



# Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Railway Corridor VIII Rrogozhina – Pogradec

Specific Contract number: AA-010284-001

## Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) July 2024



A project implemented by a  
consortium led by SUEZ Consulting  
(SAFEGE)

## Name of Project:

### **Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania**

**AA-010284-001**

## Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

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*The authors take full responsibility for the contents of this report. The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the view of the European Investment Bank.*

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## PROJECT DATA SUMMARY

<b>ACTION</b>	Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania
<b>REFERENCE NUMBER</b>	AA-010284-001
<b>BENEFICIARY</b>	Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy of Albania
<b>PROMOTER AND END RECIPIENT</b>	Albanian Railways – HSH
<b>COUNTRY</b>	Albania
<b>FINANCIER</b>	European Investment Bank
<b>Budget</b>	EUR 1,680,000
<b>Contract Signature</b>	30/01/2023
<b>Commencement date</b>	10/02/2023
<b>Duration (month)</b>	18
<b>Due date for completion</b>	10/08/2024
<b>Key Experts</b>	KE1 – Team Leader – Aris KARLAFTIS KE2 – Transport infrastructure engineer – Deputy TL – Hector MARTINEZ KE3 – Tunnel engineer – Alejandro Antonio VILLAESCUSA GONZALEZ KE4 – Rail signalling / telecom engineer – José Ignacio VIVAS ORTEGA

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ARA</b>	Albanian Road Authority
<b>ASIG</b>	Albanian State Authority of Geospatial Information
<b>AU</b>	Administrative Unit
<b>CSOs</b>	Civil Society Organisations
<b>DCM</b>	Decision of Council of Ministers
<b>DD</b>	Detail design phase
<b>EIA</b>	Environment Impact Assessment
<b>EIB</b>	European Investment Bank
<b>ERI</b>	Economic Resilience Initiative
<b>ESAP</b>	Environmental and Social Action Plan
<b>ESIA</b>	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
<b>ESMP</b>	Environment and Social Management Plan
<b>HSH</b>	Albanian Railways - Hekurudha Shqiptare
<b>IFI</b>	International Financing Institution
<b>IR</b>	Inception Report
<b>JASPERS</b>	Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions
<b>KE (s)</b>	Key Expert (s)
<b>KOM</b>	Kick-Off Meeting
<b>LARF</b>	Land Acquisition and Resettlement Framework
<b>LGUs</b>	Local Government Units
<b>MIE</b>	Albania Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy
<b>MoM</b>	Minutes of Meeting
<b>MTE</b>	Ministry of Tourism and Environment
<b>NAPA</b>	National Agency of Protected Areas
<b>NEA</b>	National Environment Agency
<b>NKE (s)</b>	Non-Key Expert (s)
<b>NTS</b>	Non-Technical Summary
<b>PAP</b>	Project Affected Person
<b>PD</b>	Preliminary Design
<b>PFS</b>	Pre-Feasibility Study
<b>PIU</b>	Project Implementation Unit
<b>RAP</b>	Resettlement Action Plan
<b>RAPA</b>	Regional Agencies for Protected Areas
<b>REA</b>	Regional Environment Agency
<b>SASPAC</b>	State Agency for Strategic Programming and Assistance Coordination
<b>SEP</b>	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
<b>SSE</b>	EIB Environment and Social Standards
<b>TA</b>	Technical Assistance
<b>TOR</b>	Terms of Reference

<b>KPIs</b>	Key performance indicators
<b>UNECE</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
<b>WBIF</b>	Western Balkans Investment Framework

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Project background

The Government of Albania received a grant from the European Investment Bank (EIB) for the preparation of the preliminary design for the rehabilitation of Corridor VIII, a railway line section from Rrogozhinë to Pogradec (called hereinafter “the Project”). EIB’s initiative is aimed at mobilizing additional financing in support of growth, vital infrastructure, and social cohesion in the Western Balkans regions.

Following a tender procedure for the project AA-010284-001, the consortium SUEZ-ARDANUY (called hereinafter “the Consultant”) was awarded the contract and commissioned to provide services to carry out the Preliminary Design of the Rehabilitation of the (railway) Corridor VIII on the section Rrogozhinë – Pogradec on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2023 with an amount of EUR 1,680,000 to be completed in 18 months.

Under this assignment, assistance for implementing the Project is provided to the Albania Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy as beneficiary, through the Albanian Railways as promoter/end beneficiary of the project.

### 1.2 The ESIA study package and the present document

This Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is part of a series of Project deliverables that will be in the public domain during the Project duration and describes the planned stakeholder consultation and engagement process for the Project.

Other documents that will be made available to the public, once finalized, include the following:

- Preliminary ESIA Report.;
- Preliminary ESIA Non-Technical Summary;
- **Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), this document;**
- Land Acquisition and Livelihood Restoration Framework (LARF);
- Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP); and
- Climate Change Resilience and Vulnerability Assessment Report (CC) Report.

### 1.3 Purpose of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan

To meet EIB requirements for stakeholder engagement and public consultation (2022) and disclosure, this Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been developed and will be implemented by HSH.

The purpose of the SEP is to ensure the identification of all stakeholders with an interest in the Project and to engage these stakeholders throughout the Project. A key function of the SEP is to ensure that issues raised by a stakeholder as part of the implementation of the SEP are fed back to the project to generate corrective actions, revise the objectives, and plan the next steps. The SEP will be periodically updated, as important Project information becomes available, during the Detailed Design and further on the selection of contractors and timelines for construction.

The main stakeholder engagement objectives are to:

- Ensure that adequate and timely information is provided to persons affected or likely to be affected (both directly and indirectly) by the project, have an interest in the project, or influence the project;
- Provide forums and opportunities for stakeholders to voice their concerns and opinions;
- Ensure that comments are received promptly so that they can be taken into account during the decision-making process;
- Establish effective communication and cooperation, facilitating community support;
- Establish effective grievance and mediation mechanisms, thereby reducing and resolving the number of cases referred to judicial authorities.

## 1.4 Phases of Stakeholder Engagement

For this project, the stakeholder engagement has been divided into three phases, each having slightly different objectives, but still within the framework/limits of a Preliminary Design study. The following phases are planned:

- **Phase 1: Scoping/inception report.** The scoping phase contacts stakeholders at a national and municipal level at selected key locations along the chosen route. This phase aims to provide information on the project and generate feedback on the approach, key issues, and key stakeholders to be consulted during the Preliminary Design and Preliminary ESIA processes. This phase also enables the project team to gather additional baseline data.
- **Phase 2: Alternative Assessment and Preliminary ESIA.** Stakeholders will be presented with alternatives and the draft Preliminary ESIA. Information on the project impacts will be presented along with the mitigation measures designed to minimize or, where positive, enhance them during the preparation of the Detailed Design and full ESIA.
- **Phase 3: ESIA Study/disclosure and ongoing engagement.** Phase 3 will be implemented during the ESIA study and includes the Preliminary Design and the full ESIA process. The Promoter will continue to engage with stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle. The methodology for this will be developed and finalized using the information compiled during the ESIA process.

## 1.5 Structure of this document

The SEP is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1: Project background and the purpose of the SEP;
- Chapter 2: Project's overview that includes the action area and the Project's elements;
- Chapter 3: Regulatory framework for SEP, including the regulations/standards adopted for the Project;
- Chapter 4: Identification of Stakeholders and Communication Methods;
- Chapter 5: Stakeholders engagement up to date and stakeholders' engagement program;
- Chapter 6: Grievance Mechanism Principles and Procedures;
- Chapter 7: Roles and responsibilities for Stakeholders' engagement;

- Chapter 8: Monitoring and reporting on Stakeholders' engagement; and
- Chapter 9: Appendices

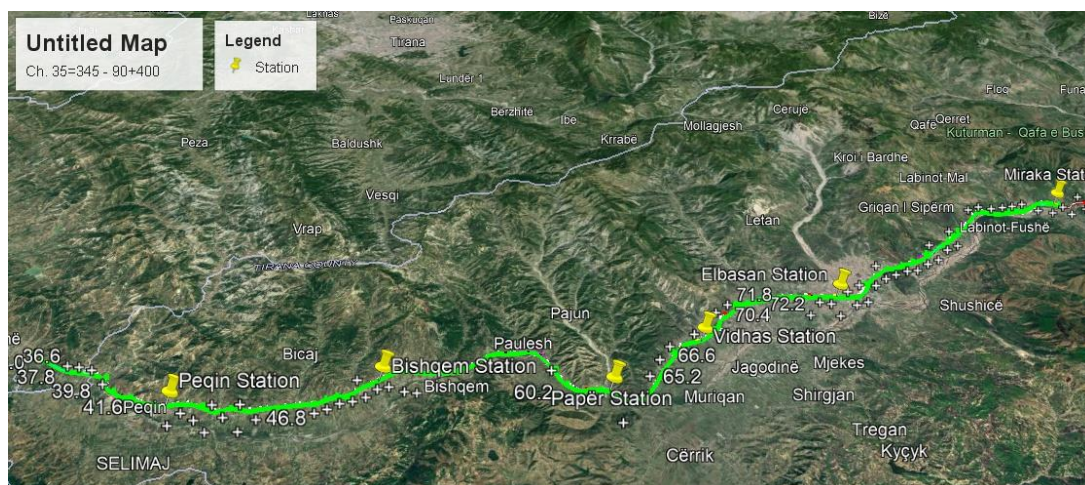
## 2 Project Overview

The railway line Durrës – Rrogozhinë – Elbasan – Pogradec is part of the TEN-T Corridor VIII and serves the intercity transport needs of six municipalities, accounting for almost 20% of the Albanian population. It was constructed between the 1950s and the 1970s. It is approximately 120 km long. The track infrastructure is currently in very poor condition, and in the section where there is traffic operation, this is with very low speeds, due to the lack of essential maintenance of the infrastructure. The current line operates only on the 41-km long section from Rrogozhinë to Elbasan, with maximum speeds of 40 km/h for passengers and 35 km/h for freight trains. Due to the lack of maintenance, the segment from Elbasan to Guri i Kuq (Pogradec) is not in operation, degraded, and covered with vegetation.

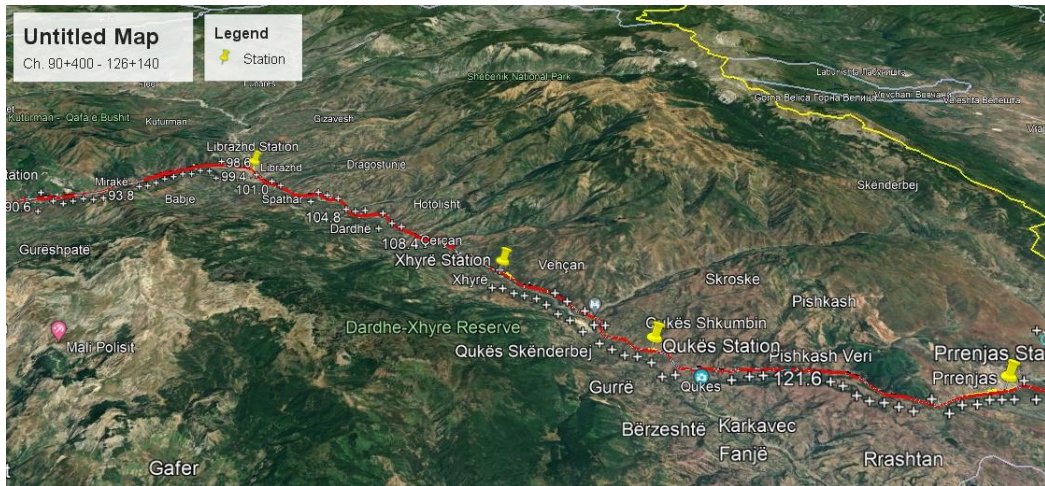
In addition to the existing line rehabilitation, plans envision the connection to Skopje, in North Macedonia and onwards to Sofia in Bulgaria, as part of Corridor VIII.

The railway section Rrogozhinë – Pogradec is designed for train speeds up to 120 km/h in flat areas and 80 km/h in mountainous areas with smaller curves with a radius of 300-400 m. The line is single-track, non-electrified with 1,435mm standard rail width. The railway line passes through 12 railway stations, both passenger and freight.

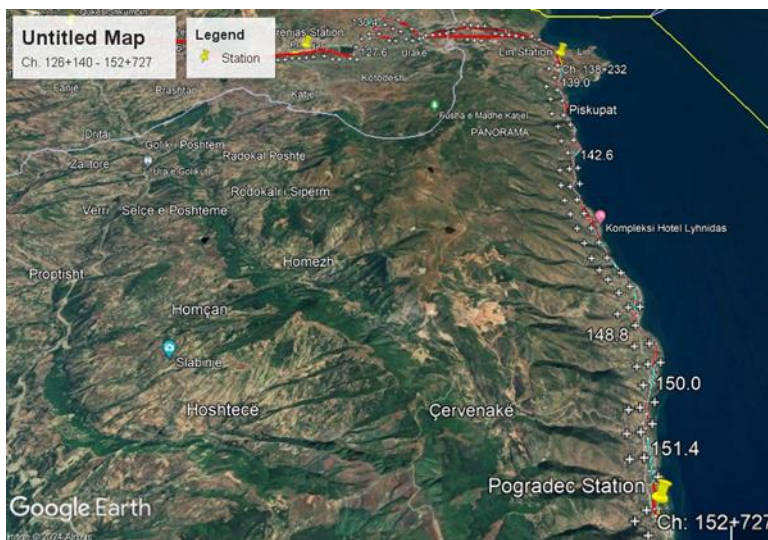
The maps in the figure present the alignment of the railway line by sections Rrogozhinë – Mirakë length of 55km (flat terrains), Mirakë – Prrenjas length of 35.7 km (mountain terrain), and the section Prrenjas – Pogradec length of 26.2 km (mountain terrain and near Ohrid lake).



**Figure 2-1 The map of the first section Rrogozhinë – Mirakë**



**Figure 2-2 Map of the second section Mirake – Prrrenjas**



**Figure 2-3 Map of the third section Prrrenjas – Pogradec**

The railway line Rrogozhinë – Pogradec passes through six municipalities – Rrogozhinë, Peqin, Elbasan, Librazhd, Prrrenjas, and Pogradec. The railway line passes mainly through urban, suburban, and agricultural areas and E&S-sensitive areas. This area has experienced also the migration of population from the mountainous region to flat terrains, which has led to many unauthorized level crossings serving this population. Across the urban areas (i.e., Elbasan, Librazhd, Prrrenjas, and Pogradec) many formal and informal buildings have been built at an inappropriate distance from the railroad. Besides, these buildings have damaged the drainage channels on both sides of the railroad.

