



European Investment Bank (EIB)

Luxembourg, 21 November 2019

## Environmental and Social Completion Sheet (ESCS)

### Overview

Project Name:	SOFIA RING WESTERN ARC CONSTRUCTION
Project Number:	20150333 / 20170860
Country:	Bulgaria
Project Description:	The project consists of the reconstruction and modernization of Sofia Ring Western Arc of the Sofia Ring Road involving the enlargement of the current two lane road to a 2x3 urban motorway of 8.537 km length.

### Summary of Environmental and Social Assessment at Completion

**EIB notes the following key Environmental and Social outcomes at Project Completion.**

The project consisted of the enlargement of 8.5 km section of the western part of Sofia Ring Road (SRR) from the current two lane road to a 2x3 urban motorway. The project includes service roads, connections to the urban network and the elimination of all at-level crossings.

The project as a whole falls under Annex II of EIA Directive 2011/92/EU. EIA National Authority for the project is the Bulgarian Ministry of Environment and Water (MoEW). On 27 September 2010 the MoEW screened out the project and concluded that there was no need to carry out a full EIA.

The decision was motivated by various circumstances including that the reconstruction project is located in a densely urbanized area, there are no protected areas which can be affected by the project (the project alignment does not cross any location included in the NATURA 2000 network), there are no protected plants or animal population in the affected area, there are no expectations for generation of wastes and emissions which may have a major negative impact and the type of landscape does not change with the implementation of the investment.

The project is divided into two sections. Construction permit for the 1<sup>st</sup> section was issued by the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works on September 8, 2012. The works were completed in November 2015 and the road was opened to traffic. For a part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> section, where land acquisition was not required, a construction permit was issued on November 16, 2015. For the rest of the section at a time of approval a condition for disbursement was included and the Promoter had to provide an evidence of land availability for the construction. During the expropriation procedures for the 2<sup>nd</sup> section a number of legal disputes between landowners and the State regarding the compensation value were brought up. All disputes have now been resolved and the compensation values have been paid.

Some environmental benefits will be generated by the project as a result of faster and smoother traffic flows – providing for an overall reduction of emitted exhaust gasses due to reduced travel time and eliminated congestion. Decrease in the number of traffic accidents along the new alignment is expected due to the applied traffic safety measures, including the construction of grade-separated interchanges. No casualties have been reported on the



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project section since opening to traffic and until the end of 2018. Population from neighbourhoods situated along the Sofia Ring road will be subject to less noise and air pollution.

**Summary opinion of Environmental and Social aspects at completion:**

The project crosses an industrial land mainly following the existing alignment and does not require any resettlement. However due to the widening of the carriageway and construction of interchanges, additional land was necessary. The expropriation procedures for the 2<sup>nd</sup> section, which generated a number of legal disputes between landowners and the State regarding the compensation value, have been completed and compensations have been paid.

Based on the information from the Promoter, site visits by the EIB team and inputs provided by supervising Engineer and Managing Authority during Construction, EIB is of the opinion, that the Project has been implemented in line with EIB Environmental and Social Standards, applicable at the time of appraisal.