

OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME "MACEDONIA – THRACE"

1. BUDGET

The Total Co-funded Budget from the E.U. for the Macedonia–Thrace Programme 2007-2013 amounts to EUR 3,264,500,000, of which EUR 2,675,000,000 is from Community Resources and EUR 589,500,000 from National Resources. In addition to this amount, it is estimated that National Resources amounting to EUR 911,500,000 will be earmarked to cover the cost of projects that are not co-funded by the E.U., such as expropriations, (larger than a certain percentage of the project's cost) anticipated earnings, etc. Private Funding amounting to EUR 302,669,300 are also expected to be earmarked for the realisation of these projects. The total sum is estimated to reach EUR 4,478,669,300.

A presentation of the layout of the strategic and general goals set out for the region as well as the structure of the priority axes are summarily outlined below.

2. STRATEGY AND STRUCTURE INTO PRIORITY AXES

A presentation of the layout of the strategic and general goals set out for the region as well as the structure of the priority axes are summarily outlined below.

The development vision of Macedonia–Thrace for 2007-2013 is encapsulated into the creation of a sustainable competitive regional economy with a dynamic outward orientation and internal economic, social, geographical and administrative cohesion.

The vision for the Macedonia–Thrace Region constitutes the cornerstone of the growth strategy for each of its constituent administrative Region for the period 2007-2013, as follows:

For the Central Macedonia Region:

'Region of Innovation and Equitable, Sustainable Development, a Key Hub in South East Europe'.

For the Western Macedonia Region:

Create a competitive economy with conditions for sustainable development, strengthening the role of the Region in the broader geographical area.

For the Eastern Macedonia and Thrace Region:

Achieve convergence and preserve the high growth rate in order to achieve long-term convergence with the European and national average, aiming at a mid-term rise in Regional GNP equal to the rate of increase of the National GNP.

The general goals of the Macedonia–Thrace region for 2007-2013 are the following:

- 1. Strengthening the competitiveness of the productive fabric**, through the utilisation of the multiple opportunities provided by the transition to a knowledge economy. The integrated approach to competitiveness, innovation and sustainable development contribute towards supporting innovative

entrepreneurship, in order to foster the growth of competitive enterprises and provide a significant boost to employment. The development and utilisation of human resources and the restructuring of the regional job market according to the needs of an integrated strategy for the improvement of employee knowledge and skills as well as the increase in work productivity and efficiency, all fall within the same framework.

- 2. The utilisation of the Region's location in South East Europe** and more specifically in the Balkans, as well as its proximity to the emerging markets of the Black Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean, through the completion of inter-European and regional networks, strengthening inter-governmental and cross-regional collaboration and promotion of business networks and outward orientation. The establishment of the Region as a key factor for developments in the Balkans and, more broadly, in Southeast Europe, utilises the advantages incumbent upon its geographical location as a gateway into the target area, as well as at the Southeast border of the European Union; moreover, it takes advantage of its role as a hub of the transport – communications – energy networks of domestic and international import, while it also promotes the potential of this dynamic growth centre, through the contribution of the broader metropolitan area of the city and region of Thessalonica.
- 3. The equitable economic and social development in the framework of sustainability** with the objective of alleviating inequalities and ensuring that everyone benefits from the results of development. The alleviation of intraregional inequalities will contribute to the cohesion of Northern Greece, the fostering of regional awareness, an increase in the efficiency of regional policies and actions, as well as creating functional networks consisting of collaborative ventures and, finally, the creation of a cohesive region.

In order to achieve the more thorough integration of the environmental dimension into the programme, the Macedonia - Thrace Operational Programme has set sustainable development as its primary goal and, from the outset, recognises the importance of formulating and integrating environmental policy into all its constituent axes. An effective and integrated environmental policy, which complements and will support the policies for the promotion of economic development and social prosperity. In this framework, the individual goals of the environmental policy should delegate the protection of the environment as the foundation for economic and social development.

Therefore, the priority for the Region's strategic planning is to integrate the environmental dimension into all the separate sectoral policies, such as transportation, energy, tourism etc.

The aforementioned General Goals are correlated to the Priority Axes of the Operational Programme.

The thematic structure of the Priority Axes is the following:

- Priority Axis 1: Accessibility Infrastructure and Services in the Central Macedonia Region.

- ❑ Priority Axis 2: Accessibility Infrastructure and Services in the West Macedonia Region.
- ❑ Priority Axis 3: Accessibility Infrastructure and Services in the East Macedonia - Thrace Region.
- ❑ Priority Axis 4: Digital Convergence and Entrepreneurship in the Central Macedonia Region.
- ❑ Priority Axis 5: Digital Convergence and Entrepreneurship in the West Macedonia Region.
- ❑ Priority Axis 6: Digital Convergence and Entrepreneurship in the East Macedonia - Thrace Region.
- ❑ Priority Axis 7: Sustainable Development and Quality of Life in the Central Macedonia Region.
- ❑ Priority Axis 8: Sustainable Development and Quality of Life in the West Macedonia Region.
- ❑ Priority Axis 9: Sustainable Development and Quality of Life in the East Macedonia - Thrace Region.