Across the environmental and social sensitive areas:

- The segment Mirakë – Librazhd passes along the perimeter of the Nature Managed Reserve Kuturman Qafë – Bushi.
- Lin – Pogradec goes through the Landscape Protected Area of Pogradec. The area is the IBA and Emerald site.
- Along the Lin Peninsula, with its natural and cultural assets such as the springs of Drilon, numerous endemic species made it part of UNESCO.

Given the geographic and economic structure of the area, it can be expected that the main impact of the Project will be on land acquisition, land access, and livelihood restoration.

Additionally, these freight services will assist the future extension to North Macedonia and/or Greece and its connection to the Eastern Balkans, to attract transit freight business.

The rehabilitation and modernization of the railway line on Corridor VIII in Albania (Durrës – Rrogozhinë – Prrenjas – Pogradec), in addition to the rehabilitation and modernization project of the Vorë – Shkodër – Hani i Hotit line connecting to Montenegro and the connection Durrës – Tirana including the new railway line to Tirana International Airport is expected to enhance the demand on Corridor VIII railway line.

## **2.1 Current situation of the railway line**

### **2.1.1 Railway alignment**

There are particular issues that will require special attention during the project implementation, such as small radii of horizontal curves, flooded or eroded areas, condition of the existing stations, review of existing permanent way, superstructure elements (rails, concrete sleepers, ballast), locations of the existing railway intersections across roads, structure/layout and functionality of the existing railway and road networks, vertical alignment of existing railway and locations of fills and cuts, locations of existing bridges, tunnels and identifying problems and implications in the urban areas.

Additionally, other observations include:

- many uncontrolled traffic crossings;
- total lack of fencing and control of access to the train's corridor;
- absence of an alternative/proper road network at several locations. For example, it was observed that the only connection to some properties is through an unavoidable uncontrolled crossing of the rail due to the lack of a frontal road network to drive them to a safe/controlled crossing.

ESIA report presents information related to level crossings, urban areas, and parallel roads with findings and conclusions as well as photographs to illustrate the issues identified. In the ESIA are included maps of the study section railway alignment and the location of stations, cities/villages, and urban areas in the vicinity of the railway line.

### **2.1.2 Main railway structures**

ESIA provides information related to the main structures and observations regarding their existing condition after field inspection. There are 24 tunnels and 15 major and minor bridges with lengths varying from a few meters to 271 meters, as is the case for the Bushtrica Bridge. In the ESIA are described the most common issues that will need to be addressed during the development of the Preliminary Design for the rehabilitation of the railway structures.

## 3 Regulatory Framework

### 3.1 National regulations

In Albania, the “Right to Information” is a constitutional right provided for in the Constitution, Article 23, and is accessible to all without exception<sup>1</sup>.

The Albanian legislation regarding the consultations on the EIA process comprises a national and a transboundary context. The Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Law and Decision of Council of Ministers (DCM) 247/2014 *“On the rules and procedures for consultation with public consultation and public involvement during the environmental assessment process”* provides the consultation requirements in a national context. Article 14 of the EIA Law provides for the public and stakeholders to be involved in the EIA process.

Similarly, EIA Law and DCM 598/2015, *“On the rules and procedures for consultation with public and stakeholders, and public consultations during the environmental assessment process in transboundary context”* regulate the public information in transboundary context.

Both EIA Law and DCM 247/2014 are in line with the EIA Directive, while DCM 598/2015 complies with the Espoo Convention<sup>2</sup>. In summary, the procedures for disclosure and consultations, as foreseen in these regulations include the following steps:

- The public is informed about details of disclosure of the draft plan/document (where the hard copy is available for review, the dates and time when it can be reviewed) through the media, and citizens/organizations are invited to send comments and/or attend public hearings.
- Public hearings are held in an appropriate local venue (i.e. city hall) and the plan/document is presented.
- Comments received from all stakeholders are processed and the plan/document is revised to reflect them.
- A report on which comments have been adopted and which have not, with a justification, is delivered together with the draft plan/document to relevant authorities which judge whether the comments have been meaningfully considered and addressed.

It must be underlined that according to the national regulations, the public hearings are organized by the National Environment Agency (NEA) as part of the ESIA public disclosure. Public hearings are held only during the completion of the Detailed Design and full ESIA package submission. That means that no such hearings will be held during the Preliminary Design and Preliminary ESIA.

Apart from the above, other national laws that foresee public consultation and involvement, include:

- Law No 119/2014, dated 18.09.2014, “On the right of information”; which defines the rules for ensuring public access to information.

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<sup>1</sup> The information allowed for publication is explicitly provided in Article 7 of Law No. 119/2014 “On the Right to Information”.

<sup>2</sup> UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Trans boundary Context (Espoo Convention) available at [https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1991/02/19910225%2008-29%20PM/Ch\\_XXVII\\_04p.pdf](https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1991/02/19910225%2008-29%20PM/Ch_XXVII_04p.pdf)

- Law No 146/2014, “On Notification and Public Consultation” regulates the process of notifying the public on drafting legislative work and other strategic national and local documents; furthermore it i) establishes the Commissioner for the right of Information to address all complaints; ii) makes obligatory the Transparency Programmes for all public institutions; iii) provides for Public Consultation Coordinator in every public institution and iv) sets up a new unique electronic register, where yearly public reports on all planned acts, number of planned public hearings shall be published.

### 3.2 EU regulations

EIA Directive 2014/52/EU provides for the approach to public consultation. Article 6 of the Directive stipulates, “Member States shall take the measures necessary to ensure that the authorities likely to be concerned by the project because of their specific environmental responsibilities or local and regional competences are allowed to express their opinion on the information supplied by the developer and on the request for development consent. To that end, Member States shall designate the authorities to be consulted, either in general terms or on a case-by-case basis. The information gathered under Article 5 shall be forwarded to those authorities. Detailed arrangements for consultation shall be laid down by the Member States”.

Given Albania’s status as the candidate country<sup>3</sup> and the process of approximation of Albanian legislation to the EU legislation, and EU directives will be observed during preparation and implementation of this Project.

As a result, due to the full approximation of Albanian Law on EIA<sup>4</sup> with the EU EIA Directive, and DCMs 247/2014 and 598/2015 which provide for the necessary information and consultations on the EIA process, then, according to EU regulations, the consultations for all stages of the EIA will be arranged based on the Albanian requirements.

### 3.3 EIB Requirements

EIB actively promotes the right to access to information, as well as public consultation and participation. Standard 2 – Stakeholder Engagement of “EIB Environmental and Social Standards”<sup>5</sup> (EIB, 2022) affirms the EIB’s expectation of engagement to uphold an open, transparent, and accountable dialogue with all relevant stakeholders at the local level. Concerning the EU regulations, the document provides the following:

- “For all projects subject to an assessment according to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive, coordinated and/or supplemented with any applicable specific assessments, as defined in Standard 1 – Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Impacts and Risks, the promoter shall support the competent authorities in carrying out the relevant public participation process, including in a transboundary context where applicable, to seek to achieve outcomes that are consistent with this Standard, and provide to the EIB upon request:
  - Evidence that the relevant information is disclosed promptly, electronically,

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<sup>3</sup> Albania was awarded candidate status in June 2014 by the EU

<sup>4</sup> Law 10440/2011 “On EIA”

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.eib.org/attachments/strategies/environmental\\_and\\_social\\_practices\\_handbook\\_en.pdf](https://www.eib.org/attachments/strategies/environmental_and_social_practices_handbook_en.pdf)

and/or by other appropriate means, allowing the public to access it easily and effectively;

- Information about the detailed arrangements of the consultation process, including in a transboundary context, where applicable, to ensure its meaningfulness as per the definition in this Standard;
- A summary of the results of the overall consultation process and how those results have been incorporated or otherwise addressed, as reflected in the decision(s) from the relevant competent authorities which satisfies/satisfies the requirements set out in the EU legal framework.

These standards and guidelines all adopt a similar approach to stakeholder engagement. They underscore the importance of stakeholder engagement in building constructive relationships that are essential for environmental and social issues to be managed successfully.

### 3.4 Gaps between national and EIB requirements

The national framework in Albania is broadly compatible with the EIB standards for public consultation and stakeholder engagement, but there remain gaps to be addressed. Although there are several documents, laws, and DCMs (as outlined above) that provide for stakeholder engagement, public participation, and consultation in the decision-making process, no detailed SEP is developed as part of the EIA process. As per Albanian regulations, the public is informed about the Project through the NEA and its regional offices, and in the case of full EIA, one public hearing is organized by the NEA. Once again, it should be stressed that the Albanian regulations require that a full EIA is prepared only during the Detailed Design Stage.

Furthermore, the requirements are scattered across various documents and laws. The requirement of an effective procedure or mechanism by which people can make comments or raise grievances beyond the formal administrative and judicial grievance settings is also recognized as a shortcoming in the national framework compared to the EIB requirements.

Therefore, this SEP has taken into consideration all the requirements and has produced a plan that avoids duplication of processes, and grievance mechanisms on one hand but on the other complies with the more stringent EIB standards and requirements of stakeholder engagement.

Gaps between Albanian legislation and EIB requirements have been identified, while mitigation measures are also presented in the table below.

**Table 3-1 Key differences between Albania Legal Framework and EIB Requirements**

Key Differences between Albanian legislation and EIB requirements	Mitigation measures
<b>EIB requires the development of a Stakeholder Engagement Plan, to guide the disclosure of Project documents and consultations with affected people and other stakeholders.</b>	SEP is prepared and updated during the Preliminary Design phase and will be constantly updated during the future project development phases (DD and full ESIA, construction, operation, and reinstatement).
<b>EIB requires a very proactive approach in obtaining public opinion and identifying and engaging with all stakeholders, as opposed to a reactive approach, i.e. responding only to comments/questions submitted and issues raised, after they have been submitted/raised.</b>	Identification of individuals, households, communities, and other entities that may be affected by the project and disclosure of communication methods are described in Section 4 of this SEP.  Considering needs and suggestions/opinions of affected communities as input to feed into the design outcomes.

Key Differences between Albanian legislation and EIB requirements	Mitigation measures
<b>Particular attention is required by EIB in identifying and engaging with vulnerable groups.</b>	Vulnerable people will be identified during the socio-economic surveys in the project area, but also through discussion with local authorities as described in Sections 4 and 6.  As no socio-economic surveys are foreseen during the PD and Preliminary ESIA process, the ESIA team will perform a rather generic survey.
<b>Consultations with stakeholders, according to EIB requirements, should be ongoing for the duration of the Project as opposed to consultations concentrated during the permitting period.</b>	Specific communication methods are proposed in Section 4 of this SEP.
<b>The establishment and implementation of a Project dedicated grievance mechanism (accessible for all stakeholders, including vulnerable groups) is required by EIB, in addition to national administrative and judicial grievance procedures.</b>	Project dedicated grievance mechanism and procedures provided in Section 7 of this SEP.

### 3.5 EBRD Performance Requirement 10: Stakeholder Engagement, Information Disclosure, and Grievance Mechanisms

PR 10 of the EBRD sets clear expectations for stakeholder engagement, information disclosure, and grievance mechanisms to ensure that projects financed by the bank are developed and implemented in a socially inclusive and transparent manner. These requirements aim to build trust, address community concerns, and promote sustainable development outcomes through effective stakeholder engagement practices.

Consultation and Participation:

- PR 10 requires project proponents to engage with stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle to understand their concerns, needs, and expectations regarding the project's potential environmental and social impacts.
- Stakeholder consultation should begin at an early stage of project development and continue regularly throughout the project's lifecycle.
- Stakeholders include affected communities, local authorities, civil society organizations, and other relevant parties.

Information Disclosure:

- Project proponents are required to provide stakeholders with timely, relevant, and understandable information about the project, its potential impacts, and the decision-making processes that affect them.
- Information should include project plans, environmental and social assessments, mitigation measures, and any other relevant documents that enable stakeholders to participate effectively in the consultation process.

Grievance Mechanisms:

- PR 10 mandates the establishment of grievance mechanisms that are accessible to stakeholders, particularly those who may be adversely affected by the project.

- Grievance mechanisms should provide stakeholders with a clear and accessible process for raising concerns, submitting complaints, and seeking resolution of issues related to the project's environmental and social performance.

#### Key Principles and Practices

- PR 10 emphasizes the importance of inclusive stakeholder engagement, ensuring that all relevant stakeholders, including vulnerable and marginalized groups, have the opportunity to participate in the consultation process.
- Project proponents are expected to demonstrate accountability by documenting stakeholder engagement activities, addressing stakeholder concerns, and incorporating stakeholder feedback into project planning and decision-making.
- The EBRD encourages project proponents to continuously evaluate and improve their stakeholder engagement practices based on feedback received from stakeholders and lessons learned from previous projects.

#### Implementation and Monitoring

- Project proponents are responsible for developing and implementing stakeholder engagement plans that detail how stakeholders will be consulted, the objectives of engagement, and the methods for information disclosure.
- The EBRD requires project proponents to monitor stakeholder engagement activities, including the effectiveness of grievance mechanisms, and to report on their performance in annual environmental and social reports. This helps ensure compliance with PR 10 and promotes continuous improvement in stakeholder engagement practices.

## 4 Identification of Stakeholders and Communication Methods

To develop an effective SEP, it is necessary to determine exactly who the stakeholders are and understand their priorities and objectives for the proposed project. Therefore, identification and categorization of the Project's stakeholders is based mainly on the following:

- Key stakeholders (promoter, beneficiary, lenders, etc.);
- Environmental and social characteristics of the project area;
- Project's main elements (including technical components, activities, associated facilities, main impacts, land requirements);
- Regulatory Framework;
- Other plans/programs/projects.

