other projects).  At the stage of evaluation of the applications for confirmation of aid: sustainable development (compliance with environmental legislation); socio-economic affordability; contribution of the project to improving safety; employment, competitiveness – connection with Trans-European Transport Networks; state aid; public procurement; partnership – (complementariness with other projects); equal opportunities (ensuring equal access to people with disabilities).  At the stage of implementation: sustainable development (compliance with environmental legislation); employment (to be reported upon completion of the project); competitiveness (procurement); equal opportunities (ensuring equal access to people with disabilities).  No horizontal principles at the stage of evaluation of project proposals are considered In **projects for development of investment projects and technical assistance projects.** In the implementation of projects for preparation of investment projects, the principle of sustainable development in terms of compliance with environmental legislation – applying the procedures for evaluation of the environmental impact, is applied. Also, application of the provisions of the Public Procurement Act is monitored.  In carrying out technical assistance projects, only the application of the provisions of the Public Procurement Act is monitored.  For all three types of projects, integration of the horizontal principles which are governed by legislation, is recommended. These are state aid, public procurement and environmental protection. This may refer also to the public-private partnership which currently is not applicable to projects under Operational Program Transport 2007-2013. Two other important principles that should be taken into consideration in the identification and implementation of projects under Operational Program Transport, are the principles for partnership and the principle for equal opportunities. Both principles are socially significant. The principle of partnership contributes to the better quality of the projects, while the principle for equal opportunities is partially regulated and it is an integral part of the horizontal principles of the Structural and Cohesion Funds of the European Union.  In infrastructure projects, it is recommended to consider sustainable development (safety) and competitiveness (connection with the Trans-European Transport Network). In terms of safety, there are technical requirements that should be observed. The connection with the Trans-European Network is an important objective of the operational program. |

***3. What mechanisms are used to ensure observation of the horizontal principles****?[[1]](#footnote-1)*

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| The mechanisms that are designed to ensure observation of the horizontal principles are as follows:   * Provision of information in the application forms (for all types of projects); * Evaluation (for infrastructure projects only); * Established procedures (for application of environmental legislation and public procurement); * Monitoring during project execution – (mainly procurement, but also some technical requirements related to environmental protection); * Reporting – observation of the procurement legislation, employment – reported at the completion of the investment projects.   In order to improve the integration of horizontal principles in the selection and implementation of the projects, it is necessary to expand and refine the established mechanisms, especially in terms of the technical assistance projects where as of date the mechanisms for ensuring observation of the horizontal principles are monitoring and reporting on the application of the procedures for public procurement. |

Coverage of the horizontal principles in monitoring the implementation and in the indicators

**1. Quality of reporting in terms of the horizontal principles**

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| **At program level:** Most often the reports at operational program level contain information for sustainable development and partnership (complementarities). Most comprehensive is the information on competitiveness (public procurement). The principles of employment and equal opportunities are least covered in the reports; in fact, they are less relevant to the objectives of Operational Program Transport 2007-2013.  The presentation of information on horizontal principles in the annual reports of Operational Program Transport is not well structured. The information on some of the principles is in a separate item, while information on other principles can be found in the various parts of the reports.  **At project level:** In general, the horizontal principles are not sufficiently reflected in the reports of the beneficiaries. An exception of this conclusion is the reporting in the field of public procurement which is given special attention in all reports.  The overall conclusion is that in terms of horizontal principles, reporting is well supported only in the field of public procurement. The other horizontal principles need improvement in their structure and exhaustiveness of reporting. |

**2. Do indicators for monitoring Operational Program Transport measure correctly and cover the impact on sustainable development and the other horizontal priorities?**

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| **At program level:** The system of indicators at level of the operational program includes several indicators that measure some of the horizontal priorities (sustainable development – safety and innovations and information technologies). In the field of sustainable development (environmental protection), indicators could be added for a better and more comprehensive reflection of the principles, given that sustainable development is an overall objective of the operational program. Having in mind the implementation phase of the programme, the inclusion of such indicators is more realistic in the next programming period.  **At project level:** Given that sustainable development is among the most relevant horizontal principles of Operational Program Transport 2007-2013, the quality of reporting by the beneficiaries (annual and final reports) should be improved by inclusion in the next programming period of indicators for sustainable development as those specified in the Report on monitoring and control of the impact on environment when implementing Operational Program Transport 2011. |

Coverage of the horizontal principles in managing and implementing Operational Program Transport

