

Public

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	BIELSKO BIALA URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE
Project Number:	2020-0187
Country:	Poland
Project Description:	The Project consist of a multi-annual municipal investment programme of the City of Bielsko-Biala in Poland. The EIB framework loan will support improvements in the urban transport networks and mobility, education and sport facilities, energy efficiency, environment, social housing, cultural and other urban infrastructure and services.
EIA required:	This is a multi-scheme operation. Some of the schemes may require an EIA under Annex II of the EIA Directive.
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The operation, structured as a Framework Loan, supporting the implementation of the Multi-annual Investment Plan (2020-2039) of the City of Bielsko-Biala. The operation will contribute to the modernisation of public infrastructure and services, and integrated urban development, particularly through investments concerning urban mobility including urban roads, social and health care facilities, education and sports infrastructure, culture and tourism related infrastructure, ICT systems and other public infrastructure and services, including energy efficiency measures in different areas.

The Polish EIA law, which is compliant with EU Directives, entered into force in November 2008 (Act on Providing Information on the Environment and Environmental Protection, Public Participation in Environmental Protection and on Environmental Impact Assessment). According to the Act, the Competent Authority issuing environmental permits for urban roads of national significance is the Regional Director for Environmental Protection (RDEP) after consultation with the Regional Sanitary Inspectorate. For other urban projects (i.e. other urban roads, urban renewal, etc.) the Competent Authority is the Mayor of the City.

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 competent authority for Natura 2000 areas is the corresponding “Voivodship’s Regional Director for Environmental Protection”. Given the scope of this operation and sectors included, some schemes may be located in the vicinity of Natura 2000 areas, thus requiring EIA screening procedure.

In 2019, the City Council approved the City’s Adaptation Plan for Climate Change until 2030. The plan aims at adapting the City of Bielsko-Biala to climate change, reducing its vulnerability to extreme events and enhancing its capacity to deal with the effects of these phenomena and their side-effects. The Adaptation Plan focuses on four most sensitive sectors/areas: health/vulnerable groups, water management, transport and energy. The Plan also sets out the principles for the implementation of adaptation actions (responsible actors, funding framework, monitoring indicators, assumptions for evaluation and update of the document).

Investments in social, culture, sports and education facilities primarily comprise rehabilitation and modernisation, rather than new construction, thus many of the schemes are not likely to fall under the Annex I or Annex II (screened in) of the EIA Directive (2014/52/EU amending Directive 2011/92/EU). This is also to be the case for some new construction schemes localised in urban areas (e.g. kindergarten and sport halls for schools). In cases where EIA is to be required (e.g. mostly schemes concerning construction of urban roads), the Promoter will be requested to provide the EIA to the EIB before the funds are allocated.

Social Assessment, where applicable

The Project is expected to bring a number of positive social impacts, including the increase in the quality of public services available to the inhabitants because of the refurbishment and modernisation of schools, culture institutions and other public buildings. Furthermore, road safety improvements are expected to result in reduced number of accidents in the concerned areas.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The Adaptation Plan for Climate Change for the City of Bielsko-Biala was verified by ensuring a broad participation of stakeholders and the public opinion. Public consultation is expected to ensure the social acceptability of the Plan and the reduction of conflicts in the implementation of adaptation actions.

The Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA) being developed or to be developed will take into consideration the applicable requirements of the EIA Directive in terms of public consultation and stakeholder engagement. The results of the public consultation will be incorporated into the ESIA documents, which will be provided to the Bank.

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 (2014/52/EU amending 2011/92/EU), Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds (2009/147/EC) Directives and Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) as transposed into national law. In projects where applicable, the Promoter will be requested to deliver the EIAs to the Bank before Bank funds are allocated. For Schemes having a potential impact on protected areas including Natura 2000 sites, the Promoters have to provide evidence of the compliance (including screening) with the Habitats and Birds Directives (if applicable) before the Bank funds are allocated. For schemes triggering art. 4.7 of the Water

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Framework Directive (WFD), the promoter has to provide evidence of the compliance with the WFD before the Bank funds are allocated.

The capacity of the Promoter to manage the environmental and social issues is deemed satisfactory. Therefore, subject to the conditions mentioned above, this operation is acceptable for the Bank in environmental and social terms.