

**Public**

## Environmental and Social Data Sheet

### Overview

Project Name:	ELEKTRILEVI FTTH NETWORK DEVELOPMENT
Project Number:	2019-0444
Country:	ESTONIA
Project Description:	The project concerns the roll-out of a passive fibre access network over the period 2019 - 2023 in Estonia. The network will provide Very High Capacity (VHC) broadband services with download speeds of 1 Gbps to about 270 000 households. The network will be offered on an open-access basis to any retail provider of broadband services.
EIA required:	No
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise <sup>1</sup> :	No
(details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")	

### Environmental and Social Assessment

#### Environmental Assessment

The project concerns the deployment of a passive fibre access network predominantly in suburban and rural areas of Estonia. The network cables will be deployed mostly alongside roads on the poles of the existing power distribution network. There is also a very limited number of small shelters required for the termination of the last mile fibre cables. They will be installed at suitable locations close to existing backbone networks to reach the different housing areas with the least possible civil works efforts.

The project does not fall under the Annexes of the EU Directive 2014/52/EU amending the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU. However before the construction work can start, a permit from the competent authorities is required, which verifies the environmental impact of the cable routes and may request mitigation measures such as a re-routing or additional protection measures and suitable reinstatement works.

Due to the fact, that the cables are usually installed above ground on existing poles of the power distribution network or in underground ducting systems, the residual environmental effects will be limited, apart from disturbances during the construction phase.

<sup>1</sup> Only projects that meet the scope of the Carbon Footprint Exercise, as defined in the EIB Carbon Footprint Methodologies, are included, provided estimated emissions exceed the methodology thresholds: 20,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

Luxembourg, 20 April 2020

The promoter aims at the provision of services with high standards in accordance with latest safety and occupational health principles. Another important objective is to limit the environmental impact as much as possible. This is supported by the implementation of proper business processes and related certifications such as ISO 14001, ISO 18001 and ISO 9001.

### **Other Environmental and Social Aspects**

The wide spread availability of broadband networks particularly in more rural areas is one of the key enabling technologies helping to improve the sustainability of the society through digital solutions such as e-government, smart business applications and also tele-working. The project will also provide latest broadband services to public buildings such as administrative offices. In Estonia, the establishment of a proper wireline infrastructure is particularly important, as there are due to the history of the country only mobile broadband services available. Such areas are particularly suffering under a high mobile network congestion during peak hours. Therefore, the project does have a strong contribution to the overall social sustainability particularly of the rural areas.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The provision of a reliable and a high quality broadband infrastructure is important for the widespread use of internet-based services such as e-government, e-learning, teleworking or online banking. The existing infrastructure in Estonia is congested during peak hours particularly in rural areas due to the availability of mostly mobile broadband services. Therefore, the project will have a strong contribution to the overall social sustainability particularly of the rural areas.

The project itself is profiting from existing infrastructures (poles of power distribution network) and this will limit the environmental impact during the construction period. During implementation, the promoter aims at the provision of services with high standards in accordance with latest safety and occupational health principles.

Considering the above, the project is acceptable for the Bank's financing in environmental and social terms.