The identification and categorization of the project's stakeholders would be as follows:

**Table 4-1 Stakeholder categorization**

No.	Issue	Type of stakeholder	Identified Potential stakeholder
1	The key, already involved, stakeholders	Stakeholders already provided in the ToRs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- European Investment Bank (EIB)</li> <li>- Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy of Albania (MIE)</li> <li>- Albanian Railways (HSH)</li> <li>- Ministry of Finance and Economy</li> <li>- Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MTE)</li> </ul>
2	Environmental and social characteristics of the project area	Institutions responsible for the receiving biophysical and man-made environment and the locals.	<p>Institutions responsible for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Designated sites (natural, cultural heritage, etc.)</li> <li>- Local government and administrative units;</li> <li>- Related public infrastructure (water, waste, power, roads, telecommunication, drainage, territory planning, etc.)</li> </ul> <p>Local groups, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local population;</li> <li>- Indigenous and or vulnerable groups;</li> <li>- Local businesses;</li> <li>- Local/national NGOs; etc.</li> </ul>
3	<p>Project's elements (components, associated facilities, activities, and main potential impacts).</p> <p>About the Project, its elements include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Components: structure, superstructure, signaling, stations;</li> <li>- Associated facilities: power supply; facilities for signalling, telecommunication, etc.;</li> </ul>	The local population, land owners, and institutions/companies are responsible for the receiving bio-physical and man-made environment, which may be affected by the project development phases.	<p>Components and associated facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Institutions /companies responsible for these elements,</li> <li>- local population, CSOs, vulnerable groups,</li> <li>- local government and administrative units,</li> <li>- land owners within the property whose will be located these elements, etc.;</li> </ul>

No.	Issue	Type of stakeholder	Identified Potential stakeholder
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potential impacts from climate change; construction and operational phases on ground and surface waters; biodiversity and protected areas; drainage and irrigation networks; local population; vulnerable groups; local businesses; etc.</li> </ul>		<p>Project's activities and main potential impacts. The affected stakeholders include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Institutions responsible for the designated sites (natural, cultural heritage, etc.); Local government and specific administrative units; related public infrastructure (water, waste, power, roads, drainage, telecommunication, territory planning, etc.);</li> <li>- Local groups, including: Local population; Indigenous and or vulnerable groups; Local businesses; Local/national CSOs; etc.</li> </ul>
4	Regulatory Framework	Institutions responsible for applying National, EU, and Lender (EIB) regulations/standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EU: As Albania is an EU candidate country, the EU regulations relate to the national regulations. EU Delegation is part of the key stakeholders;</li> <li>- National level: Institutions responsible for carrying out the EIA process (Ministry of Tourism and Environment, National Environmental Agency, Regional Environmental Agency, National Agency of Protected Areas, etc.);</li> <li>- Lender: EIB</li> </ul>
5	Other plans/programs/projects	Relevant stakeholders advancing other plans/programs/projects from the interaction with which could result in cumulative impacts. The Project must comply with the national and local development plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The National Territory Development Agency, which is responsible for the urban territory development at the country level;</li> <li>- State Agency for Strategic Programming and Assistance Coordination (SASPAC), which is responsible for overall coordination of National Single Project Pipeline and infrastructure investments in Albania;</li> <li>- The affected municipalities, which are responsible for the urban territory development, tourism, etc. at the municipality level;</li> <li>- National/local institutions/companies/donors responsible for other plans/programs/projects related to the project's components (especially on roads investments, water supply and irrigation networks, etc.)</li> </ul>

The purpose of stakeholder identification is to identify and prioritize Project stakeholders for consultation. Stakeholder identification is an ongoing process, and thus key stakeholders will continue to be identified during different stages of the Project.

As a result of the stakeholder mapping, Project stakeholders are categorized into two main categories:

- a) Primary stakeholders are the individuals and groups who are affected directly by the Project; and
- b) Secondary stakeholders are those parties that have influence on but are not necessarily directly impacted by the Project.

The key stakeholders identified are presented in Table 4-2.

**Table 4-2 List of key stakeholders identified**

Stakeholder Category	Type	Name	Impact/Influence
Primary	Project Shareholders/ Internal Stakeholders	MIE project promoter Albanian Railways (HSH), project beneficiary Ministry of Finance and Economy, lender	This group will directly influence and impact the project through the decision-making process.
	Communities and businesses in settlements near the railway alignment	Local population (including vulnerable groups i.e. women, pensioners, elderly, and any formal and informal persons and businesses) located in the directly affected and neighbouring areas where works will take place.	The communities and businesses may be affected due to impacts from construction works and as a result of temporary loss of access/ construction related disturbances.  The communities may also be impacted by noise and limited access during the operation stage due to train operations, etc).
Secondary	Governmental environmental authorities	Ministry of Tourism and Environment National Environment Agency National Agency for Protected Areas Regional Agencies for Protected Areas (RAPAs), responsible for managing the protected areas such as the Nature Protected Landscape of Pogradec, which includes also the Albanian part of the Ohrid Lake	Responsible authorities for managing the national EIA process and the nature and cultural protected sites.
	Local authorities / Municipalities along the railway alignment	Municipality departments of social protection, responsible for social assistance programs; as well as social administrators and child protection units	Will not directly impact the scope of this Project but will be consulted about vulnerable people and the Project's social issues relevant to the Project area.
		Municipality departments for urban planning, responsible for implementation of Local Development Plans and infrastructure works planning	The railway line Rrogozhinë - Pogradec is part of the General Local Development Plans of the six municipalities along the alignment of this segment
		Municipal structures responsible for public information, information offices	Will not directly impact the scope of this Project, important to raise community awareness on the safe usage of railway transport
	Other Agencies	National Territory Development Agency: responsible for urban territory development and monitoring at country level	The railway line Rrogozhinë - Pogradec is part of the General Local Development Plans of the 6 municipalities along the alignment of this segment
	Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)	A list of CSOs to be prepared at the next stage of this project	Will not directly impact the scope or construction of this Project but will be consulted about the Project's area biodiversity values as well as social issues relevant to the Project area.
	Contractors/Suppliers	Contractors and equipment suppliers on the Project.	This group will directly participate in the implementation of the Project.
	Construction workers	Local individuals, residents in Municipalities (settlements) along the railway alignment	Hired by contractors of this Project to carry out the construction works.
	Supervising Engineer	Works Supervision Engineer	Will monitor and guide the implementation of the works and

Stakeholder Category	Type	Name	Impact/Influence
			implementation of environmental management plans, and other plans of the Contractors
	Local emergency services	Health services, Fire Department, Police Department, Accident & Emergency	Need to be informed on the planned construction works, and consulted on any public disturbance/access issues.
	Owners and operators of utilities	Telecommunication system, water pipelines, drainage and irrigation channels	Need to be informed and consulted in case they need to plan any repairs to their network during construction works
Lender	Lending Organisation	EIB	This organization will provide the loan to carry out the Project, alongside certain environmental, social, and technical requirements.
	Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions	JASPERS	Advisory support to HSH during project preparation (project maturing)
	Others	European Union Delegation to Albania	Part of the Corridor 8 railway alignment maturing studies in Albania has been prepared through WBIF funds. EUDs are observers for the use of WBIF funds. IPA III contributes grant funding to the WBIF. The EUDs are responsible for managing IPA III for the programming period 2021-2028

The stakeholder identification process examined if any groups of affected people might be more vulnerable to current and potential Project impacts. During the assessments and the preparation of this SEP, it will be assessed whether there will be any groups who might be affected by the projects differently due to their gender, age, religion, physical or mental disability, or other attributes.

**Table 4-3 Stakeholder interest and role in the project**

Stakeholders	Interest and role in the project
<b>National</b>	
Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MEI)	MIE project promoter. The Ministry has a much broader responsibility as in addition to energy it includes transport, spatial planning, and telecommunication.
PIU	The Project Implementation Unit (PIU) set up within the HSH is the implementing agency and is responsible for internal and external communications regarding the Project and will be the main contact point for affected people.
HSH	Albanian Railways (HSH) is the project beneficiary.
Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MTE)	Supervision of the ESIA procedure and approval of the ESIA report.
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)	The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) is responsible for managing water resources, irrigation, drainage, and flood protection. The Ministry coordinates priorities among different purposes and different users of water resources.
Ministry of Culture (MoC)	Protection and conservation of the National cultural heritage (shall be informed in chance findings during the construction activities). Provide information on cultural heritage in the project area.

Stakeholders	Interest and role in the project
National Environment Agency (NEA)	Supervising the implementation of the ESIA procedure and review and approval of the ESIA report. Supervising public engagement during the ESIA process.
National Territorial Planning Agency (NTPA)	National Territorial Planning Agency (NTPA) is a public institution responsible for spatial and urban planning, crucial steps in the development process for infrastructure projects, within MEI.
National Agency for the Protected Areas (NAPA)	NAPA is a public body under the MTE, which is responsible for the management of protected areas.
National Institute of Cultural Heritage– (NICH) Ministry of Culture	Protection and conservation of the National cultural heritage; shall be informed of chance findings during the construction activities. Provide information on the cultural heritage in the project area.
<b>Regional</b>	
Regional Environmental Agency, Berat, Korçë, Elbasan Regions	Supervision and implementation of the public consultation process. Assist and publish the Public Hearing notice and the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) on its webpage (hosted on the NEA website). Attend the Public Hearing process and report to NEA about the compliance of the project with the public consultation procedure. Certification of the public consultation procedure.
Drainage Board	The Drainage Board is responsible for managing irrigation, drainage, and flood protection.
Regional Agency for the Protected Areas (RAPA)	RAPA is a public body under the NAPA, which is responsible for the management of the Regional protected areas.
Elbasan and Korçë Prefectures	For Civil Emergencies.
Elbasan and Korçë Counties	For regional cooperation and development.
<b>Local</b>	
Rrogozhinë Municipality Peqin Municipality Elbasan Municipality Librazhd Municipality Prenjas Municipality Pogradec Municipality	Elected representative of the community, reporting key concerns/opinions to the Government. Role in the facilitation of the public engagement and hearing process. Responsible for the development of Local plans in interaction with the Project.
Technical Directories of Rrogozhinë, Peqin, Elbasan, Librazhd, Prenjas, and Pogradec Municipalities	<p>Management of the local resources within the given competencies and technical support to the mayor's decision-making. Role in the facilitation of the public engagement and hearing process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Urban planning directory (includes also environment), provides information for the land use plan in the project area. Provide information to protect the environment in the project study area.</li> <li>- Agriculture, forestry, irrigation, and drainage directory, provide information for the land use in the project study area. Provide information for the drainage system and plans in the project study area.</li> <li>- Water supply enterprise provides information for the water supply systems in the project study area.</li> </ul>

<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Interest and role in the project</b>
Local communities in the project area Land owners and users; Informal owners and users; Business owners; Vulnerable groups and individuals; Stakeholders impacted by construction activities.	Settlements and households, that might be impacted by land loss, economic displacement, and disturbance from construction activities.

## 5 Communication methods

A variety of communication methods were identified during SEP preparation to be used as appropriate for each group of stakeholders. In general, key communication channels include:

- Public (open) meetings
- Individual meetings
- Focus group meetings
- Announcements in media
- Provision of general information on noticeboards at key public locations
- Regular mail/ e-mail correspondence

Publication of relevant project information on the websites of:

- MIE,
- Municipalities of Rrogozhinë, Peqin, Elbasan, Librazhd, Prrenjas and Pogradec,
- Developer HSH.

Each method has advantages and disadvantages and is usually suited for a particular audience. Table 5-1 provides an overview of the communication methods/ tools that are considered.

**Table 5-1 Overview of SEP communication tools**

Communication tool	Description
<b>Press releases/ announcements for media</b>	This communication method includes new facts and information about the project. Press releases/ announcements provide a response to the so-called 5W questions (who, what, where, when, and why (and how)). This method is simple, but not always effective because it depends on the filtering of information in the media.
<b>Interviews</b>	The advantage of this method is that it can be prepared for specific target groups. Important to identify in advance the target group and plan what needs to be said and to whom.
<b>Internet/ web page / social media</b>	It can be very effective if it is used regularly and promptly. It enables constant access to information and research, depending on the interests of specific target groups.
<b>Presentations</b>	The purpose of the presentation is to introduce the project and the results of the work.
<b>Focus group discussions</b>	This method uses presentations and interviews but is intended for target groups and a smaller number of participants. The method is useful for collecting information and opinions of the target group and allows two-way communication.
<b>Direct dialogue (open hearings)</b>	The method of direct dialogue is desirable to establish direct two-way communication with the target group. Allows a fast and successful exchange of information and is an efficient method for collecting the opinions of the target group.

The methods/ tools described above, as well as their advantages and disadvantages related to the defined objective, were considered in preparing the SEP.

The following are anticipated to be used for consultations and disclosure of information as part of the ESIA process for the proposed project:

- Regular mail/e-mail correspondence with national/local authorities;
- Interviews with key informants (i.e. Heads of communities, village elderly, and other knowledgeable people at the local level).
- Press releases/announcements in national/local media, and social media along with leaflets and posters, etc.;
- Focus group discussions, i.e., with vulnerable groups, women, and the elderly;
- Presentations of the main project features, impacts, and mitigation measures;
- Publications – Preliminary ESIA, draft and Final ESIA, Non-technical summary;
- Open hearings, at municipality and community level.

The public hearings and the detailed socio-economic surveys will be carried out only following the Detailed Design and full ESIA processes, which belong to the next stage of the project's development.

A leaflet with clear and comprehensive information accessible to stakeholders might be prepared following the structured outline for the content:

***Project Disclosure Leaflet***

[Project Name]

Developer: [Developer Name]

Funded by: European Investment Bank (EIB) / European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

1. Project Overview: Briefly describe the project's objectives, location, and scope of activities.
2. Commitment to Stakeholders: Explain the importance of engaging with stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle.
3. Expected Benefits: Outline the anticipated positive impacts of the project on the local community, economy, and environment.
4. Environmental and Social Considerations: Summarize findings from the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), including potential impacts and proposed mitigation measures. Describe how the project will affect local communities, including any plans for resettlement, compensation, or livelihood restoration (if applicable).
5. Stakeholder Consultation Process: Detail how stakeholders have been and will be consulted, including methods, timelines, and opportunities for feedback.
6. Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM): Provide information on how stakeholders can raise concerns or complaints through the Grievance Redress Mechanism.
7. Project Phases: Outline key project phases, timelines, and milestones from planning to completion.
8. Contact Information: Provide contact details for the project developer or designated

representative handling stakeholder inquiries.

9. Further Information: Direct stakeholders to additional resources such as project websites, documents, or public meetings where more detailed information can be accessed.

## 6 Stakeholder Engagement Activities Conducted to Date

### 6.1 SE during Inception Stage

During the Inception stage, the objective of the project team was to engage with various stakeholder groups to inform them about the project and to understand their views towards it.