**1. How are horizontal policies covered in the relevant documents and manuals for implementation of Operational Program Transport?**

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| Horizontal principles are described in operational documents for implementation of the program and the Managing Authority has the necessary instruments for ensuring their application and monitoring. The application of part of the horizontal principles is legally regulated and their observation is obligatory within the limits stipulated by the law. The beneficiaries play the main role for application of horizontal principles in the preparation and implementation of investment projects, while the Managing Authority has the control functions. The inclusion of horizontal principles and the description of their application in the relevant documents and manuals of MA and the beneficiaries vary due to the nature of the various principles as far as they are legally regulated, as well as the understanding regarding their applicability to the objectives of OPT 2007-2013. During the next programming period it might be useful to pay special attention to the horizontal principles. They should be more systematically defined in the text of the operational program itself; afterwards, they should be described as procedures and submitted “top down” by the Managing Authority to the beneficiaries. |

***2.* How do beneficiaries ensure the implementation of horizontal policies?**

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| Beneficiaries observe the implementation of horizontal policies and the application of horizontal principles within the existing regulatory or operational requirements that are directly related to the implemented projects. The beneficiaries have the necessary structures for applying the horizontal principles in their activities regarding the implementation and management of projects under Operational Program Transport 2007-2013.  The lack of systematic approach to horizontal principles beyond the practical aspects related to the implementation of the regulatory requirements and the Managing Authority’s guidelines, can be explained by the lack of sufficient clarity about the nature of horizontal principles and their practical application in the operational program itself. The inclusion of a separate chapter describing horizontal principles in the manuals of beneficiaries is not necessary. It is sufficient to refer to the Operational Program and the Manual of the Managing Authority where there should be a clear definition of the principles and instructions for application. |

Analysis of external impacts

***1. Analysis of the development of horizontal policies at national and European level and their impact on Operational Program Transport***

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| The introduction of horizontal principles in the European and national policies aims at providing a strategic focus for achievement of generally accepted goals. Operational programs can be regarded as instruments of these policies and therefore, gradually since 1988, horizontal principles have been included in the regulations for management of the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund. Initially, the main horizontal issues to be considered, were equal opportunities and sustainable development. Then other horizontal principles appeared in various operational programs, such as partnership, information society, employment.  In the new general Regulation for the programming period of 2014-2020 which will lay down the main framework for the funds and the general strategic framework and the partnership contracts with each member country, the European Commission proposes a series of general principles for management of the funds which include multi-level management, observation of the legislation at European and national level, promotion of gender equality, non-discrimination and sustainable development. At the same time, in programming the operational programs for the new period, a big emphasis is placed on achieving the strategic objectives of Europe 2020.  The main horizontal principles at national level in terms of operational programs for 2007-2013 are specified in the National Strategic Reference Framework and in the Council of Ministers Decree No 182/21.06.2006. These are sustainable development (including environment), equal opportunities; competitiveness (including state aid); procurement.  In terms of transport and transport policies, sustainable development and partnership are considered as significant horizontal principles.  Operational Program Transport 2007-2013 is directly related to the horizontal principle of sustainable development. The overall objective of the program is *Development of sustainable transport system.*  The development of inter-modal transport systems which is one of the priority objectives of the program contributes directly to the achievement of sustainable transport.  The principle of equal opportunities and non-discrimination is examined in the Operational Program Transport 2007-2013 in relation to the aspect for creating accessible transport for all people, including transport facilities and systems that can be used by disabled people as well.  Partnership is seen as a fundamental principle in the preparation and implementation of the measures under the operational program. The principle is clearly reflected not only in terms of including socio-economic partners and stakeholders in the preparation, management and implementation, but also by striving to coordinate and ensure complementariness of the measures with other programs and measures.  Operational Program Transport 2007-2013 indirectly contributes to enhancing competitiveness of the economy and the regions by improving the transport system and providing connections with the major European transport corridors, which is reflected in the program objectives and the marked progress for achieving the objectives of the National Strategic Reference Framework.  State aid and public procurement are legally regulated and, therefore mechanisms are created for their integration in the operational program. |

The following major **conclusions** have been made on the basis of the analyses:

Evaluation of the integration of horizontal principles in the management, monitoring and implementation of Operational Program Transport, can be regarded as the first separate assessment on a given topic. Horizontal principles have been considered in previous assessments as well, but in a very limited way, as part of the implementation and management of the program.

