

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: BARCELONA COVID-19 SOCIAL AND EFFICIENT HOUSING
Project Number: 2020-0747
Country: Spain
Project Description: Construction of approx. 490 social housing units for rent in the City of Barcelona, including ancillary infrastructure and public facilities (e.g. health centre, library, kindergarten).

EIA required: no

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: no

(details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The Project concerns the financing of the construction of approximately 490 social housing units for rent, with ancillary infrastructure and public facilities. The Promoter and Borrower is the Municipal Housing Company IMHAB (Institut Municipal de l'Habitatge i Rehabilitació de Barcelona) owned by the City.

The housing units have been grouped in 11 small size schemes (cost below EUR 25 million) which are distributed across the City of Barcelona, and located in the following 8 neighbourhoods: Vallcarca i els Penitents, Torre Baró, Sant Andreu, La Verneda i la Pau, El Besòs i el Maresme, La Bordeta, Vila de Gràcia, and La Sagrada Família.

The selected locations are outside Natura 2000 or protected areas and comprise available plots with the appropriate zoning in line with the spatial development plans. The latter were subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) according to the SEA Directive 2001/42/EC, transposed into the Spanish Law 9/2006.

The Spanish Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Law (Environmental Law 6/2001), is compliant with EU Directives. Given the nature, location and size of the schemes included in this operation, none of them is subject to an EIA under Directive 2014/52/EU, amending Directive 2011/92/EU, nor requires an assessment under the EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC and Birds Directive 2009/147/EC. In addition, all the buildings included in the Project comply with the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive 2010/31/EU, as transposed into the Spanish legislation.

The Competent Authority issuing building permits is the Municipality of Barcelona. These permits take into account (when required) the consultation with the Regional Environmental Protection Department of Catalonia, who is the Competent Authority for EIA and protected areas. The individual building permits will stipulate monitoring of environmental requirements prior to, during and post construction.

The Project's environmental impact at the construction stage will be short-lived and reversible, at a level that is deemed acceptable. Potential negative effects (e.g. dust and noise during construction) will be alleviated by appropriate site organisation and construction management.

All the social housing units are aligned to a low carbon pathway consistent with the Paris Agreement goals and principles. In addition, IMHAB prioritises the incorporation of passive solutions to increase climate resilience and minimise CO₂ emissions as well as energy

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.

consumption. The Project is therefore expected to meet very good environmental standards and will contribute to maintain and improve the quality of the built environment, contributing to the Bank's climate (mitigation and adaptation) objectives.

Social Assessment

The schemes covered by this Project mirror the key priorities of the Plan for the Right to Housing of Barcelona 2016-2025 (City Housing Strategy) which emphasizes, among other objectives, the need to increase the public housing stock for rental, and addresses social emergency in the housing sector. In addition, the Project is in line with the so-called Plan de Barrios (Neighbourhoods Plan). This is a multi-sector urban regeneration strategy aiming to address disadvantaged and vulnerable citizens in 16 (out of a total of 73) neighbourhoods of Barcelona (12.6% of the total population), taking into consideration social inequalities as well as other indicators.

Therefore, the Project is expected contribute to reducing the shortage of social housing and, regenerating affected urban areas. The level of social inclusion in Barcelona will be improved by facilitating the accommodation of low-income groups. Furthermore, IMHAB works in close collaboration with the Municipal Social Rights Department, who provides (if needed) social services to the beneficiaries of this Project, all of them vulnerable people.

Land is already available for all the schemes included in the Project and no expropriations or resettlement of families are necessary.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The provision of appropriate housing is ensured through the existence of a comprehensive national, regional and local framework. The public consultation process is also embedded in the planning process followed by the Promoter.

This Project considers the stakeholder's engagement and citizen's proximity in the core of its planning and implementation. In this regard, IMHAB works in close collaboration with the Barcelona Housing Consortium, who has a comprehensive office network, acting as the 'one-stop shop' since 2008, supporting the citizens with relevant information and administrative procedures for public housing.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The overall environmental and social impact of the Project is expected to be positive, with improved environment linked to energy savings and quality of life for citizens. The Project is expected to increase the capacity of Barcelona to respond to housing needs of vulnerable people, primarily within the existing urban area, thus reducing the risk of urban sprawl, and migration.

Prior to disbursement against any specific scheme, the Promoter is required to provide to the Bank documentary evidence that schemes comply with relevant provisions of the environmental EU Directives, including EIA (2014/52/EU amending 2011/92/EU), Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds (2009/147/EC) Directives as transposed into national law.

IMHAB is a very experienced and capable Promoter able to manage the environmental and social issues of this Project. Therefore, given the nature of the operation and the procedures concerning EIA and nature protection put in place by the competent authorities in Barcelona, subject to the condition mentioned above, the Project is acceptable in environmental and social terms.