The Project team aims to continue with a proven and active stakeholder engagement approach through regular dialogue with relevant regulatory bodies, designated experts, affected communities, and other stakeholders of the project. The process of stakeholder engagement and identification of potentially affected communities is, therefore, ongoing.

The most important engagement activities undertaken during this stage are summarised in the Table 6-1.

**Table 6-1 Meetings during the Inception Stage**

Stakeholder	Date	Method of engagement	Main issues discussed
<b>National stakeholders</b>			
<b>Albanian Road Authority (ARA)</b>	29/03/23	Meeting	<p>Inform on the project scope of work and discuss ARA projects that might affect the preparation of PD;</p> <p>DD for the Elbasan – Librazhd – Qafë Thanë highway has been completed and construction of LOT I, around 5 km has started with the connection point in Labinot; LOT II will be announced soon for construction. In collaboration with North Macedonia authorities, a linking connection up to the border is foreseen to be tendered and constructed but the preparation of relevant documents has not yet started. The connection point is foreseen to be located from Qukes up to Rrajce;</p> <p>Regarding the Elbasan Road bypass, another project of interest, DD is under preparation and the initial alignment of the road will be shared with the project team;</p> <p>A planned highway, part of Corridor VIII which will lead from Elbasan to Lekaj, close to Rrogozhinë, is in the project pipeline of ARA and needs to be considered.</p>
<b>Municipal / Local Stakeholders</b>			
<b>Municipality of Elbasan</b>	23/03/23	Meeting	<p>Inform Elbasan’s Municipality about the start of the project and identify any current or future projects and plans that could affect the development of the Preliminary Design of this railway line in the Municipality of Elbasan. As per the approved General Local Development Plan, the railway alignment is proposed to be built on the other side of the Shkumbin River. The existing railway station is planned to be reconstructed, and to be a multimodal transport interchanger including a bus station; ensure Municipality support for upcoming stages – data, suggestions on usage of unauthorized level crossing, etc.;</p>

As a note, the full summary of consultations will include MoMs along with a list of participants, and photos from the meetings/discussions with various stakeholders and shall be available on request from the HSH.

### 6.2 SE Activities during Alternative Assessment

The SE activities aimed to understand the views of interested parties so that these can be taken into account in the project design and implementation. In this section are presented the activities undertaken in the engagement process for the Project.

The meetings were organized in collaboration with HSH, while the present in the meetings were experts in technical, environmental, and social. For all formal meetings, the following documents have been prepared and filed:

- Formal invitations sent with signature and the protocol/reference number. The invitations provided background information for the project, as well as the aim of the meeting, discussion points, proposal for time, date, and venue;
- Minutes of the meetings in English and Albanian;
- The attendance lists signed by participants in the meetings;

All the above documents have been transferred by the consultant to the responsible authority for the maintenance of the records in a Master database. Table 6-2 presents the meetings and a summary of the issues discussed and questions and concerns of local authorities in all municipalities affected by the project.

**Table 6-2 Meetings during Alternative Assessment**

Stakeholder	Date	Method of engagement	Main issues discussed
<b>Local stakeholders (Representatives of Municipalities)</b>			
<b>Rrogozhinë</b>	15 Sep 2023	Meeting	Discussed the access of the dwellings along the railway on the level crossings at (KP 35+600, KP 36+000, and KP 38+394). Municipality representatives agreed with the solution of the design team.
<b>Peqin</b>	15 Sep 2023	Meeting	The focus of the meeting was the closure of the level crossings at KP 39+550, KP 39+984, KP 39+984, KP 43+028, KP 43+325, KP 44+969, KP 47+498, KP 48+136 and KP 51+700. The proposed solutions were accepted in principle by the participants.
<b>Elbasan</b>	14 Sep 2023	Meeting	The main point of discussion in Elbasan Municipality was the request of the mayor for the displacement of the rail station outside the city with the justification that the General Local Plan, is anticipating the rerouting of a segment of the railway line and displacement of the train station in an area outside the city near the Shkumbin River. This plan has gone through the approval process in the relevant institutions and the municipality was interested in the development of this project. That project design can be accessed in a link published by the municipality.  The project team answered that in the frame of the preliminary design, it will be considered a connection node that will ensure access to the existing railway route with the proposed project in the future.
<b>Librazhd</b>	18 Sep 2023	Meeting	The main points of discussion in Librazhd Municipality  Illegal constructions in Mirakë station (a fence wall of a house) do not present any problem since the wall does not have a permit and it will be demolished according to the laws in force.  The area of the train station is free from non-formal constructions and the houses are far from the railway. The station building is degraded and part of it is used for services that do not have permits or contracts. Even these premises can be easily vacated.  In this segment, there is also an uninhabited apartment that is very close to the railway, which can be demolished as it is without a permit.  The municipality is looking for a reasonable and safe solution for the LC at point KP 104+610 because it is widely used by the community of Dardhë village. After this LC, a footbridge was built that connects the village with the National Road. The project has provided an underpass to ensure access to this area.

Stakeholder	Date	Method of engagement	Main issues discussed
			<p>Near the train station, there is an entity that produces spare parts for cars (steering wheels), but it is thought that it does not interfere with the area of the train station.</p> <p>Information was exchanged on waste classified as dangerous for the environment.</p> <p>The presence of asbestos and minerals from the former warehouse buildings of HSH near the train station presents an environmental issue that needs to be solved.</p> <p>According to the representatives of the municipality, the current disposal area of debris/inert is at the premises of the former State Enterpriser of Construction, about 2.5 km from the Librazhd train station.</p>
<b>Prrenjas</b>	18 Sep 2023	Meeting	<p>The railway segment that passes through the Prrenjas municipality presents several problems related to:</p> <p>Presence of a channel at KP 121+910 &amp; 122+060, that passes over the protective structure of the entrance/exit of the tunnel. The Prrenjas Municipality was aware of the channel that passes over the protective structure of the entrance/exit of the tunnel. In the construction permit of the relevant subject, the channel is not foreseen in that way and the subject is aware of the violation. That private subject must find technical solutions to eliminate this violation.</p> <p>There are constructions near the railway route along the railway segment in the area of Rajce (KP 127 - KP 133). In some cases, the houses are near the railway with direct access to the railway line. In this area, level crossings through the railway in the agricultural lands were also observed. These crossings are widespread since the railway has not been in operation for years.</p> <p>In KP 129+550, a water pipe that crosses the railway was identified.</p> <p>The project team is working to find acceptable solutions for overpasses and underpasses that will ensure the safe movement of people and vehicles.</p> <p>Currently, the municipality of Perrenjasi manages the urban waste in the incinerator of Elbasan, while for the disposal of inert /debris, they use a square approved by the Municipal Council, which is located 5 km away from the Perrenjasi Train Station.</p> <p>Around the train station in Perrenjas, there are destroyed and abandoned buildings owned by HSH (such as warehouses for mineral deposits, chemical fertilizers, and other goods) which have generated debris that shall be removed, and the disposed of goods left in these buildings. Most of the roofs of these buildings are covered with asbestos, a dangerous material for the health of the population especially when we demolish it.</p> <p>The area of the train station is degraded, but construction has not been allowed in the area, except for some small facilities that are without permission and illegal (3-4 service units for repairs). The area has enough space to expand the freight station, especially the storage space for goods (containers), and the municipality expressed its support in case of a proposal for the expansion of the territory of the train station.</p> <p>The objects constructed along the railway line in Rajcë were not legalized. The municipality will work with the community to build parallel roads to ensure access after the close of the illegal level crossings.</p>
<b>Pogradec</b>	18 Sep 2023		<p>The main issues discussed in the meeting were related to:</p> <p>Information for the area of the train station, occupied by a subject which has a contract for the trade of iron-nickel up to 2025.</p> <p>The cleaning of waste around the station, as well as the lake, is also a request of UNESCO since the area along Lake Ohrid has the status of an area protected by UNESCO.</p>

Stakeholder	Date	Method of engagement	Main issues discussed
			<p>The municipality's specialists required that the underpasses should also provide for the passage of the fire brigade., a request that should be taken into consideration in the design of all underpasses.</p> <p>The municipality recommended that instead of level crossings be underpasses, that is in the function of tourism and business development and in line with the urban plan.</p> <p>The municipality of Pogradec is working on a study that will precede a large project for the treatment of black water along the lake line. It is recommended that during the design phase of the project, information is exchanged in such a way that there is no conflict.</p> <p>According to urban planning specialists, the construction of tourist resorts is without permission. They have built level crossings that are irregular and have not taken into consideration the technical requirements for the distance from the railway. Where possible, level crossings will be closed immediately and the possibility of providing access through underpasses will be considered.</p> <p>The area near the station is considered informal by the municipality's specialists, which has damaged the railway line, especially during the time that the railway has been out of service. To the knowledge of the municipality employees, these objects are not in the legalization process.</p>

### 6.3 SE Activities During Preliminary ESIA Study

The main stakeholder engagement activities at this stage were a follow-up of the activities conducted during the alternatives assessment. National and Local Stakeholders were informed formally by the beneficiary of the project HSH, and by the respective consultant responsible for the preliminary design of the project on the selected alternative, and proposals for Level Crossings, Road Underpasses, Road Overpasses, and the information for the closure of unauthorized crossings. The aim was to inform Municipalities and get their feedback on technical issues, as well as on the environmental and social issues that had to be considered in the LARF and ESIA. The table below presents a summary of the stakeholders and main issues discussed during this stage of the project. All formal letters part of the correspondence with institutions have been transferred by the consultant to the responsible authority for the maintenance of the records in a Master database.

**Table 6-3 SE Activities during ESIA Study**

Stakeholder	Date	Method of engagement	Main issues discussed
<b>Albanian National Commission for UNESCO</b>  <b>Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs</b>  <b>Ministry of Culture</b>  <b>National Institute of Cultural Heritage Tirana</b>	16.02.2024	Official letter	<p>The beneficiary of this project HSH, cc: the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure has informed institutions on Feasibility study and Preliminary Engineering Design, about the development of this project, which will continue onto the detailed design in the next phase.</p> <p>Attached to the letter, is sent the footprint of the project and the selected alternative in a kmz file (Google Earth).</p>

Stakeholder	Date	Method of engagement	Main issues discussed
<b>Regional Directorate of Cultural Heritage Korçë</b>			
<b>Albanian Road Authority</b>	12.02.2024	Official letter	<p>Sent the draft proposal for the proposed level crossings along the railway.</p> <p>Attached to the letter is the table with the LC, Road Underpasses, Road Overpasses, and the information for the closure of unauthorized crossings.</p> <p>Required the review and confirmation of the proposal.</p>
<b>Rrogozhinë Municipality</b>	12.02.2024	Official letter	<p>Sent the draft proposal for the proposed level crossings along the railway.</p> <p>Attached to the letter is the table with the LC, Road Underpasses, Road Overpasses, and the information for the closure of unauthorized crossings.</p> <p>Required the review and confirmation of the proposal.</p>
<b>Peqin Municipality</b>	12.02.2024	Official letter	<p>Sent the draft proposal for the proposed level crossings along the railway.</p> <p>Attached to the letter is the table with the LC, Road Underpasses, Road Overpasses, and the information for the closure of unauthorized crossings.</p> <p>Required the review and confirmation of the proposal.</p>
<b>Elbasan Municipality</b>	12.02.2024	Official letter	<p>Sent the draft proposal for the proposed level crossings along the railway.</p> <p>Attached to the letter is the table with the LC, Road Underpasses, Road Overpasses, and the information for the closure of unauthorized crossings.</p> <p>Required the review and confirmation of the proposal.</p>
<b>Librazhd Municipality</b>	12.02.2024	Official letter	<p>Sent the draft proposal for the proposed level crossings along the railway.</p>

Stakeholder	Date	Method of engagement	Main issues discussed
			Attached to the letter is the table with the LC, Road Underpasses, Road Overpasses, and the information for the closure of unauthorized crossings.  Required the review and confirmation of the proposal.
<b>Prrrenjas Municipality</b>	12.02.2024	Official letter	Sent the draft proposal for the proposed level crossings along the railway.  Attached to the letter is the table with the LC, Road Underpasses, Road Overpasses, and the information for the closure of unauthorized crossings.  Required the review and confirmation of the proposal.
<b>Pogradec Municipality</b>	12.02.2024	Official letter	Sent the draft proposal for the proposed level crossings along the railway.  Attached to the letter is the table with the LC, Road Underpasses, Road Overpasses, and the information for the closure of unauthorized crossings.  Required the review and confirmation of the proposal.

#### 6.4 The feedback of the municipalities from review and confirmation of proposals

The recommendations/opinions of the municipalities expressed in their formal letters have been presented and taken into consideration by the technical team of preliminary design. They are all included in the ESIA report.

##### 6.4.1.1 The letter of Librazhd Municipality dated 12.03.2024:

- Request for permission/approval for the construction of a road that crosses the railway line near the Cadastral Area no. 2446 of Qendër Administrative Unit.

##### 6.4.1.2 The letter of Peqin Municipality dated 29.03.2024 recommends:

- Instead, of the Pedestrian Underpass at Km 39+557 proposed by the project, the municipality proposes a Road Underpass because there is a school near the junction and there is a passage of a community of 4 villages.
- At Km 42+548, is an unauthorized level crossing, planned to be closed. Municipality explains that cross guarantees communication with the other part of the city, and the community of the neighbourhood "Teqe". As this crossing is very important is

recommended to build an authorized and protected level crossing.

- At, Km 42+810, located near the Peqin city station, the train station affects the communication of one part of the community with the other part, for this reason municipality recommends a Pedestrian Overpass.
- At, Km 42+940, the existing LC is very important because it connects the residents with the city's hospital. Therefore, to make possible this communication and to avoid safety risks is recommended to build a Pedestrian Overpass.
- At, Km 51+160, located near the Bishqem station, the municipality suggests building a Pedestrian Overpass.
- At, Km 51+233, is proposed a Pedestrian Underpass (PU) by the project. Municipality recommends PU to be converted into a Road Underpass with dimensions of 5 x 3.5m.

## 6.5 Future Stakeholder Engagement Programme

As part of the ESIA public consultation and disclosure process, SEP and NTS of ESIA will be disclosed by HSH on its official website.

### 6.5.1 Disclosure of information

The types of information disclosed and the specific methods of communication to be undertaken for this project are summarised in the Stakeholder Engagement Programme in Table 6-4 below. The objectives of external communications are to provide continuous engagement with affected people and other relevant stakeholders and to inform them about the existing activities, performance, development, and implementation of the Project. The information to be disclosed publicly is governed by EIB standard 2 and Albanian legislation.