Horizontal principles should not be considered separately from the set goals of the program. They should be seen as compatible and supporting the objectives. Horizontal principles are not additional objectives; they are framework mechanisms which ensure a better opportunity for achieving the objectives of the program. Therefore, horizontal principles should be examined at each stage of policy implementation (programming of the measures and their implementation and reporting) and at each level of the management. It is especially important to work out a common understanding of the nature and significance of these issues by all stakeholders involved in the implementation of the operational program. Where possible, the application of horizontal principles should be measured by pre-defined indicators.

The text of Operational Program Transport 2007-2013 specifies the horizontal principles and policies that are an integral part of the program but it does not give clear definitions of all principles and the way they should be integrated. Both at national and European level, the horizontal principles that are applied in the implementation of operational programs, are different and reflect the specifics and priority objectives of the programs. The main horizontal principles in Bulgaria are those indicated in the Council of Ministers Decree No 182/21.07.2006 and in the National Strategic Reference Framework - *sustainable development (including environment), equal opportunities, competitiveness (including state aid) and public procurement.* In addition to them, the various operational programs include also other horizontal principles that are relevant to their objectives. Operational Program Transport is no exception. In Chapter 8 “Coherence with the policies of the European Union”, along with these, other principles are specified as well – the Lisbon Strategy, coherence with the EU transport policy, consistency with the programs for territorial cooperation and application of the principle of partnership. Precise definition of the horizontal principles in the text of the operational program would be a prerequisite for their proper consideration in the implementation and reporting of the program.

There is a separate chapter on horizontal principles in the Procedure Manual of the Managing Authority of the operational program. The application of part of the horizontal principles is included in the description of components of the project cycle. There are instructions for application of these principles that are legally regulated (public procurement and environmental protection). Instructions for application of other principles are missing or are too general. The description of horizontal principles in a separate chapter of the manuals of the beneficiaries is not necessary when at operational program level the principles are clearly defined and the manuals both of the Managing Authority and the beneficiaries give instructions for their practical application.

The institutional framework that monitors the integration of horizontal principles in Operational Program Transport largely follows the institutional framework for managing and implementing the operational program and it can be considered as an integral part thereof. The Managing Authority and the beneficiaries have the necessary structures for implementing the horizontal principles in their activities for the implementation and management of projects under Operational Program Transport. However, with the exception of public procurement and, to some extent, the principle of sustainable development in the part relating to observation of environmental legislation, the integration and reporting of the principles in the project implementation is not adequately regulated due to the lack of specific requirements for compliance and reporting of the other principles at operational program level and at national level.

In the Monitoring Committee of Operational Program Transport 2007-2013 there are representatives nominated by the state administration for the horizontal principles listed in the National Strategic Reference Framework, namely – *sustainable development, equal opportunities, competitiveness and public procurement.* There are no requirements for representatives on other horizontal issues. No participation of experts on horizontal issues of NGOs is provided but there are representatives of the non-governmental sector in the Monitoring Committee itself and they can take a position on most of the horizontal issues reviewed in the evaluation. In this respect, it can be assumed that the members of the Monitoring Committee are well represented to discuss the horizontal issues under Operational Program Transport 2007-2013. For the next programming period there should be enough representatives in the Monitoring Committee to reflect all horizontal issues that are to be reviewed by the future operational program.

Horizontal principles are included in the selection and evaluation of the projects under Operational Program Transport 2007-2013 in the following way:

* At preparation stage - by holding meetings for discussion with the Managing Authority and other stakeholders (for the investment projects and projects for development of investment projects)
* At pre-selection stage:

- by providing information in the application form (for all three types of projects)

- by ranking and collecting points (for the investment projects)

* At evaluation stage – by collecting more points (for the investment projects)

The integration of horizontal principles in the projects of Operational Program Transport 2007-2013 mainly depends on the type of projects (infrastructure, preparation of infrastructure projects and technical assistance projects) and to a much lesser extent, on the objectives of the projects. While the infrastructure projects can integrate most of the horizontal principles reviewed for the evaluation, the technical assistance projects can reflect mostly the principles of *partnership, procurement and equal opportunities.*

Horizontal principles could be structured into three groups in terms of whether they are legally regulated, whether they are part of strategic objectives and policies or whether they are generally accepted principles for good practices and management. This division facilitates the analysis regarding the principles to be reviewed and integrated in Operational Program Transport.

