

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	FIBRE OPTIC NETWORK EXPANSION POLAND (FONEXP)
Project Number:	2020-0782
Country:	POLAND
Project Description:	The project relates to the deployment of a new FTTH (fibre to the home) access network in designated areas of Poland where very high capacity networks are not available. The new network will pass 1.1 million homes and will be operated on a non-discriminatory wholesale access basis only, selling wholesale services with equal terms and conditions to all retail operators.

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, comprising the installation of fixed telecommunications infrastructure with no new buildings, does not fall under Annex I or II of the EIA Directive 2014/52/EU amending Directive 2011/92/EU.

The promoter and its contractors will rely as much as possible on existing fixed network infrastructures (ducts and poles mainly) to deploy its new fibre optic network, minimising the need for construction works and therefore potential negative environmental effects. In any case, for the part of the network requiring civil works, the potential negative effects would still be limited in time and scope, mainly related to minor disturbances such as noise and dust in the project sites. The promoter will mitigate the potential impacts by applying well-established industry-standard measures. Moreover, the network will be deployed mainly within towns and villages and the promoter does not expect the project to require network deployment activities in Natura 2000 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.

Luxembourg, 22 April 2021

The project qualifies for climate change mitigation – energy efficiency for the part of the network connecting the households that will be equipped with a CPE (customer premises equipment) with a GPON (gigabit passive optical network) interface, which is expected to account for around 50% of the project investment cost. For this part of the project, there will be a substantial reduction in the energy consumption of the access network (delimited by the electrical interface in both ends) comparing to the existing DSL (digital subscriber line) and cable networks in the project area.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The project will have indirect positive environmental and social impacts because ultra-high speed broadband networks enable videoconferencing, telemedicine, e-government, e-education and teleworking. These solutions improve significantly the attractiveness of the less densely populated areas that the project is targeting in terms of job opportunities and quality of life. In addition, they may contribute to the reduction of personal transportation needs and therefore of road traffic and pollution, as well as resilience to health emergencies.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The project does not fall under Annex I or II of the Directive 2014/52/EU amending EIA Directive 2011/92/EU. Moreover, the promoter will rely on existing infrastructures to minimise the need for civil works, which in any case would have limited and manageable environmental effects. On the other hand, the project will have significant positive environmental impacts related to the reduction of the fixed broadband access network energy consumption, as well as positive socio-economic impacts associated with the coverage expansion of ultra-high speed broadband networks.

Therefore, the project is acceptable in environmental and social terms for the Bank's financing.