The SEP is a live document that will be revised and updated to reflect the changes in stakeholder engagement due to Project developments and the involvement of new stakeholders. The information that is required to be disclosed may change if there are changes in the Project design, schedule, or area of influence. The external and internal communication methods and information for disclosure identified in Table 6 are not exclusive, and HSH may choose to disclose more information upon request by stakeholders.

The Project Implementation Unit (PIU) set up within the HSH is responsible for internal and external communications regarding the Project and will be the main contact point for affected people. All related Project documents and communication related to the Project will be available and undertaken in English and Albanian languages.

Contact information for this project is provided below:

Albanian Railways Mr Eriton Hasaj, Social and Communication Manager Mob: +355 672221452 E-mail: ankesa-projekte@hekurudha.al; web site: www.hekurudha.al
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HSH will collect any comments and feedback associated with this Project and will document these. Minutes of meetings will be taken at all meetings (formal and informal) and will include a signed attendance register.

All comments received will be reviewed by the commitments made under national and EIB

standards, as well as the best international practice. All communications will be reviewed for the feasibility of making changes to satisfy the request and interest, and the communicator will be informed of the outcome.

#### **6.5.2 Documents to be disclosed during the Preliminary Design (PD) and Preliminary ESIA**

During the ESIA process, stakeholders will be provided access to reliable and complete Project information presented in a manner that takes account of specific local conditions, as well as the cultural and language preferences of local communities. Documents to be disclosed at this stage of the project maturity include:

- Preliminary ESIA Report;
- Preliminary ESIA Non-Technical Summary;
- Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP);
- Land Acquisition and Livelihood Restoration Framework (LARF);
- Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP); and
- Climate Change Resilience and Vulnerability Assessment Report (CC) Report

This SEP will be updated periodically, during the next stages of the project, during the development of the DD and full ESIA, which will follow the PD and Preliminary ESIA and will remain publicly available.

#### **6.5.3 Documents to be disclosed during DD and full ESIA**

Once the project is mature and the DD is completed, to effectively communicate relevant information to diverse stakeholder groups, all ESIA package documents shall be translated into Albanian language and disclosed as indicated below:

- Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Report;
- ESIA Non-Technical Summary;
- Stakeholder Engagement Plan;
- Land Acquisition and Livelihood Restoration Framework/Plan;
- Resettlement Action Plan;
- Environmental and Social Management Plan;
- Environmental and Social Action Plan; and
- Climate Change Resilience and Vulnerability Assessment Report

#### **6.5.4 Available Communication Tools**

To ensure accessibility of the disclosed documents, they will be available to the public on the webpages of the involved institutions, project promoter, and the affected Municipalities:

- National Environment Agency (NEA) <http://www.akm.gov.al/>
- Regional Environment Agency of Korça <http://drm.korce.akm.gov.al/>

- Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy <https://www.infrastruktura.gov.al/>
- Hekurudha Shqiptare [www.hekurudha.al](http://www.hekurudha.al)
- Municipality of Rrogozhinë <http://www.bashkiaRrogozhinë.gov.al/>
- Municipality of Peqin <https://peqini.gov.al/>
- Municipality of Elbasan <https://elbasani.gov.al/>
- Municipality of Librazhd <https://bashkialibrazhd.gov.al/>
- Municipality of Prrenjas <https://www.bashkiaprrrenjas.gov.al/>
- Municipality of Pogradec <https://bashkiapogradec.gov.al/>
- Ministry of Tourism and Environment <http://www.mjedisi.gov.al/>
- Ministry of Culture <https://kultura.gov.al/>
- European Investment Bank  
<https://www.eib.org/en/infocentre/contact/offices/albania.htm>

The documents will be made available immediately upon the commencement of the Project and will remain disclosed on the website of Albanian Railways (HSH), Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MIE), and EIB throughout the Project lifecycle.

It is envisaged that electronic copies of the relevant reports (ESIA, ESMP, SEP, NTS, LARF – and RAP if required) to be completed during the next stages of the project, development of the DD and full ESIA, which will follow the PD and Preliminary ESIA, will remain in the public domain up to the completion of the construction phase. This SEP will be updated periodically and will remain publicly available through the abovementioned links.

In addition, printed hard copies of the documents will be made available at the following premises:

- Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (address: Rr. “Abdi Toptani”, Nr.1, 1001, Tirana);
- Hekurudha Shqiptare (address: Lagjia 3; Rruga “Egnatia” Durrës);
- European Investment Bank, Tirana Presence (address: Delegation of the European Union ABA Business Centre, Rruga Papa Gjon Pali II, Tirana, Albania).

### 6.5.5 Stakeholder Engagement Programme

An initial Stakeholder Engagement Programme is detailed in Table 6 below. This plan will be updated regularly by HSH, in the course of the project’s lifetime.

**Table 6-4 Stakeholder Engagement Programme**

Target Stakeholders	Type of Engagement/Information to be provided	Type of Communication/Venue	Tentative date/time frame
<b>Study preparation to mature project (PD and DD)</b>			
<b>Local communities in the affected settlements</b>	Individual consultation meetings as needed or requested by the Municipality or by any identified stakeholder groups/individuals to discuss Project impacts. Specific meetings targeting vulnerable populations i.e. women to inform of Project impacts and benefits and solicit opinions	Consultation meetings in affected municipalities	Ongoing, on a need basis

Target Stakeholders	Type of Engagement/Information to be provided	Type of Communication/Venue	Tentative date/time frame
<b>All interested stakeholders</b>	Organizing and conducting a public consultation to present and further discuss the Preliminary ESIA report with the interested stakeholders in close cooperation with HSH and the affected Municipalities. Expose the consultation materials in LGU offices as well as municipalities' social media accounts. Disclosure package in hard copy	Hard copies of the disclosure package Social media Announcements on the website of HSH and affected municipalities	
<b>Pre-construction</b>			
<b>All interested stakeholders</b>	Online publication of project information and disclosure package on NEA, affected Municipalities, and REA's web page.	Online on the web page of NEA	NEA within 5 days from the date of receipt of the request by HSH, publishes on its website for 20 days
<b>All interested stakeholders</b>	Organizing and conducting public hearings to further discuss the ESIA report with the public, HSH in close cooperation with NEA, REAs, and the affected Municipalities organize public hearings. HSH, in parallel with informing NEA, shall formally broadcast project information, in the audio-visual media and local written media and, if the project has a national character, also in the national media; expose the public hearing materials in LGUs offices. Disclosure package in hard copy.	Hard copies of the disclosure package Mass media – local newspapers, TV channels, radio, social media Announcements on the website of HSH and affected municipalities	HSH within 5 days from the date of NEA, sends to the municipalities at least 100 printed copies of NTS HSH shall formally broadcast project information for 20 days
<b>All formal and informal stakeholders of land and other right-holders</b>	Prepare and disclose information on conducting census and socio-economic surveys with PAPS; dissemination of a cut-off date via public announcements; explanation of the grievance process		To be prepared once the expropriation study has been completed or in parallel with it
<b>Local communities in the affected settlements</b>	Individual consultation meetings as needed or requested by the Municipality or by any identified stakeholder groups/individuals to discuss Project impacts. Specific meetings targeting vulnerable populations i.e. women to inform of Project impacts and benefits and solicit opinions. Designing and implementing an information and awareness raising campaign, reaching out to stakeholders along the railway line (in particularly vulnerable groups and those who currently use unauthorized crossings) in terms of encouraging behavioral changes in terms of safe rail crossing practices, railway safety, and efficiency and railway transport expected benefits	Consultation meetings in affected municipalities  Awareness raising campaign including leaflets, mass media – local newspapers, TV channels, radio, social media	Ongoing, on a need basis  The awareness-raising campaign shall be implemented before the construction works start; the campaign may be implemented by national/local CSOs
<b>Construction</b>			
<b>Permitting authorities, relevant ministries, and public institutions</b>	Providing timely information on planned construction and expansion works, consultations regarding prepared plans, and documentation. Consultations with relevant government authorities concerning Project activities undertaken by HSH.	Internal meetings with governmental institutions	Ongoing, on a need basis
<b>Affected communities and businesses in</b>	Providing timely information on the nature and duration of construction works; potential traffic delays, and any access restrictions.	Public meetings, local notice boards, local mass media	At least 2 weeks before the start of construction works/ changes in traffic

Target Stakeholders	Type of Engagement/Information to be provided	Type of Communication/Venue	Tentative date/time frame
<b>the Project settlements</b>	Undertaking general awareness activities on safety during the construction for local community members Providing timely information on land acquisition activities (if required). Information on control measures being undertaken by <i>contractors to limit disturbances</i> .		routes and ongoing as necessary
<b>Vulnerable Groups</b>	Assistance in interpreting and understanding the information provided in public meetings. At least one meeting held for each potentially affected vulnerable group person with HSH, before construction Information on job opportunities and assistance in entering the job market.	Direct meetings with every affected person	On-going, on a need's basis;
<b>CSOs</b>	Providing timely information, communication, consultation, and grievance management.	Websites of HSH affected Municipalities, and local media; consultative meetings as necessary	On-going, on a need basis.
<b>Contractors</b>	Grievance procedure, code of conduct and work safety and health regulations, environmental protection requirements.	Information in contracts; communication via PIU and supervision engineer; training as necessary	On-going, on a need basis.
<b>Operation</b>			
<b>New and existing users of rehabilitated railway line</b>	Providing timely information on service quality and availability and any disruptions to services that might affect them; disseminating information on railway conditions.	HSH website and local notice boards; daily local media;	On-going
<b>Vulnerable Groups</b>	Information on job opportunities and assistance in entering the job market.	Municipal website and local notice boards; daily local media; direct meetings (if needed)	On-going; on a need's basis

## 7 Grievance Mechanism

### 7.1 Introduction

In line with the EIB Environment and Social Standards – Standard 2 (ESS 2) (EIB, 2022), the implementation of the proposed Project may potentially lead to disagreements, disputes, or conflicts. To prevent and/or resolve them in a timely and effective manner, EIB requires establishing and maintaining a permanent mechanism for receiving and handling citizens' grievances and concerns.

Managing complaints, including avoiding and minimizing them as well as effective handling, is an integral part of a sound stakeholder engagement strategy. Experience indicates that significant numbers of complaints arise from misunderstandings and that such complaints can be avoided, or their numbers reduced, through proactive and consistent engagement with communities. Engagement also helps anticipate and review community concerns to prevent them from escalating into complaints.

A specific Project complaint mechanism is useful for:

- Reducing complaints related to the project implementation, linked risks and costs;
- Addressing community and individual concerns and complaints before they escalate beyond control; and
- Enhancing the reputation of the project developer and helping acquire and sustain public support.

Plans will be made to manage (avoid, mitigate, or compensate for) any potential environmental or social impacts as part of the Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP) included within the disclosure package.

### 7.2 Grievance Mechanism Principles

#### **Communication**

To effectively address complaints, the project developer will outline its grievance mechanism in writing, publicize it, and explain it to all affected parties. As with all information, this disclosure will be provided in a format and language readily understandable to the local population, i.e. Albanian, simple enough so that it does not require legal counsel to complete.

#### **Transparency**

The process needs to be transparent, fair, readily understandable, accessible, and culturally appropriate for all affected parties particularly vulnerable populations as their concerns are often not heard.

The project owner will clarify at the outset who is expected to use this procedure and assure potential users that there will be neither costs nor retribution associated with submitting a grievance and that their data will be treated according to the local legislation on privacy. Anonymous grievances will also be processed, provided a means of communication is provided.

The entire process – from how a complaint is received and reviewed, through to how decisions are made and what possibilities may exist for appeal – will be made as transparent as possible through

good communication.

### **Timing**

The project developer will publicly communicate and commit to a certain timeframe in which all recorded complaints will be responded to and ensure that this response time is enforced. Combining this with a transparent process by which stakeholders can understand how decisions are reached inspires confidence in the system.

During critical periods, such as construction, it is important to have an immediate response to time-sensitive complaints, such as a fence being knocked down by a contractor, for example, and livestock getting out.

### **Written records**

The project developer will keep a written record of all complaints which is critical for effective grievance management. The record will contain the name of the individual or organization; the date and nature of the complaint; any follow-up actions are taken; the final result; and how and when this decision was communicated to the complainant.

## **7.3 Grievance procedure**

The responsibility for implementing a grievance mechanism by Albanian Law and EIB's ESS 2 will pass to the Albanian Railways (HSH) for the construction and operation phases of the Project. The HSH will implement a grievance mechanism during the construction and operation of the railway to ensure that it is responsive to any concerns or complaints, particularly from affected stakeholders and communities.

Any comments or concerns can be brought to the attention of the HSH verbally or in writing (by post or e-mail) or by filling in a grievance form (example include [www.hekurudha.al](http://www.hekurudha.al) in Appendix 1). The grievance form will be made available on the HSH website (<https://hsh.com.al/>) alongside a description of the grievance mechanism.

Moreover, an independent grievance procedure for land acquisition issues will pass to the MIE. Completed grievance forms can then be submitted to the HSH/MIE representative whose contact details are provided in Section 9.

All grievances will be:

- Acknowledged within 5 days, and
- Responded to in no later than 30 days.

Grievance information will be recorded in a grievance log by the Project Manager.

## 8 Role and Responsibilities

This chapter provides for the roles and responsibilities for SEP implementation and grievances resolution.

### 8.1 Roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for SEP implementation, during the project cycle, include various entities as follows:

- Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy – as the project proponent and transport policy-making institution;
- Project Implementation Unit (PIU) within HSH, as the Implementing Agency;
- Municipalities along the railway alignment – Municipalities of Rrogozhinë, Peqin, Elbasan, Librazhd, Prrenjas, and Pogradec are also beneficiaries given that the action area is included in their administrative territories. These municipalities are responsible for advancing the plans/projects that affect the same area (General Local Development Plan, etc.) and/or the same sector (transport);
- Consultant (PD and Preliminary ESIA) – which is responsible for preparing in close consultation with MIE and HSH the PD and the Preliminary ESIA package;
- Consultant (DD, ESIA, and TD) – upcoming Project stage which will be responsible for preparing in close consultation with MIE and HSH the DD, ESIA package, and TD;
- Construction Company – following the contract awarding;
- Operational Company – Albanian Railways;
- Governmental institutions – Ministry of Tourism and Environment, NEA, REAs, NAPAs, RAPAs;
- Project Affected People – Local population, especially vulnerable groups;
- Albanian National Commission for UNESCO;
- CSOs – Civil Society Organisations dealing with the environment, socio-economic development of the project area, and/or any particular target group (youth, women, disabled persons), etc.

