

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	Iasi Urban Infrastructure
Project Number:	2018-0774
Country:	Romania
Project Description:	The project consists of a multi-annual municipal investment programme of the Municipality of Iasi in Romania. The EIB investment loan will support the modernisation of mobility, education and social infrastructure.
EIA required:	No
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	No

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The operation is an investment loan to the municipality of Iasi in Romania's North-East, mainly focusing on investments in urban mobility, education and social infrastructure. This operation will encompass 7 schemes focusing on tram tracks modernisation, new trams acquisition and public transport management system, construction and modernisation of schools and kindergartens and construction of a multifunction centre.

All schemes are part of the multi-annual investment programme of the Municipality of Iasi in Romania for the period 2019-2023 identified in the Integrated Urban Development Strategy (SIDU 2015-2030) and the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP 2016-2030). The Integrated Urban Development Strategy is the strategic planning document guiding the response to the main economic, environmental, climate, demographic and social challenges of the Municipality of Iasi whilst the SUMP is the main planning document for urban mobility. These documents, together with plans and strategies for other sectors such as energy or tourism, constitute the overarching framework for the different investment projects included in this operation. In addition to the strategic planning framework, the Municipality has aligned its investments with national priorities defined by the Ministry for Regional Development and Ministry of Finance.

The EIA and SEA EU Directives are transposed into national law via Government Resolution No. 445/2009 concerning EIA, and Government Resolution No. 1076/2004 on SEA. Furthermore, the Habitats and Birds Directives are transposed into Romanian law via the provisions of Government Emergency Ordinance No. 57/2007 on nature and landscape. Given that the scope of the project is urban infrastructure investments and the project is

¹ Only projects that meet the scope of the Carbon Footprint Exercise, as defined in the EIB draft Carbon Footprint Methodologies, are included, provided estimated emissions exceed the methodology thresholds: 20,000 tonnes CO₂e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tonnes CO₂e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

located inside the built area of Iasi, the competent authority for EIA is the Local Office of the National Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Given the character of the selected investments none of the schemes is subject to EIA and none of the schemes will have an impact on Natura 2000 or other protected areas.

Regarding investments related to urban mobility, significant positive effects are expected in terms of increased accessibility; improved quality and comfort of urban public transport; more efficient management of traffic flows in the city; greater energy savings; and positive environmental effects resulting from lower CO₂ emissions. Therefore, this investment loan has elements that support climate action through investments in public transport and mobility solutions targeting soft mobility modes (pedestrian and bicycle lanes).

For investments concerning public buildings there are a number of positive effects expected, including energy savings as a result of insulation of walls and roofs, new windows and other energy efficiency measures (although not quantified at this stage).

Environmental impacts at the construction stage will be short-lived and reversible, at a level which is deemed acceptable. At construction, the schemes will result in increased noise levels, vibrations from heavy traffic to and from the sites, and impacts on air quality. Special mitigation measures are being implemented in order to minimize these impacts. At operation stage the impacts will be connected to noise, pollution occasioned by road use and generated waste. Special mitigation measures will be introduced in order to reduce impacts to a level below regulatory thresholds.

Social Assessment

There is no self-standing social assessment for the project. However, it is deemed that the overall social impact of the investment loan will be positive based on the expected results of the programme including improved urban mobility (tramways, electrical buses), new social housing, rehabilitated public buildings, improvements to public educational facilities (schools, crèches), sports facilities and green open spaces.

Improvements to urban public mobility and connectivity will contribute to reducing congestion, noise and air pollution. Also, investments in urban development and renewal will improve the quality of public infrastructures and the overall public realm. Modern education, social/sport facilities, together with improved quality of surrounded public spaces are considered as means to achieve the municipality's strategic goals.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Public consultation with local government units, public institutions and professional bodies, as well as public participation, was carried out as part of the SEA process during the preparation of Iasi's Integrated Urban Development Strategy (SIDU) 2015-2030.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Promoter will be required to act according to the provisions of the relevant EU Directives, including SEA (2001/42/EC), EIA (2011/92/EU) and subsequent amendments (e.g. 2014/52/EU), Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds (2009/147/EC) Directives as transposed into National Law. Due to the relatively small size of the individual schemes and the nature of the sectors concerned, none of the schemes are deemed to have significant negative environmental impacts. In addition, the Promoter has determined that all schemes are located outside protected areas including Natura 2000.

The projects is expected to have an overall positive impact on the quality of life of the population. The improvements of education services and infrastructure will have positive affect on education of children and on quality of life of young families. The construction of a multi-function facility in a degraded area will significantly contribute to social integration of the local population.

Furthermore, the project will include the implementation of energy efficiency measures, which are expected to contribute to climate change mitigation (although not quantified at this stage).

The public transport projects are expected to have a positive effect on the environment, decreasing emissions and increasing its attractiveness compared to the private vehicle.

The institutional capacity of the Promoter to manage the environmental and social issues is deemed adequate. Therefore, given the nature of the operation and the procedures concerning EIA and nature protection put in place by the competent authorities in Iasi, subject to conditions mentioned above the investment loan is acceptable to the Bank in environmental and social terms.

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