* Horizontal principles which are regulated should be reflected and reviewed as a compulsory requirement for implementation of the program. The presence of effective internal mechanisms for implementing these horizontal principals in the management of Operational Program Transport contributes to increasing the efficiency of the program implementation. These horizontal principles are – *sustainable development* (in the aspect of *environmental protection and compliance with environmental legislation)*, *public procurement, state aid, and possible public-private partnership and concessions (*if provided in the next operational program).
* Application of the partnership principle is appropriate for all types of projects not only because it is socially significant but because it contributes to the better quality of the projects. It is, therefore, important to be integrated and reflected for the three types of the projects funded by Operational Program Transport – infrastructure, preparation of infrastructure projects and technical assistance projects.
* The *equal opportunities* project is socially significant and it is partially regulated. Therefore, it should be observed under the three types of projects.
* *The safety* of transport facilities is an important element of sustainable transport. There are technical safety requirements to be met by the transport infrastructure. Ensuring safety is a mandatory element of the transport systems.
* Operational Program Transport has an indirect contribution to improving *competitiveness* through the construction of transport infrastructure and the connection with the Trans-European Transport Network. Therefore, this principle should be monitored and reported through the monitoring system for achieving the objectives of Operational Program Transport (connection with the Trans-European Transport Corridors).
* The principle of *sustainable development in the parts related to physical accessibility, socio-economic affordability and energy efficiency,* as well as the principle *of innovations and information technologies,* are not directly focused on the objectives of Operational Program Transport, but they are part of the European and national strategies and policies. Therefore, the competent authorities that will take decisions on the scope of the next operational program, are authorized to decide whether to integrate these aspects of the development of sustainable transport in projects funded by Operational Program Transport, depending on the priorities of the Program.
* The principle of providing employment should be reflected if there is a requirement to be reported at national and European level, as part of evaluating the effectiveness of the financial assistance under the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund. In general, the provision of employment is not directly related to the program objectives.

Evaluation of the horizontal principles’ inclusion in the project proposals is carried out by awarding of points in the presence of a horizontal principle which contributes to greater results in the formation of the overall evaluation of the project. This is not applicable to the horizontal principles that are legally regulated and therefore obligatory.

Ranking based on the observation of the horizontal principles is appropriate for the pre-selection of investment projects because there is a greater priority for projects that are better prepared for implementation and better reflect the objectives of Operational Program Transport, as far as some of the horizontal principles can be used for such indications. These are the principles for connection with the European transport network and with the transport network of other countries, compatibility with other interventions, as well as compliance with the environmental legislation.

Information on some horizontal principles is provided in the application forms of projects for preparation of investment projects but this information is not evaluated. The same refers to the technical assistance projects. In some cases, the application of horizontal principles is a necessary condition (public procurement) and it is sufficient to mark only the presence of these elements. In other cases, where the horizontal principles support the achievement of the program objectives, it would be appropriate to evaluate higher the projects that would have “added value” in terms of achieving the objectives of Operational Program Transport.

Reporting of the horizontal principles at program level is incomplete. In the annual reports on implementation of Operational Program Transport, a special attention is paid only to public procurement and, to some extent, to complementariness (partnership). Other horizontal principles such as employment and equal opportunities are not considered. Information on sustainable development, innovations and information technologies is present in the annual reports in one form or another but it is not clearly described as part of the horizontal principles. Given that these reports are one of the main instruments for providing information to the general public on implementation of the program and on the application of horizontal principles sensitive to society, improvement of the presentation of information on horizontal principles is important for the better communication of the program and for improvement of the positive attitude of society.

Regarding the application of measures for environmental protection, the Managing Authority has the duty to prepare a report for monitoring and control during the implementation of the program, including the measures for prevention, reduction or elimination of the damages on environment resulting from implementation of the program. Such a report was prepared in 2011 and it specified that no information had been reported on the indicators for monitoring and control of the environmental components which led to lack of timely and detailed information. A recommendation was made for improvement of the quality of data collection and reporting which was addressed with the recently announced public contract for working out a Master Plan for Environmental Monitoring.

Horizontal policies are an element of the reporting of the beneficiaries. An exception is the reporting in the field of public procurement which is given special attention in all reports. The application of horizontal principles accompanies the implementation of the project and therefore the provision of operational information on them by the beneficiaries is not necessary beyond the implementation of the regulations. It is appropriate to be reflected on an annual basis and in the preparation of final reports on project implementation.