### 8.2 Resources

Human and material resources for implementing the SEP and managing the grievance mechanism include.

**Table 8-1 Resources for implementing SEP and managing grievance mechanism**

No.	Stakeholder	Comment
<b>Project phase – Pre-Construction Phase – General</b>		
1	MIE – project proponent	MIE, as the project promoter, and policy-making institution has a very important role in agreeing and approving the studies. They are involved in consultations, and public hearings and ensure coordination and information sharing with the relevant institutions. They will support HSH in applying for and gathering all the necessary permits (environmental permit,

No.	Stakeholder	Comment
		archaeological permit, construction permit, etc.) for construction work commencement. A contact person to be assigned to follow on behalf of MIE the project implementation at a more technical level.
2	HSH – project beneficiary	HSH, as the direct project beneficiary, and the institution managing the railway line has an important role in agreeing and approving the studies. A contact person to be assigned, preferably from the Environmental sector within HSH, to follow on behalf of HSH all the communication procedures, consultations with the project stakeholders, and public hearings once the ESIA disclosure process is undertaken. HSH will be closely involved in preparing and disclosing the expropriation study and identification of the vulnerable persons to be directed and affected by the project activities, through conducting of census and social surveys to be prepared during DD as part of the Land Acquisition and Resettlement Framework
3	Environmental institutions	MTE is very important in the ESIA process, both in communication with NEA, regional offices (Tirana and Korça), and neighbouring countries. NEA is important for supporting stakeholders' engagement in the disclosure process. Its REA offices will be involved in the activities to be performed in the affected municipalities. NAPA and Korça Regional Agency of Protected Areas (RAPA); are important to be involved in as the railway line runs near the Ohrid Lake protected area. Communication with them will be primarily through meetings and electronic correspondence
4	Municipalities	Municipalities will be closely involved through consultation meetings and organization of public hearings, promotion of consultation documents, and informing of the general public. In addition, they will support HSH in identifying the PAPs as well as implement information disclosure activities, which among others will include publication of project leaflets, grievance leaflets on their websites, print-outs of project elements specific to the municipality, etc.
5	CSOs – national and local CSOs	To have an impaired opinion on alternatives and project environmental and social impacts, national and local CSOs will be consulted during the ESIA approval process. A list of national and local CSOs will be provided, whereas also NEA as part of the ESIA public hearing procedure shares the project documents and invites CSOs; CSOs (particularly local ones) are also considered very important to raise public awareness about the benefits of rail transportation and to promote safe rail crossing practices in the project area; they may be involved in the implementation of information and awareness-raising programs, reaching out to stakeholders along the railway line (in particularly vulnerable groups and those who currently use unauthorized crossings) and encouraging behavioral changes;
6	Consultants	Further TAs might be needed to support HSH in preparing the expropriation study and LALRP to ensure fair addressing of PAPs
7	EIB	EIB as the lead IFI is closely involved in project implementation. They are providing no objections to preparing additional studies and fair addressing a PAP's concern.
<b>Project stage – Construction</b>		
1	MIE – project proponent	Responsible for reporting on project works and status. Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy should budget the funds necessary to implement the Project, including obligations as set in the LALRP
2	HSH – project beneficiary	The assigned PIU will closely work to implement and monitor implementation in due time of works contracts, as well as monitor, report, and evaluate compliance of the Project with EIB “Environmental and Social Standards” ESS. As a project implementer, HSH also should serve as a contact point for consultation and providing feedback to all affected parties, including the landowners and the public during the construction period. HSH should disseminate information about anticipated construction activities to affected stakeholders.
3	Environmental institutions-	National Environmental Agencies including National Environmental Agency; Regional Environmental Agency of Tirana and Korça; the responsible REA for the territory of Rrogozhinë Municipality is the Tirana REA, while that for the territories of the other municipalities (Peqin, Elbasan, Librazhd, Prrenjas and Pogradec) is REA Korça; National Agency of Protected Areas;

No.	Stakeholder	Comment
		Korça Regional Agency of Protected Areas shall monitor the implementation of mitigation measures and impacts on the environment as per the approved ESIA.
4	Municipalities	Albanian Railways to be assigned expert/s shall coordinate with the local governments of the municipalities affected by the project activities, to control the implementation of the appropriate mitigation measures, strategies, and decisions, as defined in the construction works contract and related permits.
5	CSOs – national and local CSOs	Albanian Railways (HSH) should serve as a contact point for consultation and providing feedback to all affected parties, including the CSOs and the public.
6	Contractors and Consultants to the Promoter	Contractors for works will be responsible for works execution in due time and as per TD requirements; they should keep stakeholders informed about anticipated construction activities that might affect them (i.e., to notify stakeholders on road closures and diversions, and any transport disruptions, construction schedule, etc.) Supervision contractors will be responsible for ensuring works contracts are completed as per DD and TD requirements. Contractors should keep stakeholders informed on local employment opportunities. Consultants to the HSH, will support the latter in preparing periodic reports assessing compliance with the E&S standards. During construction works, the Contractor will manage the process of temporary occupation of privately owned land, storing the material required for the rehabilitation works for the railway. The Contractor should ensure that the temporary lease of land does not negatively affect the landowners and should restore it to its original condition for future agricultural production.
7	EIB	EIB as the lead IFI is closely involved in project implementation. It will be the recipient of the Initial Monitoring Report on the implementation of the LARP at the time of the Loan condition effectiveness, and periodical Monitoring Reports annually thereafter, during the life of the project as part of the Annual Reporting.
<b>Project stage – Operational stage<sup>6</sup></b>		
1	MIE – project proponent	Responsible for policy making (including legal framework drafting) to ensure further advancement of the railway sector. Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy should budget the funds necessary for loan repayment as per be agreed loan requirements with EIB;
2	HSH – project beneficiary	Responsible institution for implementing a detailed financial and implementation plan for the future maintenance operations of the Project (O&M plan) and its reporting;

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<sup>6</sup> CMD 379/2016

## 9 Monitoring and Reporting

The results of the stakeholder engagement process will be included in Monitoring Reports to be prepared by the HSH PIU. The reports will be made public on the website of the HSH with the following information:

- Place and time of carried out consultative meetings (including other types of engagement activities) with information on the participants;
- Issues and concerns raised during consultative meetings and information on how the issues raised during the meetings were taken into consideration by the HSH, including the implemented corrective measures meant to address the grievances;
- Number and types of grievances raised in the reporting period, with an indication of opened, resolved, and closed grievances.

During PD and Preliminary ESIA, the monitoring reports will be prepared twice a year. In total, three monitoring reports could be produced during this Project’s phase.

During the next phases, starting from DD and full ESIA, the first report will be produced 3 months after the beginning of the Project and will continue every quarter. In addition, the HSH PIU will submit Annual Environmental and Social Reports to EIB summarising environmental and social impacts, health and safety performance, disclosure and consultation performance, and implementation of the external grievance mechanism. Summaries of these reports will be published on the website of HSH.

The HSH PIU will be responsible for monitoring all Project-related stakeholder engagement activities, ensuring the fulfillment and updating of this SEP, and reporting to EIB.

The outcomes of stakeholder engagement will be monitored and reported through the following list of key performance indicators (KPIs).

**Table 9-1 Monitoring and reporting KPIs**

Step	Database of activities during the project development phases
<b>1</b>	Engagement with stakeholders
<b>1.1</b>	Formal stakeholders (Categories: Lender, Implementing agency, beneficiary, governmental institutions and agencies, NGOs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and nature of engagement activities by category;</li> <li>• Raised issues and agreed actions, as well as the status of those actions;</li> <li>• Minutes of meetings (given in an appendix and reported bi-monthly);</li> <li>• Number and nature of Project documents disclosed on the websites of the involved stakeholders;</li> <li>• Number and nature of the Project website updating;</li> <li>• Number and categories of comments received on the website;</li> </ul>
<b>1.2</b>	PAPs (categories: Locals, Vulnerable groups) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number, nature, and location of formal and informal meetings with PAPs by category;</li> <li>• Number and nature (gender, age, education, employment, ethnic/sociolinguistic group, etc.) of vulnerable persons/groups for each attended meeting;</li> <li>• Minutes of meetings (given in an appendix and reported bi-monthly);</li> <li>• Number and nature of received comments, agreed actions, the status of those actions, and how the comments are included in the ESMP.</li> </ul>

Step	Database of activities during the project development phases
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number, nature, and location of community awareness raising, including the targeted communities;</li> <li>• PAs engagement will be given as an appendix of the SEP report.</li> </ul>
<b>1.3</b>	<p>Grievance Mechanism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of received grievances by stakeholders category (PAs, formal stakeholders, CSOs, etc.) and nature of used means (email, telephone, discussion);</li> <li>• Profile of the complainants (location, vulnerability of the social/ethnic group, gender, age, education, employment, etc.), by category of stakeholder;</li> <li>• Grouping grievances in the function of the receiving environment (e.g. drinking water quantity and quality, wastewater, etc.);</li> <li>• Number of handled grievances, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opened;</li> <li>- Resolved;</li> <li>- Resolved partly;</li> <li>- Treated but not accepted;</li> <li>- Number of satisfactory responses and category/profile of the complainants;</li> <li>- Average time of resolution process, in function of the category/profile of the complainants</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The received complaints and their processing, and their results will be annexed to the SEP report</li> </ul>
<b>1.4</b>	<p>Workers' grievance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of grievances raised by workers and their profile (vulnerability of workers' group, gender, age, education, etc.),</li> <li>• Number of handled grievances, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opened;</li> <li>- Resolved;</li> <li>- Resolved partly;</li> <li>- Treated but not accepted;</li> <li>- Number of satisfactory responses and profile of the worker;</li> <li>- Average time of resolution process, in function of the worker's profile</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The received complaints and their processing, and their results will be annexed to the SEP report</li> </ul>

## 9.1 Project Reporting

The SEP will be periodically revised and updated during the PD and Preliminary ESIA, as well as during the next stages of Project implementation – DD and ESIA, to be undertaken following the completion of PD and Preliminary ESIA, and construction and operation. The results of stakeholder engagement of completed project phases will be reported as an Appendix to the SEP, summarizing all activity for the period, and providing a summary of issues raised and how they have been addressed.

The results of stakeholder engagement activities, including how stakeholder comments have been considered, will also be reported in both Preliminary ESIA and full ESIA reports that will be prepared during PD and DD, respectively.

## 10 Appendixes

### 10.1 Appendix 1 – Sample of Grievance Form

<b>Reference No:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Full Name</b>			
<b>Contact Information</b>  Please mark how you wish to be contacted (mail, telephone, e-mail).	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>By Post: Please provide a mailing address:</b> _____ _____ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> <b>By Telephone:</b> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> <b>By E-mail</b> _____		
<b>Description of Incident or Grievance:</b>	What happened? Where did it happen? Who did it happen to? What is the result of the problem?		
<b>Date of Incident/Grievance</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>One-time incident/grievance (date _____)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Happened more than once (how many times? _____)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>On-going (currently experiencing problem)</b>		
<b>What would you like to see happen to resolve the problem?</b>			
<b>Signature:</b> _____			
<b>Please return this form to:</b> Mr Eriton Hasaj, Communication and Social Manager HEKURUDHAT SHQIPTARE S.A. (HSH), Rruga Egnatia, Nr. 3 Durrës, Email: ankesa@hsh.com.al Tel / Mob: +355 672221452			

### 10.2 Appendix 2 – Minutes of the meetings during Alternative Assessment/ESIA

#### MINUTES of MEETING 15 September 2023

Project No. **AA-010284-001**

Title **"Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania"**

Date	<b>15 September 2023, 10:00</b>
Place	<b>Rrogozhinë Municipality</b>
Prepared by	<b>Dhimitraq Marko</b> <b>Edison Memolla (Mayor Rrogozhinë Municipality)</b> <b>Sami Veliu (Rrogozhinë Municipality, Urban Specialist)</b> <b>Dorina Shehi (Rrogozhinë Municipality, Responsible for Cadastre office)</b>
Participants	<b>Geraldo Gjini (Rrogozhinë Municipality, Director of Urban Planning)</b> <b>Vasil Leka (ICE consultant)</b> <b>Ani Duka (SAFEGE, local consultant)</b> <b>Dhimitraq Marko (Social expert)</b>
Subject	Meeting with the Municipalities in the frame of the stakeholder engagement for the project: <b><i>"Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania"</i></b> .

### **Meeting purpose**

The purpose of the meeting was to inform Rrogozhinë Municipality about the project and on the environmental and social issues identified during the ESIA preparation for the railway segment passing along the territory of Rrogozhinë Municipality.

The municipality was informed of the meeting in advance through a written invitation, where was explained the aim of the meeting, the persons who should participate in the meeting, as well as the points of discussion.

### **Notes from the Meeting**

The Mayor of Rrogozhinë Municipality welcomed the meeting, while present in the meeting were representatives of the departments of the municipality as per recommendation in the invitation.

The mayor and the relevant staff of the municipality participated in the meeting and appreciated the purpose and format of the meeting. They mentioned the previous experience with the project "Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Durres – Rrogozhinë" implemented for the railway segment Durres - Rrogozhinë, which is in an advanced stage (the detailed design has been completed). Although the project of the preliminary design of railway line Rrogozhinë-Pogradec in the territory of Rrogozhinë municipality is only 3 km, the municipality expressed the willingness to provide every possible support for the project. The mayor asked some technical questions about the width of the railway and the technical details of technical solutions for the Level Crossings. The municipality is also aware that in certain segments the territory of the railway line has been occupied by illegal owners and construction.

