

# CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS IN IPA COUNTRIES

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# THE BACKGROUND

## Albanian Rail Network:

- **Past:** Affordable, reliable and accessible option for passengers, and was a cost-effective way of transporting freight.
- **Present:** A decline started in the 1980s, as the lack of maintenance and limited and frequently disrupted services prompted a switch to the roads.
- **Future:** The Albanian Government has prioritized the shift back from road to rail. The Albanian railway company HSH has been asked to help turn things around by promoting an ambitious programme to rebuild and modernize the railways.

# THE PLAN

## Modernization of the Albanian Rail Network:

- Make transport in Albania greener, more competitive, and more sustainable;
- Improve connections with neighboring countries and the European railway network;
- Rebuilding and modernizing the railway sections between:
  - Durrës and Tirana (*including a new link to Tirana's airport*),
  - Vorë and Han i Hotit (*border with Montenegro*),
  - Corridor VIII: Durrës and Rrogozhinë,
  - Corridor VIII: Rrogozhinë and Pogradec, with a new cross-border link with North Macedonia.

# THE CHALLENGE

Linking sea nodes and rail connections with ports and airports, along the TEN-T network...

- Limited experience and staff;
- Implementation of the railway reform (*Unbundling of the Albanian Railways Company*);
- Implementation of Quality Management Systems, Environmental Standards and Health and Safety;
- Alignment with EU Acquis;



# THE ACTION

- The Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy and Albanian Railways (HSH) approached JASPERS to draw up the action plan for capacity strengthening for the management of railway infrastructure projects.
- This will equip it with the necessary skills to implement such an ambitious investment programme.
- The action plan will focus on helping HSH employees to develop the right skills for rail projects so that the company can go ahead with these investments.
- **The Action Plan** aims to demonstrate, through a set of the activities, a feasible and sustainable implementation structure to be gradually established to ensure that the envisaged scope of the project “*Rehabilitation and modernization of the railway line Vore-Han i Hotit*” will be constructed and put into operation in quality and timely manner.

# THE PRODUCT

- JASPERS proposed a **new working environment** that **empowers employees** and attracts the best talent..
- The first priority under the action plan was to upgrade **the skills and expertise** of HSH employees, including the project management and implementation unit.
- **A comprehensive, people-centred, tailor-made training programme** based on the various pillars of expertise and on the needs of HSH's workforce.
- Addressing the employee working conditions.
- A set of measures to enhance employee **cooperation across HSH departments and with external stakeholders.**
- Preparing a **practical manual of relevant procedures** as a reference for staff.

# THE RESULT

- Efficient cooperation between all stakeholders to develop the action plan.
- Excellent management and coordination by JASPERS in bringing together EIB departments, the national authorities, EBRD, and the European Commission.
- Providing support to HSH in identifying potential professionals as railway Project Implementation Units Key Personnel.

*THANK YOU!*

Questions?