In terms of possible indicators to measure the horizontal principles, such can be defined for measuring the principles of *sustainable development, employment, and innovations and information technologies*. In the context of the current Operational Program Transport, *competitiveness, equal opportunities and non-discrimination, as well as partnership* could hardly be measured and therefore it is not possible to develop an indicator. Indicators at the level of Operational Program Transport 2007-2013 include several indicators that measure the contribution to compliance with the horizontal policies.

In order to take full account of horizontal practices, it would seem advisable to include in the next programming period additional indicators at program level, and especially at project level. Given the specifics of Operational Program Transport, it would be appropriate to follow the same approach as for the other indicators in the monitoring system of the operational program – specific indicators for each project and general program level indicators. There should not be a large number of indicators. Only in the field of sustainable development more indicators at project level should be provided in order to measure environmental impact. Also, in terms of monitoring efficiency, project level indicators should be reported only in the annual and final project reports and they should be set in the application forms.

The main difficulties in integrating the horizontal principles in Operational Program Transport are mostly related to the lack of clarity on the principles and their integration, both among representatives of the Managing Authority and the beneficiaries of the program. The presence of instructions for integration of horizontal principles in the operational programs is essential in view of the ongoing programming for the next program period 2014-2020.

The report **recommends that**:

In preparation for the next programming period, horizontal principles should be defined and the program should include description of their application during the program implementation.

Regarding infrastructure projects, the following horizontal principles are recommended for consideration and integration in Operational Program Transport:

* *Sustainable development* in the following aspects: environmental protection and safety;
* *Competitiveness* – connection with Trans-European Transport Corridors;
* *Public procurement*;
* *State aid*;
* *Public-private partnership and/or concessions* (if such are provided in the future Operational program);
* *Partnership*;
* *Equal opportunities*.

Other horizontal principles such as *innovations, information technologies and energy efficiency* (as part of the sustainable development) may be considered if they are related to program objectives.

*Employment and socio-economic affordability* (as part of the sustainable development) should be considered if they are to be reported at national or European level, as these principles are not directly related to the objectives of Operational Program Transport.

Regarding projects for preparation of infrastructure projects:

* *Sustainable development* (if it is relevant to the project concerned) in the following aspects: environmental protection and safety
* *Competitiveness* (if it is relevant to the project concerned)
* *Public procurement;*
* *State aid;*
* *Partnership;*
* *Equal opportunities.*

Regarding technical assistance projects:

* *Public procurement*;
* *Partnership*;
* *Equal opportunities*.

It is recommended to carry out the evaluation of the inclusion of horizontal principles in the project proposals for principles that are legally regulated, through a review of eligibility.

Horizontal principles which require information in the application form should be evaluated during evaluation of the project proposals.

In the annual reports on implementation of Operational Program Transport, the information on integration of horizontal principles should be presented in a better structural way commenting the application of all horizontal principles that have been set in the Program.

It is advisable to add an item for reporting the implementation/observation of the following horizontal principles in the formats of the annual and final reports of the beneficiaries:

Infrastructure projects:

* *Sustainable development*: environmental protection and safety
* *Competitiveness:* connection with Trans-European Transport Corridors
* *Public procurement;*
* *Partnership;*
* *Equal opportunities.*

Projects for preparation of infrastructure projects:

* *Sustainable development* (if it is relevant to the project concerned) in the following aspects: environmental protection and safety
* *Competitiveness* (if it is relevant to the project concerned)
* *Public procurement;*
* *Partnership;*
* *Equal opportunities.*

Technical assistance projects:

* *Public procurement*;
* *Partnership*;
* *Equal opportunities*.

It is recommended to define additional indicators in the next programming period to measure horizontal principles’ implementation in Operational Program Transport at program and project levels. It is recommended to include in the system of indicators for Operational Program Transport the following program indicators that should measure the achievement of horizontal principles:

* Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (CO2 and equivalent, kt as a result of interventions by Operational Program Transport)
* Increase of the share of railway and waterway transport in the freight transport

It is recommended that the Central Coordination Unit should develop (further develop) a systematic guidance on the application of horizontal principles in the operational programs. To achieve maximum impact at national level, it is advisable to organize a meeting/discussion on integration of horizontal issues with representatives of all units involved in the management of the operational programs funded by Structural and Cohesion Funds.

After developing guidelines at national level, Managing Authority of Operational Program Transport should organize a presentation for the beneficiaries on matters of integration of horizontal principles in the preparation, management, implementation and reporting of projects.

1. The questions in cursive are suggested by the Consultant in addition to the key questions specified in ToR of the Client [↑](#footnote-ref-1)