

Public

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	PUBLIC INVESTMENTS HALLE
Project Number:	2019-0692
Country:	GERMANY
Project Description:	Financing of investments by Stadtwerke Halle, the local utility, in new trams, rehabilitation of the local district heating and electricity networks, as well as in water and wastewater infrastructure.
EIA required:	yes
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The project concerns the investment programme of Stadtwerke Halle's (SWH) subsidiaries for urban transport, energy supply and water for the period of 2020-2026. It will improve the efficiency and sustainability of the relevant utilities in Halle by means of investment such as modernising the trams, electrical lines, district heating pipelines, replacement of sewer networks, water mains, and improvements to an existing wastewater treatment plant.

Although net long term environmental impacts will be positive, some works may require a full EIA according to Directive 2011/92/EC as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU or affect protected areas. However, due to the nature of the works to be implemented it is anticipated that the negative environmental impacts will be mostly associated with the period of construction and will be mainly localised and temporary, such as noise, vibration, and dust. During operation, some components may trigger electromagnetic fields (EMF). Appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented to minimise impacts during construction and operation. These include, but are not limited to, containing noise, dust, vibrations, emission of gaseous pollutants and traffic disruption as well as proper management of construction waste materials. In relation to Environment, the Competent Authority is Untere Naturschutzbehörde.

According to SWH, schemes are not expected to have any negative impact on Natura 2000 sites or other protected areas.

¹ 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 CO₂e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tonnes CO₂e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

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The project contributes to the Bank's transversal objective Climate Action Mitigation by supporting energy efficiency schemes in district heating and at the wastewater treatment plant.

The project will also contribute to the Bank's transversal objective Climate Action Adaptation through the components that provide additional storage capacity for storm water and improve storm water management in the city of Halle.

A detailed assessment per component is given hereafter:

Urban Transport

The project implements the city's local transport plan ("Nahverkehrsplan 2018"), which was not subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The purchase of new tram vehicles does not fall under Annex I or Annex II of Directive 2011/92/EU (the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive) amended by Directive 2014/52/EU, which is not applicable to manufacturing of rolling stock. Therefore, no Environmental Impact Assessment is required for this project component. However, the renewal of the tram fleet is expected to have a positive environmental impact. The new trams will enable the Promoter to improve attractiveness of public transport, which in turn will support a modal shift to public transport, subsequently reducing the detrimental impacts of private vehicle usage. Given the nature of the project, no impacts on Natura 2000 or other protected sites are expected. Finally, the Promoter will use firms that are environmentally certified to dispose of the obsolete trams that will be replaced. The Bank will request, after project completion, information from the Promoter on the disposal of the obsolete rolling stock.

Electricity and district heating networks

Due to their technical characteristics, none of the investment schemes are expected to fall under Annex I of the Directive 2014/52/EU, amending the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU. Some programme schemes might fall under Annex II of the EIA Directive, leaving it to the competent authority to determine whether a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required. Given the nature, scale of works, and installation method for the electrical lines (underground) and district heating pipelines in an urban setting, a full EIA is not expected to be required.

All sub-projects have been/will be subject, as necessary, to environmental analyses in the process for the authorization to build and operate. The relevant authorities shall be consulted – where required – to ensure proper protection of environmental aspects relating to biodiversity and designated areas of conservation as per the Environmental Management System operating procedure of the energy utility.

The investments into digital remote metering infrastructure principally involve the substitution of existing equipment and the usage of telecommunication networks. The main potential impact on the environment relate to electromagnetic fields and the management of the old meters being substituted by this project according to the established industry practice. The Promoter confirmed that exposition of people to electromagnetic radiation from smart meters is compliant with the applicable national regulation (VDE Richtlinie). Appropriate procedures are established to manage, track and monitor the disposal process of mechanical and electric meters. Any adverse environmental impact of this component is thus expected to be minimal. The meters are enabling billing according to real-time consumption, encouraging the consumers to rational use and saving of electricity.

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Water and wastewater infrastructure

The works mainly concern rehabilitation or replacement of water mains and sewers (including house connections) as well as improvements in the existing wastewater treatment plant.

Statutory duties with regard to the protection of the environment are embedded within key legislation for the German water industry. Halle's investment plan does not fall under the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/CE as it mainly concerns works in existing plants and is not part of a programme. Compliance with applicable environmental legislation (national and EU), including Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) legislation is inherent to the definition of the investments programme. The Promoter carries out EIA procedures where required by the competent authority and mitigating measures are applied as appropriate.

Social Assessment

The appraisal of the proposed investment programme has identified a number of potential positive social impacts, the most important of which are: (i) higher level of service in urban transport thanks to enhanced passenger comfort, vehicle reliability and access for passengers with reduced mobility; (ii) improved quality of life thanks to cleaner surface waters and reduced risk of urban flooding, (iii) continued provision of water, transport and energy services of high standard at affordable prices. Besides, the works, supplies and services required to implement the project will temporarily create employment in the area and beyond.

Temporary adverse social impacts may include the following: disruption of services and traffic, noise, temporary occupation of public and private space, and health and safety hazards during construction. Such impacts are common for this type of project, and the mitigation of expected adverse social impacts will be addressed as part of the planning for each scheme.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The Promoter must ensure compliance with national and European environmental legislation and facilitate access by the public to environmentally relevant information in accordance with the Aarhus Convention. The Environmental Impact Assessments (if required) as well as the screening according to the relevant criteria listed in Annex III of the EIA directive 2011/92/EC as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU will be made available to the Public. The EIAs (if required) will be published on the EIB website. Consultations with affected communities and interested parties will take place in line with the requirements of the Directives.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The Promoter's energy utility has implemented an environmental management system in line with the standard Environmental Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) and is also certified EN ISO 14001. External auditors periodically control both schemes.

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Conclusions and Recommendations

The schemes implemented under this programme will have long-term positive impacts on the environment. The purchase of new trams improves the quality of public transport services and is expected to reduce the adverse impacts of transport on the environment, in particular the local emission of air pollutants, greenhouse gas and noise.

The schemes in the electricity (including meters) and district heating networks, will allow the continued technical and commercial safe operation of the networks, contributing to the quality and security of electricity and heat supply, in line with industry best practice. The Promoter's district heating network meets the EU definition of an energy efficient district heating network, delivering primary energy and greenhouse gas emissions savings.

The water component of the project will assist in maintaining compliance with the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive 91/271/EC and the Drinking Water Directive 98/83/EC and contribute towards compliance with the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC.

All schemes covered by the programme will be subject to the Promoter complying with the following requirements:

- The Promoter will be required to act according to the provisions of the relevant EU Directives, including the EIA (2014/52/EC) amending the EIA Directive (2011/92/EC), Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds (2009/147/EC). The promoter undertakes not to allocate Bank funds to project components that require a full EIA until the EIA and the necessary appropriate assessment, if required, have been finalised and approved by the relevant competent authority. Once any EIA is finalised, the promoter will provide the Bank with an electronic copy of the EIA, for publication on the EIB website.
- The Promoter undertakes to provide to the Bank, if requested, any decisions issued by the competent authority that screen out project component and the main reasons for not requiring EIA with the reference to the relevant criteria listed in Annex III of the EIA Directive.

Under these conditions, the operation is acceptable to the Bank's financing in Environmental and Social terms.