

Public Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	PFR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FL
Project Number:	2018-0656
Country:	Poland
Project Description:	Framework loan to regional development agency in the Cohesion region of Pomorskie (Poland) to support new eligible sustainable urban development schemes. This is a Sub-operation under the POLISH REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES PROGRAMME LOAN (2016-0564).
EIA required:	This is a multi-scheme operation. Some of the schemes may require an EIA under Annex I or Annex II (screened in) of the EIA Directive 2014/52/EU (amending 2011/92/EU).
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise:	No

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The operation, structured as a Framework Loans to a region-owned entity, will finance new eligible schemes in the sector of urban development in Pomorskie (all EIB Cohesion Priority regions). The Borrower/Promoter is the Region's promotional institution Pomorski Fundusz Rozwoju Sp. z o.o. "PFR".

Within the proposed scope of the Project will be schemes which support the implementation of the Pomorskie regional strategy. They are expected to support regeneration of degraded areas, provision of urban amenities, improvements to public spaces, improvement of the cultural infrastructure, protection of historic monuments, business related infrastructure and urban mobility improvements. The Project aims to improve the competitiveness and attractiveness of the Region's settlements, as well as to strengthen the Region's social and economic potential.

The types of schemes expected to be supported are generally of a small size (total project cost below EUR 25m) with the rehabilitation of public buildings expected to be a principal focus. Types of schemes may include conservation and transformation of (often historic) buildings towards new economic uses, as well as rehabilitation/construction of social facilities. Final beneficiaries who apply to PFR for financing are expected to be mostly municipalities and public entities.

Luxembourg, 26 August 2020

The schemes in which the Promoters will invest will be consistent with the existing and relevant urban planning and urban development strategies and policy objectives frameworks and follow an integrated approach to spatial development.

Relevant environment EU Directives have been transposed into national legislation (SEA Directive, EIA Directive, Birds and Habitats Directives, Energy Performance of Buildings Directive). Some of the underlying investments may fall under Annex I or II of EIA Directive 2014/52/EU (amending Directive 2011/92/EU), requiring a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) or EIA screening by the competent authority on the basis of Annex III to determine the need for a full EIA. As the investments will be located in already urbanised areas therefore significant impacts on protected sites, including Natura 2000 areas, cannot be excluded but are deemed unlikely.

The schemes are expected to have a limited temporary impact during the construction phase usually through an increased local traffic and construction and demolition waste generated. These impacts are expected to be mitigated by adhering to a good practice and by following the recommendations of the competent authority.

The Project is expected to have a positive impact on climate change mitigation stemming from building rehabilitation - reduced energy usage of existing buildings to be refurbished and redeveloped - and potentially urban mobility improvements that support the competitiveness of alternative modes to the car. Concerning adaptation, Pomorskie is impacted by climate change through expected increasing frequency of floods. While the natural disaster recovery schemes are a necessary reactive instrument that facilitates reconstruction of the infrastructure, more work is needed in the preparation and implementation of systemic adaptation measures.

Social Assessment

There are issues concerning degraded industrial and post-industrial sites and urban centres deteriorating in terms of their cultural, educational, recreational and economic functions/offers to citizens and businesses. The Project is expected to bring a number of positive social impacts. These may include urban residents enjoying improved overall quality of life through better services, amenities and urban environment quality. Businesses may enjoy increased business confidence outlook stemming from improvements in the urban environment and infrastructure. This, along with the more direct economic effect of increased construction and refurbishment activities resulting from the investments, are expected to have a positive effect on job creation and private investment.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Schemes promoted by a municipality will be included in the approved urban planning of the concerned municipalities, as well as regional spatial planning framework which will have been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) according to the Polish legislation. The SEA process includes a public consultation phase, according to which the general public has the right to express its opinion on the plan and the environmental report. Individual schemes may also be subject to public consultation in line with the EIA law.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The environmental compliance of schemes financed under this Programme will be established in the building permit process and verified before EIB funds can be used for the schemes.

Poland has received formal notice from the EC requesting them to ensure that urban wastewater is adequately collected and treated as the compliance gaps for agglomerations remains serious.

Luxembourg, 26 August 2020

Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, the investments to be carried out are expected to generate a wide range of positive environmental and social impacts, despite some possible minor negative impacts during the remediation and construction period.

The Promoters shall procure that schemes are implemented according to the provisions of the relevant EU Directives, including SEA (2001/42/EC), EIA (2014/52/EU amending 2011/92/EU), Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds (2009/147/EC) Directives as transposed into national law. In projects where applicable, the Promoter will be requested to deliver the NTS of EIAs to the Bank.

For Schemes having a potential impact on protected areas, including Natura 2000 sites, the Promoter has to provide evidence of the compliance (including screening-out decision) with the Habitats and Birds Directives (if applicable).

For schemes triggering Art. 4.7 of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the Promoter will have to provide evidence of the compliance with the WFD before the Bank funds are allocated. Where urban wastewater collection/treatment is considered a risk, the Promoter shall ensure that schemes that increase this risk are not presented for financing.

Environmental and efficiency improvements in public buildings will be required to comply with the provisions of the EU Directive on Energy Performance of Buildings 2010/31/EU. The institutional capacity of the Promoter to manage the environmental and social issues is deemed acceptable. Therefore, given the nature of the operation and the procedures concerning EIA and nature protection put in place by the environmental competent authorities, subject to the conditions mentioned above, the Project is acceptable in environmental and social terms.