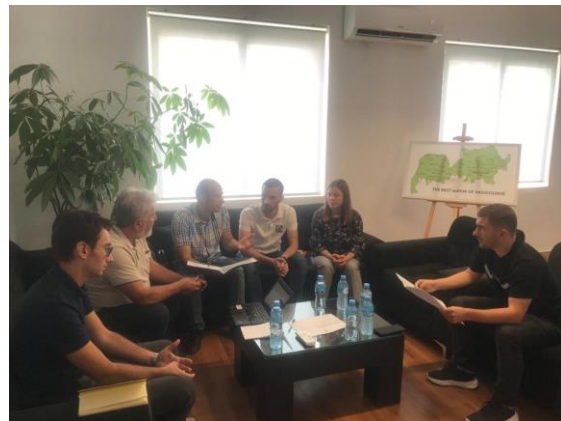
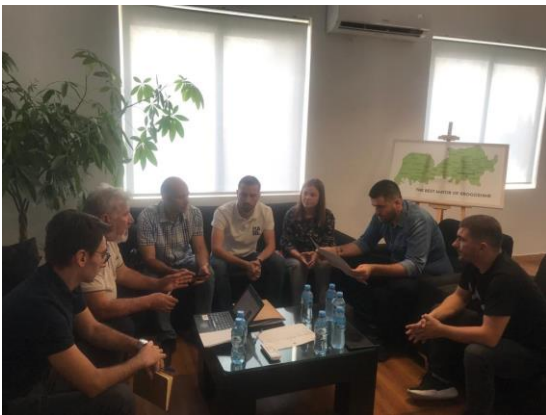
The municipality expressed the willingness to contribute to the mitigation of the problems and communication with the community for these issues based on the discretion provided in the Law on Local Self-Government.

The project team presented the drawings, proposals, and findings for the road access of the dwellings along the railway on the level crossings at (KP 35+600, KP 36+000, and KP 38+394) and explained that at these nodes, the design team is working to find the best solution to ensure safe access to residential areas.

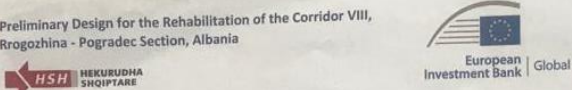
In summary of the discussions of the meeting:

- The Mayor of Rrogozhinë municipality is a supporter of the project;
- The municipal staff expressed their willingness to cooperate and to provide information and recommendations.
- The project team is committed to informing the municipality of the progress of the project. Further communication will continue via email.
- The overall evaluation of the meeting is positive.

**Photos of the meeting:**



Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII,  
Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania



Date 15/09/2023

Midis SAFEGE TAKIM dhe BASHKËIA Rrogozhinë

**LISTA E PJESMARRESVE**

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**MINUTES of MEETING 15 September 2023**

Project No. **AA-010284-001**

Title **"Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania"**

Date **15 September 2023, 10:00**

Place **Peqin Municipality**

Prepared by **Dhimitraq Marko**  
**Bukurosh Maçi (Peqin Municipality, Mayor)**  
**Gentian Cani (Peqin Municipality, General Secretary)**  
**Kastriot Salla (Peqin Municipality, ASHK Responsible)**

Participants **Johan Sallufi (Peqin Municipality, Director of Urban Planning)**  
**Vasil Leka (ICE consultant)**  
**Ani Duka (SAFEGE, local consultant)**  
**Dhimitraq Marko (Social and Stakeholder Engagement Expert)**

Subject Meeting with the Municipalities in the frame of the stakeholder engagement for the project: **"Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania"**.

## **Meeting purpose**

The purpose of the meeting was to inform Peqin Municipality about the project and the environmental and social issues identified during the ESIA preparation for the railway segment passing along the territory of Peqin Municipality.

The municipality was informed of the meeting in advance through a written invitation, where was explained the aim of the meeting, the persons who should participate in the meeting, as well as the points of discussion.

## **Notes from the Meeting**

The Mayor of Peqin Municipality welcomed the meeting, while present in the meeting were representatives of the departments of the municipality as per recommendation in the invitation.

**The Mayor** of Peqin Municipality and the specialists of the municipality in the meeting appreciated the organization and format of the meeting. They all were positive and in support of the project.

The mayor asked some technical questions - about the width of the railway and for the technical details of the proposed solutions for the Level Crossings. The municipality is aware of the situation of the railway line that in certain segments the corridor of the railway has been occupied by illegal constructions. The municipality expressed its readiness to contribute to the mitigation of social issues as much as the law on “Local Self-Government” allows them. Their focus was especially on LCs at (KP 39+550, KP 39+984, KP 39+984, KP 43+028, KP 43+325, KP 44+969, KP 47+498, KP 48+136, and KP 51+700).

In addition, the Municipality asked about the solutions anticipated in the preliminary design for the irregular LCs.

The experts presented detailed information on the findings during route supervision and the discussion was very constructive.

**The project team** presented the drawings, proposals, and findings for the road access of the dwellings along the railway on the level crossings at KP 39+550, KP 39+984, KP 39+984, KP 43+028, KP 43+325, KP 44+969, KP 47+498, KP 48+136 and KP 51+700. The technical consultant (Vasil) explained that at these nodes, the design team is working to find the best solution to ensure safe access to residential areas. The proposed solutions in principle were accepted by the participants. The stakeholder engagement in the preliminary design has as the main objective to collect the opinions and recommendations of the interested parties and to integrate them into the project. All parties will be informed of the progress and possible changes in the project design.

Mr. Kastiot Salla, Head of ASHK (State Cadastral Agency) Peqin, provided information about the situation of the properties and the procedure to require information from ASHK:

During these years, the cadaster offices may have registered irregular assets, while there are properties that have AMTP (The Act of Land Acquisition) and are not registered yet.

State institutions and state companies have not made a complete registration of properties, as in many cases there are deficiencies in the documentation of the transfer of properties.

Until a few months ago, the regional offices of cadaster had access to the national cadaster system to provide information on properties and owners for the land where the project is planned, only by a formal request. There are some months when ASHK applies a new online system where the staff of ASHK works only on the requests generated and authorized by the system. For this reason,

the request for information related to the properties and owners must be made by the relevant authority (HSH), firstly for the railway properties and secondly for the owners who are located along the track and are affected by the need for the rehabilitation of the railway line.

In summary of the discussions of the meeting:

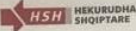

- The Mayor of Peqin municipality is a supporter of the project;
- The municipal staff expressed their willingness to cooperate and to provide information and recommendations.
- The project team is committed to informing the municipality of the progress of the project. Further communication will continue via email.
- The overall evaluation of the meeting is positive.

**Photos of the meeting:**



**List of Participants:**








Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII, Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania

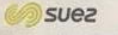
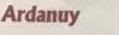



Date 15/10/2023

TAKIM  
 Midis SAFEEDH dhe BASHKËSIA PEQIN

**LISTA E PJESMARRESVE**

NR	EMER MBIEMER	INSTITUCIONI	POZICIONI	KONTAKT (Mob:)	e-mail	FIRMA
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## MINUTES of MEETING 14 September 2023

Project No.	<b>AA-010284-001</b>
Title	<b><i>"Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania"</i></b>
Date	<b>14 September 2023, 10:00</b>
Place	<b>Elbasan Municipality</b>
Prepared by	<b>Dhimitraq Marko</b> <b>Gledian Llatja (Elbasan Municipality, Mayor)</b> <b>Alba Canaj (Elbasan Municipality, Coordinator of Urban Planning)</b> <b>Marvis Avllaragaj (Elbasan Municipality, Director of Drafting Directory)</b> <b>Metion Musmusa (Elbasan Municipality, Director of Urban Planning)</b>
Participants	<b>Aulona Bylykbashi (Elbasan Municipality, Deputy Mayor)</b> <b>Marsela Kocllari (Local Coordinator Safege)</b> <b>Manushaqe Jace (Environmental Expert)</b> <b>Vasil Leka (ICE Consultant)</b> <b>Dhimitraq Marko (Social and Stakeholder Engagement Expert)</b>
Subject	Meeting with the Municipalities in the frame of the stakeholder engagement for the project: <b><i>"Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania"</i></b> .

### Meeting purpose

The purpose of the meeting was to inform Elbasan Municipality about the project and on the environmental and social issues identified during the ESIA preparation for the railway segment passing along the territory of Elbasan Municipality.

The municipality was informed of the meeting in advance through a written invitation, where was explained the aim of the meeting, the persons who should participate in the meeting, as well as the points of discussion.

### Notes of the Meeting

The Mayor of Elbasan Municipality welcomed the meeting, while present in the meeting were representatives of the departments of the municipality as per recommendation in the invitation.

Project team informed Elbasan Municipality of the progress of the project: "Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania" and to exchange ideas and opinions valid to the preliminary design of the project, as well as for the environmental and social issues to be addressed in the ESIA. The experts present in the meeting are part of the team of experts who are working on this project as per the Terms of Reference (ToR) provided by the Client "Albanian Railways". More specifically, we want to consult some findings on the current state of the railway to suggest interventions that would have a positive social & environmental

impact on the community. Our team has conducted a detailed evaluation of the current situation (environment and social screening), and now we are in the phase of evaluating alternatives, a process aiming at the achievement of reasonable conclusions and recommendations for the best alternative. Based on the ToRs, an important part of the project is the ESIA document. The stakeholder engagement activities will ensure the involvement of the public in consultations for ESIA preparation, which is not only a contractual obligation but also an opportunity to get the opinion of the interested groups.

Mayor of Elbasan Gledian Llatja: I don't know who from you has been present in a previous meeting we have held on this issue. You are talking about the rehabilitation of the existing route, while we as the institution have expressed in the previous meeting that we are not interested in this option since there is a project prepared by Elbasan Municipality that is part of the General Local Plan, which anticipates rerouting of a segment of the railway line and displacement of the train station in an area outside the city near the Shkumbin River. This project has gone through the approval process in the relevant institutions. We are interested in the development of this project. In the following, the project design can be accessed at the relevant link published by the municipality.

Marsela: I participated in the previous meeting in the role of Coordinator of the Contractor, and I am aware of what the municipality of Elbasan requested in the meeting. I would like to emphasize here that in that meeting there were representatives from the Client "Albanian Railways" who kept note of this claim. In the role of consultant, we are working to fulfil every requirement in the ToR, while we have been open to every possible adjustment requested by the Client. However, in the frame of the preliminary design, the possibility of considering a connection node that will ensure access to the existing railway route with your proposal in the future.

Mayor of Elbasan Gledian Llatja: In our understanding, we thought that today we would discuss the rerouting option, as far as the existing option is concerned, we are not interested. As the mayor, I cannot sign a construction permit for the existing option, as I have signed another document related to the relocation.

Manushaqe: In terms of ESIA, a new railway route (new project) has more detailed assessments than an existing project and the new segment recommended by you can be included as a separate project in the future.

Dhimitraq: We understand your attitude regarding the segment you propose for rerouting, but apart from this segment, we have two other segments that we want to consult with you that are the Murras - Zona Industriale segment and the Intersection Krastë - Xibrakë segment. In these segments, we have identified many problems which we want to consult with your specialists.

Mayor of Elbasan Gledian Llatja: This is a technical discussion that you can have with specialists, you can provide information and ask for their opinion in writing. (Action required: sending the information on these issues identified to a specialist to obtain their opinion.)

Marsela: Aiming to promote cooperation, we are ready to exchange information with the staff of the municipality. We will connect electronically and communicate. We will send a report of the problems observed in the field that are specifically related to the social and environmental side (which pertains only to the segment in the territory of Elbasan Municipality) and we will address any need for information that we may have on the social side and environmental. In the meantime, we will ask you to provide us with information on how to track the stages which is your proposal for the railway reroute.

Photos of the Meeting:



List of participants in the Meeting:

Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII,  
 Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania

**HSH** HEKURUDHIA SHQIPTARE

European Investment Bank | Global

Date 14, 09, 2023

TAKIM dhe BASHKICIA ELBASAN  
 Midis SAFEZH

**LISTA E PJESMARRESVE**

NR	EMER MBIEMER	INSTITUCIONI	POZICIONI	KONTAKT (Mob:)	e-mail	FIRMA
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5	Milton Musumusa	Bashkia Elbasan	Dr. Urbanistik	0675637127	milton16@gmail.com	
6	Manushkaje Josa	Eksperte Expert	eksperte ngjodesh	0692212255	jose.manushkaje@gmail.com	
7	Aliona Gjylkeshi	konulent				
8						
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10	Vasil Leka	Consulent ICE	Proj. Rruges	0692472743	vasil.leka@ice.al	
11	Dimitrop Marivo	konulent	transport social	0682221838	dimitrop.marivo@ardanuy.com	
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13	Glodian Llatja	Bashkia Elbasan	Kryetar	0674011599		
14						

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## MINUTES OF THE MEETING 18 SEPTEMBER 2023

PROJECT No.: **AA-010284-001**

Title: **"Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania"**

Date: **18 September 2023, 15:30**

Place: **Librazhd Municipality**

Prepared by: **Dhimitraq Marko**

Participants: **Jetmir Isaku (Vice Mayor, Librazhd Municipality)**  
**Jurgen Memaj (Urban Planning Supervisor, Librazhd Municipality)**  
**Robert Alla (Land Protection Supervisor, Librazhd Municipality)**  
**Julgerta Balla (Project Unit Supervisor, Librazhd Municipality)**  
**Erdis Alikaj (Road and Public Works, Librazhd Municipality)**  
**Shefqet Gurra (Inspector of Territorial Protection IMT, Librazhd Municipality)**  
**Olset Haxhiu (ICE Engineer)**  
**Manushaqe Jace (Environmental Expert)**  
**Dhimitraq Marko (Social Expert)**

Subject: Meeting with the Municipalities in the frame of the stakeholder engagement for the project: ***"Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania"***.

### Meeting purpose

The purpose of the meeting was to inform Librazhd Municipality about the project and on the environmental and social issues identified during the ESIA preparation for the railway segment passing along the territory of Librazhdë Municipality.

The municipality was informed of the meeting in advance through a written invitation, where was explained the aim of the meeting, the persons who should participate in the meeting, as well as the points of discussion.

Vice Mayor of Librazhd welcomed the meeting, while present at the meeting were representatives of the municipality directorates as recommended in the invitation.

Introduction: This meeting aims to inform Rrogozhinë Municipality of the progress of the project: "Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania" and to exchange ideas and opinions valid to the preliminary design of the project, as well as for the environmental and social issues to be addressed in the ESIA. Based on the ToRs, an important part of the project is the ESIA document. The stakeholder engagement activities will ensure the involvement of the public in consultations for ESIA preparation, which is not only a contractual obligation but also an opportunity to get the opinion of the interested groups.

The Mayor and the relevant staff of the municipality appreciated the meeting and the importance of the project. The rehabilitation of the railway, in addition to bringing about the operation of railway transport, will also bring about the rehabilitation of the train station, which is part of the city. For the residents of Librazhd, a railway of good standards means a reduction in transport costs, because many social and economic activities are related to Tirana. Traveling by train is not only economical but also ecological, because it reduces the use of road transport.

**The presentation of findings:**

The Mirake station where in front of the station platform is an illegal construction ( a fence wall of a house), that is near to the railway. For the municipality, the case does not present any problem since the wall does not have a permit and it will be demolished according to the laws in force.

The area of the train station is free from non-formal constructions and the houses are far from the railway. The station building is degraded and part of it is used for services that do not have permits or contracts. Even these premises can be easily vacated.

There are also service facilities such as a restaurant bar, carwash, and parking, which were built without permission in the vicinity of the railway at the exit of the city and can also be demolished according to the laws in force.

In this segment, there is also an uninhabited apartment that is very close to the railway, which can be demolished as it is without a permit.

The municipality is looking for a reasonable and safe solution for the LC at point KP 104+610 because it is widely used by the community of Dardhe village. After this LC, a footbridge was built that connects the village with the National road. The project has provided an underpass to ensure access to this area.

In order not to interfere with the road infrastructure, there is a DCM no. 408 that defines the criteria that must be met when constructions are made in the vicinity of roads. According to this DCM, in the permit application procedure, consultation with ARRS is foreseen. The same measures should be followed for the railway line.

In the vicinity of the train station, there is an entity that produces spare parts for cars (steering wheels), but it is thought that it does not interfere with the area of the train station.

Information was exchanged on waste classified as dangerous for the environment.

Issue about removing debris/inert and especially asbestos and minerals from the former warehouse buildings of HSH in the vicinity of the train station but also near the railway line is expressed by the environmental expert Manushaqe .

According to the representatives of the municipality, current disposal area of debris/inert is at the premises of NSHN (former State Enterpriser of Construction) about 2.5 km from the Librazhd train station.

The project team presented findings and proposals for providing road access for businesses along the railway at level crossings. In addition, the project team is working to find the best solutions to ensure safe access to residential areas.

In summary of the discussions of the meeting:

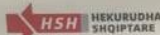
- Librazhd Municipality staff is supportive of the project;
- Staff expressed their willingness to cooperate and provide information and recommendations.
- The project team is committed to informing the municipality about the progress of the project. Further communication will continue by email.
- The community of Librazhd is waiting for the implementation of the project and the signal of the train (a forgotten tradition).
- The overall assessment of the meeting is positive.


**Photos of the meeting:**



## List of Participants:

Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII,  
Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania


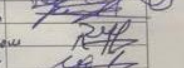
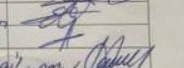
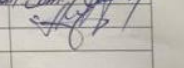
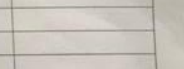
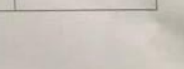



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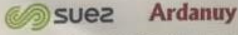
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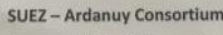
Date 18.09.23

Midis SAFEGE TAKIM dhe DASHKIA LIBRAZHD

**LISTA E PJESMARRESVE**

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## MINUTES OF THE MEETING 18 SEPTEMBER 2023

PROJECT No.: **AA-010284-001**

Title: **"Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania"**

Date: **18 September 2023, 10:00**

Place: **Prrrenjas Municipality**

Prepared by: **Dhimitraq Marko**

Participants:

- Nuri Belba (Mayor, Prrrenjas Municipality)**
- Maliq Alla (Director of Agriculture, Prrrenjas Municipality)**
- Suzana Kopxhiu (Finance Director, Prrrenjas Municipality)**
- Merita Pali (Planning Directory, Prrrenjas Municipality)**
- Gordona Karaj (Waste Supervisor, Prrrenjas Municipality)**
- Olset Haxhiu (ICE Engineer)**
- Manushaqe Jace (Environmental Expert)**
- Dhimitraq Marko (Social Expert)**

**Subject:** Meeting with the Municipalities in the frame of the stakeholder engagement for the project: ***"Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania"***.

### **Meeting purpose**

The purpose of the meeting was to inform Prrenjas Municipality about the project and on the environmental and social issues identified during the ESIA preparation for the railway segment passing along the territory of Prrenjas Municipality.

The municipality was informed of the meeting in advance through a written invitation, where was explained the aim of the meeting, the persons who should participate in the meeting, as well as the points of discussion.

The Mayor of Prrenjas welcomed the meeting, while present at the meeting were representatives of the municipality directorates as recommended in the invitation.

Introduction: This meeting aims to inform Prrenjas Municipality of the progress of the project: "Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania" and to exchange ideas and opinions valid to the preliminary design of the project, as well as for the environmental and social issues to be addressed in the ESIA. The stakeholder engagement activities will ensure the public's involvement in ESIA preparation consultations, which is not only a contractual obligation but also an opportunity to get the opinion of the interested groups.

The Mayor of Prrenjas and the specialists of the municipality at the meeting appreciated the organization of the meeting. The Prrenjas Municipality has been aware of the project, since the meetings with the group of surveyors in the field and informative meetings with the authorities of the Albanian Railway. The representatives of the municipality expressed their support for the project as well as their expectations for the project. From their expectations, the operation of the railway will improve the transport of goods and passengers and will have a positive impact on the economy and the creation of employment opportunities.

The project team appreciated the support and presented the main findings during the field inspection. During the presentation, all findings were accompanied by photos for each KP and segment where they were recorded, making a clear and concrete presentation for the attendees. The railway segment that passes through the Prrenjas municipality presents several problems related to:

- In KP 121+910 & 122+060, a channel has been identified that passes over the protective structure of the entrance/exit of the tunnel.
- Problems have been identified in the area of the train station;
- There are constructions near the railway route along the railway segment in the area of Rajce (KP 127 - KP 133). In some cases, the houses are near the railway with direct access to the railway line. In this area, level crossings through the railway in the agricultural lands were also observed. These crossings are widespread since the railway has not been in operation for years.

- In KP 129+550, a water pipe that crosses the railway was identified.

The project team is working to find acceptable solutions for overpasses and underpasses that will ensure the safe movement of people and vehicles.

Further, the project representatives asked for information on the way of handling waste from the municipality (especially those classified as hazardous).

Currently, the municipality of Prrenjasi manages the urban waste in the incinerator of Elbasan, while for the disposal of inert /debris, they use a square approved by the Municipal Council, which is located 5 km away from the Prrenjasi Train Station.

Around the train station in Prrenjas there are destroyed and abandoned buildings owned by HSH (such as warehouses for mineral deposits, chemical fertilizers and other goods) which have generated debris that shall be removed, and the disposed goods left in these the buildings. Most of the roofs of these buildings are covered with asbestos, a dangerous material for the health of the population especially when we demolish it.

The Prrenjas Municipality was aware of the channel that passes over the protective structure of the entrance/exit of the tunnel. In the construction permit of the relevant subject, the channel is not foreseen in that way and the subject is aware of the violation. That private subject must find technical solutions to eliminate this violation.

The area of the train station is degraded, but construction has not been allowed in the area, except for some small facilities that are without permission and illegal (3-4 service units for repairs). The area has enough space to expand the station, especially the storage space for goods (containers), and the municipality expressed its support in case of a proposal for the expansion of the territory of the train station.

The problems in the area of Rajce were known, while the constructed objects according to the municipality were not legalized. According to the municipality, if the project is developed, the municipality will influence the community to build parallel roads to ensure access after closing the illegal level crossings.

The identified pipeline was used for irrigation, but currently, it is not working, but the possibility that it will be put into operation in the future is not excluded.

The representative of the municipality also provided information about the waste disposal site and the way of treatment.

**Conclusions at the end of the meeting:**

- The mayor of Prrenjas Municipality and the staff expressed their support for the project;
- Municipal staff will provide any information and may participate in joint field visits with the project team;
- The environmental representative of the municipality will send additional information about the environment;
- The overall assessment of the meeting is positive.

**Photos of the meeting:**



**List of Participants:**

Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII,  
Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania

**HSH** HEKURUDHA SHQIPTARE

European Investment Bank Global

Midis SAFEZH TAKIM dh bashkia Pogradec ora 10:00 Date 18.09.2023

**LISTA E PJESMARRESVE**

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING SEPTEMBER 18, 2023**

PROJECT No.: **AA-010284-001**

Title: **"Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania"**

Date: **18 September 2023, 13:00**

Place: **Pogradec Municipality**

Prepared by: **Dhimitraq Marko**

Participants: **Dritan Babasuli (General Secretary, Pogradec Municipality)**  
**Andi Kosta (Adviser External Relations, Pogradec Munic)**  
**Kledi Cela (Director of Territorial Inspection, Pogradec Municipality)**  
**Ferdinand Kullulli (Supervisor of Urban Planning Directory, Pogradec Municipality)**  
**Olset Haxhiu (ICE Engineer)**  
**Manushaqe Jace (Environmental Expert)**  
**Dhimitraq Marko (Social Expert)**

Subject: Meeting with the Municipalities in the frame of the stakeholder engagement for the project: ***"Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania"***.

### **Meeting purpose**

The purpose of the meeting was to inform Pogradec Municipality about the project and on the environmental and social issues identified during the ESIA preparation for the railway segment passing along the territory of Rrogozhinë Municipality.

The municipality was informed of the meeting in advance through a written invitation, where was explained the aim of the meeting, the persons who should participate in the meeting, as well as the points of discussion.

The General Secretary of the Municipality welcomed the meeting, while present at the meeting were representatives of the municipality directorates as recommended in the invitation.

The general secretary of the Municipality and the relevant staff present at the meeting evaluated the purpose and format of the meeting. They presented information about the private entity located in the area of the train station, which has a contract for the trade of iron-nickel up to 2025. This ore is exported to Kavadar (North Macedonia). Regardless of the activity, what is essential is that the deposits can be cleared when needed. The cleaning of waste in the area of the station as well as the lake is also a request of UNESCO since the area along Lake Ohrid has the status of an area protected by UNESCO.

During the presentation, it was emphasized that the project is looking at the possibility of eliminating level crossings where possible and using underpasses that will be rehabilitated. For the municipality's specialists, the underpasses should also provide for the passage of the fire brigade. This request must be taken into consideration in the design of all underpasses.

The municipality asked to build underpasses, instead of level crossings, because based on the development plans of the municipality of Pogradec, the areas that are currently accessed by level crossings will be developed from an urban point of view as a function of tourism and business.

The municipality of Pogradec is working on a study that will precede a large project for the treatment of black water along the lake line. It is recommended that during the design phase of the project, information is exchanged in such a way that there is no conflict.

According to urban planning specialists, the construction of tourist resorts is without permission. They have built level crossings that are irregular and have not taken into consideration the technical requirements for the distance from the railway. Where possible, level crossings will be closed immediately and the possibility of providing access through underpasses will be considered.

The area near the station is considered informal by the municipality's specialists, which has damaged the railway line, especially during the time that the railway has been out of service. To the knowledge of the municipality employees, these objects are not in the legalization process.

According to the representative of the municipality Kledi Cela, for the iron-nickel ore dump in Guri e Kuq, there is a mineral exploitation permit for the removal of this mineral from the dump and for the rehabilitation of the square. This exploitation permit is valid until 2025.

For the coal ore dump near the train station, there is no action so far.

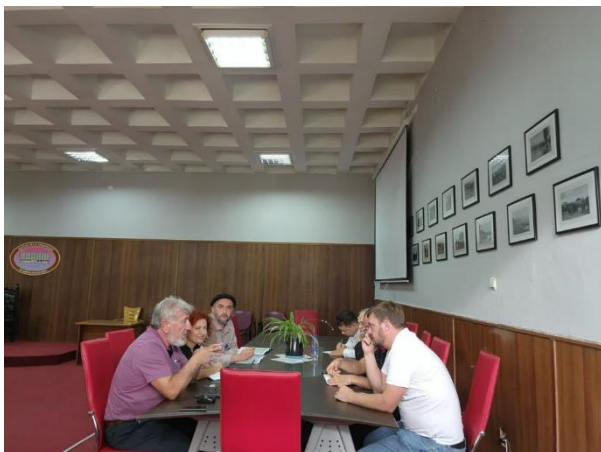
Currently, the Municipality of Pogradec does not have a landfill for depositing debris/inert.

The project team presented findings and proposals for providing road access for businesses along the railway at level crossings. In addition, the project team is working to find the best solutions to ensure safe access to residential areas.

**In summary of the discussions of the meeting:**

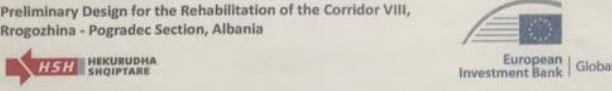
- The general secretary and the staff are supportive of the project expecting the project to be developed as soon as possible, to have standards and a high speed of movement to increase the railway transport use from the public.
- The municipal staff expressed the willingness to cooperate and provide information and recommendations.
- The project team was committed to informing the municipality about the progress of the project. Further communication will continue by email.
- The general assessment of the meeting is positive, the municipality expressed clearly problems and recommendations.

Photos of the meeting:



**List of participants:**








Preliminary Design for the Rehabilitation of the Corridor VIII,  
 Rrogozhina - Pogradec Section, Albania

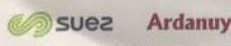


Date 18.09.2023  
 09:13<sup>00</sup>

Midis SAFE27 TAKIM dhe BASHKIA POGRADEC

**LISTA E PJESMARESVE**

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### **10.3 Formal letters part of the correspondence with institutions**

- 10.3.1 Letter sent to Albanian National Commission for UNESCO; Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Culture; National Institute of Cultural Heritage Tirana; Regional Directorate of Cultural Heritage Korçë;**
- 10.3.2 Letter sent to Albanian Road Authority**
- 10.3.3 Letter sent to Rrogozhinë Municipality dated on 12.03.2024;**
- 10.3.4 Letter sent to Peqin Municipality dated on 12.03.2024;**
- 10.3.5 Letter sent to Elbasan Municipality dated on 12.03.2024;**
- 10.3.6 Letter sent to Librazhd Municipality dated on 12.03.2024;**
- 10.3.7 Letter sent to Prrenjas Municipality dated on 12.03.2024;**
- 10.3.8 Letter sent to Pogradec Municipality dated on 12.03.2024;**
- 10.3.9 The letter of Librazhd Municipality dated on 12.03.2024;**
- 10.3.10 Request for permission/approval for the construction of a road that crosses the railway line near the Cadastral Area no. 2446 of Qendër Administrative Unit Librazhd Municipality.**
- 10.3.11 The letter of Peqin Municipality dated on 29.03.2024 recommends:**